

INSPECTION REPORT

RODILLIAN SCHOOL

Wakefield, Leeds.

LEA area: Leeds

Unique reference number: 108080

Headteacher: Mr John Barrett

Reporting inspector: Mr Tony Byrne
2561

Dates of inspection: 31st March – 4th April 2003

Inspection number: 254046

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 - 18
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Longthorpe Lane Lofthouse Wakefield Leeds
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Alec Hudson
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

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23393	Brian Dower	Team inspector	English	
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17156	Edward Graham	Team inspector	Design and technology	
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27050	Val Blackburn	Team inspector	Biology	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This mixed 11 to 19 comprehensive school is much bigger than average. There are 1402 pupils, including 149 in the sixth form. The school operates a partnership arrangement to share and extend the curriculum for 14 to 19 year olds with another school and a college of further education. Another partnership has been developed with a second school as a joint specialist performing arts college. The school is in the Excellence in Cities initiative and has Investors in People status. The intake of the school has expanded from being restricted to an area of former mining settlements and has changed, as more pupils from the city of Leeds have enrolled, owing partly to parental preference and partly to the closure of a school nearer to the city. There is little movement into or out of the school once pupils have started Year 7. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is about average at 16 per cent. There is a low proportion of pupils from ethnic minorities and those, who have English as an additional language, do not require specialist help in learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is higher than the out-of-date figure currently published and is in line with the national average at 17 per cent. About a quarter of those pupils are identified as having behavioural difficulties. Pupils are of below average attainment on entry, but national tests at the end of Year 6 and standardised tests administered by the school show that the level of attainment is rising.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The quality of education is satisfactory. Standards are below average at first, but improve as pupils move up the school. Results in GCSE are close to the national average and above average for similar schools. Further progress leads to good achievement in the sixth form, with standards reaching average. Teaching is satisfactory and good in the sixth form. New management has made a satisfactory start on addressing some inherited weaknesses and inadequate adjustment to changing circumstances, but there is much to do to achieve systematic rigour and consistency. The large budget is managed well and is bringing about improvements. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- An innovative approach has brought about worthwhile partnerships, including status as a performing arts college, which have widened curriculum choice and brought about improvements in facilities.
- The curriculum brings achievement within the reach of some pupils, who are not motivated by traditional school subjects. Careers and vocational education are very good. There is a wide and high-quality range of extra-curricular opportunities.
- Some teaching engages pupils through interesting and enjoyable activities that allow time to offer support on an individual basis.
- The improvements to the management of special educational needs are significant and the work of the pupil enhancement centre and of learning mentors helps other pupils get back on track.
- Provision in art, in specialist information and communication technology and in physical education is particularly good.
- Sixth-form provision is good because of the breadth of curriculum and consistently good teaching and relationships.
- A large budget is managed efficiently.

What could be improved

- Monitoring of systems is not regular and rigorous enough to secure consistency and governors have not ensured that issues from the previous inspection have been addressed.
- Standards, particularly literacy skills, are below average in Years 7 to 9.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory; it does not provide enough information to monitor progress, nor does it give pupils clear guidance on how to improve.
- Unduly negative attitudes and the behaviour of some pupils, especially in Years 7 and 8, disrupt learning. Teachers' use of school systems tends to contain misbehaviour, rather than correct it.
- Attendance is poor and is not well managed by the school.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory. The original buildings, with unsuitable additions, are not adequate and negatively affect attitudes.
- Provision is unsatisfactory in some aspects of design and technology (graphics, resistant materials and systems and control) and in religious education.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement is unsatisfactory, but there are extenuating circumstances. Owing in part to the closure of other schools and in part to the popularity of this school, the roll has expanded and the proportions of social disadvantage and of the extent and complexity of special educational needs have increased. These changes have caused a fall in standards and attendance and a rise in exclusions. However, prior to the recent appointment of the new headteacher, the governing body did not check that issues were being addressed. Pupils now arrive punctually at school. Improvements in history and ICT have been made. Not enough has been done to monitor departments, or to improve consistency in marking and assessment and the weaknesses in some areas of design and technology have not been addressed. On the other hand, governors have overseen innovative bids and partnerships that have radically improved choice and breadth in the curriculum.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 11 and sixth-form students at the end of Year 13 based on average point scores in GCSE and A-level/AS-level examinations.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
GCSE examinations	C	C	C	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
A-levels/AS-levels	C	D	N/a		

Results at the end of Year 9 are below average and pupils do less well than in schools where they enter with similar levels of attainment. Girls are further behind than boys. GCSE and GNVQ results are better. The dip in 2001 has been recovered, results match the national average and the school came close to meeting its target for last year. This was a particularly good achievement in 2002 when boys, who are less likely to reach average levels, considerably outnumbered girls in the year group. However, results clustered around C or D grades, indicating that some pupils were not challenged enough. The picture of better standards in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7 to 9 is reflected in work and lessons. This confirms the view of some parents that progress is too slow at first, but improves to a satisfactory rate. Standards are undermined by weakness in writing. In English, only the most competent pupils' writing is of an average standard by the end of Year 11. Standards have been low in mathematics, but are improving under new teaching approaches. Whilst standards are improving towards average in science in Years 7 to 9, they remain below average in Years 10 and 11. Standards in numeracy, affected by previous difficulties in mathematics provision, are low. Standards in ICT are low in Year 7, but average and occasionally better in other years. The best standards are in art, where pupils achieve above the nationally expected level for their age at the end of both Year 9 and Year 11. In physical education, the majority attain in line with average standards and a significant minority do better. Standards are average in citizenship, history and music. Attainment is below average in geography, but is showing improvement. In design and technology, standards are above average in food and child development, well above average in textiles, but well below average in graphics, systems and control and resistant materials. Standards are below and sometimes well below average in modern foreign languages and well below average in religious education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory overall, but with some weaknesses, particularly in attitudes to learning in Years 7 and 8 and generally in complying with uniform and keeping the site tidy.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory , but pupils are boisterous in moving round the school, which makes for unsettled starts to lessons. The behaviour of some pupils in Years 7 and 8 disrupts some lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory . Pupils work well in groups and feel confident in approaching their teachers for help.
Attendance	Attendance is poor and has got worse since the previous inspection. The management of attendance is ineffective.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7 – 9	Years 10 – 11	Years 12 – 13
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good

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

More than half of lessons are taught well and most at least satisfactorily. Learning was good or better in about half of lessons seen and very good or excellent in about a quarter. Sometimes, potentially good teaching is only satisfactory because pupils are not as interested in learning as they should be. This is more prevalent in Years 7 and 8, but occurs at times with older pupils. Teachers regain attention, but the flow of the lesson is interrupted. The work of pupils over time represents satisfactory teaching and learning. The best lessons get off to a prompt, orderly start. Pupils are clear about what is expected and good support is given to individuals. Pupils learn well when they are involved in group work and when pace is maintained by varying activity. They enjoy learning that relates to "real life". However, some pupils lose concentration whenever an activity changes. In some lessons, pupils' unduly negative attitudes hinder learning and their response is disappointing when they do not exercise self-control, or are deliberately passive. The inconsistent use of homework and assessment is unsatisfactory.

Teaching is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science. In English, the challenge of some lessons is good, but other lessons lack flair, relying on common exercises worked on at the same rate, curbing the expression and development of some pupils. Planning for individuals is often good in mathematics; the few unsatisfactory lessons are not taught at a demanding pace. Science is taught with better variety in Years 7 to 9 than in lessons with older pupils. There is very good, often excellent teaching in art. Physical education lessons are consistently good. In history and music, teaching is good in Years 10 and 11, but satisfactory with younger pupils. Geography and citizenship are satisfactory with good features. There are some weaknesses, but overall satisfactory teaching in design and technology, modern foreign languages and religious education. There is not enough consistent support in all subjects for pupils' writing. Though some teachers do it well, overall, teaching of literacy is unsatisfactory. Teaching of numeracy is good. Very good specialist teaching with back-up from other subjects, as far as availability of resources allows, means that overall teaching of ICT is good. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory because of good specialist teaching of small groups and in-class support, but not all teachers act on information available about individuals, or plan the use of support. Gifted and talented pupils are not challenged enough, especially in younger classes. Teachers work hard to overcome the disadvantages of some classrooms, which are unsuitable for learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is good . An outstanding strength is the range of provision through partnerships with other schools and colleges and alternative qualifications. Careers and vocational education and extra-curricular activities are strong. An act of worship is not provided and moments of reflection are rare and unplanned.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory . There are some good initiatives, but the response of different faculties is uneven.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are no pupils at an early stage of learning English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory , though not co-ordinated and there is no regular provision for periods of quiet reflection.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory with good support on an individual basis, but weaknesses in improving attendance and behaviour and the role of the form tutor.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher's clear-sightedness and determination inspire confidence and the leadership team is united. Astute uses of government funding and partnership arrangements are bringing about change, but there are inherited weaknesses. Line management does not secure consistency in academic and pastoral systems.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory, good in organisation and budget management, but unsatisfactory in providing for accountability and improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. Monitoring is not regular and rigorous enough to ensure consistency. Departments do not use assessment effectively. The improvement plan does not focus on the attendance problem.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. There are inherent weaknesses on site, but the school is taking advantage of all opportunities to enhance provision. For <i>best value</i> the school is strong in consulting well and it competes successfully through bids for funding, but is weak in looking outside to compare systems and outcomes and then challenging internal performance. On balance, the school's achievement of best value is satisfactory. Buildings and site are inadequate and depressing, but some recent improvements have been made in mathematics and performing arts.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good progress of older children • High expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about progress • Behaviour of some pupils • Homework • Working closely with parents

Very few parents attended the meeting and fewer than 10 per cent responded to questionnaires. The inspection team partly agrees with the views of parents, who did contribute to the inspection. Pupils do better in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7 to 9. Some teachers have high expectations, but this is not consistent enough. Information about progress is supplied, but is not accompanied by specific targets and advice about improving. Behaviour of younger pupils at times disrupts learning and homework is unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 9. The school does face difficulties in engaging with those parents, who show little interest in their children's education and, in some cases, condone their children's absence from school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SIXTH FORM

The sixth form of this large 11 – 18 comprehensive school has 149 students and numbers have grown in recent years. There are nearly twice as many students in Year 12 compared to Year 13, but with a similar number of male and female students in each year. The sixth form is part of the South East Leeds Partnership: in conjunction with two other institutions it provides an extensive range of academic and vocational courses at intermediate and foundation levels. The additional enrichment programme is limited. The school operates an open sixth-form policy, although there are guidelines on the general levels of attainment required to follow particular courses in the sixth form. Half of the students in Year 11 continue into the sixth form with a few joining from other schools within the partnership arrangement. Recent examination results in 2002 were above the national rate with 94 per cent of students achieving a pass grade and 27 per cent at A or B grade. In 2002, over 70 students continued their studies at further or higher-education establishments.

HOW GOOD THE SIXTH FORM IS

The sixth form gives satisfactory value and is cost effective. Students learn effectively and attain average results. Achievement is generally good. Students have an extensive choice from a wide range of subjects. However, they do not receive lessons in personal, social and health education and religious education. Teaching in the sixth form is good in most subjects and very good in art and design, but more generally, there are insufficient opportunities for independent study and research and students tend to rely on information provided from their teachers. Leadership and management are satisfactory and the sixth form is economically run, offering good value for money.

Strengths

- Standards in art and design are well above average.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and often very good. Teachers have good command of their subjects.
- The school offers an extensive range of courses to suit all students and the partnership arrangements have enabled some under-subscribed subjects to continue.
- Assessment is good, leading to a good response to individual needs.
- Financial management is strong.

What could be improved

- Challenging students to speak up for themselves, to engage with their peers and their teachers and to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Monitoring of students' general progress and of the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory because it lacks rigour as it relies mainly on surveying students' opinions.
- The quality and range of enrichment activities are very limited.
- Personal, social and health education and religious education are not provided.
- The accommodation is poor, both in the social areas provided and the lack of places for private study.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan. Strengths and areas for improvement in individual subjects are identified in the sections on individual subjects in the full report.

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION IN INDIVIDUAL CURRICULUM AREAS

The table below shows overall judgements about the provision in the subjects and courses that were inspected in the sixth form. Judgements are based mainly on the quality of teaching and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects in the sixth form were inspected.

Curriculum area	Overall judgement about provision, with comment
English literature	Good. Standards are in line with national averages and students achieve well because of teachers' command of their subject and how they plan to meet students' needs. Leadership and management of the subject are good.
Mathematics	Good. Examination results have been below expectations. However, improved criteria for course entry and good teaching and learning provide a firm basis for attaining higher target grades. The co-operation within the partnership schools allows students to study mathematics with a wide combination of other subjects.
Biology	Satisfactory. Standards are below average, but students make satisfactory progress given their starting points from GCSE examination. The standard of teaching is good and occasionally very good.
Art and Design	Very good. Students achieve standards well above the national expectations, supported by very good leadership and management of the subject. Teaching is very good, characterised by very good planning and resources.
Drama	Satisfactory. Standards overall are below average, although better in practical work than in written work. Good teaching leads to good learning in lessons. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of opportunities to work with professionals and visits to the theatre.
French	Good. There are many good features in teaching, but poor attendance depresses achievement.
Business Education	Good. Good teaching ensures that students achieve well. The head of business studies provides good leadership and management.
Psychology	Satisfactory. Psychology is taught within the South East Leeds Partnership arrangements. From the limited evidence available, provision is satisfactory. The subject is growing in popularity.
Physical Education	Good. Enthusiastic students respond very positively to the good teaching and make good progress.

In other subjects, work was sampled. Teaching was mainly in the range of good and very good. Very high quality teaching was seen in media studies and information technology. No teaching was unsatisfactory. The response of students was consistently good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Aspect	Comment
How well students are guided and supported	Satisfactory guidance and support are given to students entering the sixth form. Information about sixth-form courses is good. Information about career options and opportunities beyond school are good with a structured programme during tutorial sessions.
Effectiveness of the leadership and management of the sixth form	Satisfactory. Leadership and management are shared because of the partnership arrangements. The partnership director gives clear strategic and co-ordinated direction. Financial planning is strong and focused on improving teaching and learning.

STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

What students like about the sixth form	What they feel could be improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teaching is good and students are challenged• Teachers are accessible and give extra help when needed• The range of choice of subjects suits their talents• Students enjoy the sixth form and the collegiate partnership arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The space available for independent study• Some students feel they are not treated as adults• The quality and range of enrichment activities• Support and guidance for personal problems and future career choices

Students are positive about the sixth form and the wide variety of opportunities afforded. The facilities for independent study are unsatisfactory and there is a lack of enrichment activities. Students receive help and guidance for their career choices through the tutorial programme. Teachers are available for help and guidance, but this is often limited due to staff teaching at different establishments.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Results at the end of Year 9 are below average compared with national results in tests in English, mathematics and science. This has been the trend for several years. In English and mathematics, pupils achieve in line with similar schools, based on the free school meal entitlement indicator, but attainment is lower than similar schools in science. In comparison with schools where pupils enter with a similar level of attainment in end of Year 6 tests, results are below average in English and well below average in the other two subjects. However, in work seen during the inspection there were signs of improvement on previous results in mathematics and science. Girls are further behind than boys in comparison with national results based on gender.
2. Standards are better at the end of Year 11. Results are usually at the national average for GCSE, except for a sharp dip in the five or more A*-C passes category in 2001, recovered in 2002. Matching the national average in 2002 was a good achievement as two-thirds of the year group are boys and national results show that boys are less likely to reach average levels. Pupils at Rodillian achieved higher than the average for schools where pupils began Year 10 with similar attainment. They matched or bettered results in schools with similar levels of free school meal entitlement. This is a creditable achievement. The school came close to achieving its target for A*-C passes. A large proportion of pupils pass at the C/D level at GCSE. Forty-three per cent of all passes in 2002 were at these two grades. This indicates that some pupils with the potential for higher attainment are not challenged enough. The gender difference is reversed at this level; boys achieve less well than girls at the end of Year 11. Pupils' progress is good between the end of Year 9 and the end of Year 11, but the improvement is, to some extent, exaggerated by results not being as good as they could be at the end of Year 9.
3. The difference in results at the end of Years 9 and 11 is reflected in inspection evidence. In lessons, standards in Years 10 and 11 are significantly better than in Years 7 to 9. Standards attained by older pupils are above average in about 40 per cent of lessons. This is almost twice the proportion of above average standards attained in Years 7 to 9. Standards are below average in 40 per cent of lessons in Years 7 to 9, as compared with 30 per cent below average in Years 10 and 11. Standards in Year 8 were lowest overall; in Year 9, considerably better standards are achieved. This reflects the view expressed by parents that progress is too slow at first, but speeds up and that there is not enough challenge for pupils capable of high attainment.
4. Standards in work seen are mainly average and below. Literacy is below average. The content of what pupils write is usually adequate, but is undermined by inaccuracy and sometimes by poor presentation. There is a weakness in extended writing. Standards of writing are weak in all years, except for the most competent pupils. Many pupils are not able to adapt their writing to the varying demands of the curriculum. In some subjects, opportunities for writing are limited because of the use of worksheets, which restrict the development of pupils' extended writing skills. Apart from the work of the highest-attaining pupils, writing lacks fluency and the number of pupils, who have problems with spelling, punctuation and grammar, is high. Reading standards are better and broadly in line with expectations, with most pupils being able to read accurately. Standards of speaking and listening are also broadly average, but there are pupils, who lack confidence when called upon to speak formally to the class or to a large group. This impairs standards in English that are below average and only the

most competent pupils attain average standards by the end of Year 11. In mathematics, standards have been well below average, but are showing signs of improvement in response to new teaching approaches. Numeracy is average. Science is improving in Years 7 to 9 to about average, but remains below average in Years 10 and 11. Standards are improving to average in information and communication technology (ICT).

5. The best standards are in art, where pupils achieve above the nationally expected level for their age at the end of both Year 9 and Year 11. Pupils are confident with a range of materials, interpret constructively and reach a high level of technique. In physical education, the majority attain at least in line with average standards and a significant minority do better. Standards are average in citizenship, history and music. Poor listening skills inhibit progress through discussion in citizenship. Improvement in history is being brought about by a new course in Year 10.
6. Attainment is below average in geography, but with distinct improvement supported by good fieldwork skills. There is a split in design and technology, where standards are above average in food and child development and well above average in textiles, but well below average in graphics, systems and control and resistant materials. Standards are below and sometimes well below average in modern foreign languages and are well below average in religious education.
7. There was no evidence of difference in the standards attained by the small proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, except that two pupils of Chinese heritage made high-quality contributions in two lessons in English and drama. No pupils, who have English as an additional language, are at an early stage where extra help would be required.
8. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make reasonable progress in most subjects. In departments and faculties where teaching is usually good, such as science, art and design, history, music and physical education, pupils with special educational needs make good progress alongside their peers. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve well when their specific needs are met skilfully in groups apart from the main class. This is evident for those pupils, who receive help in reading, working in a small group over a six-month period. Occasionally, in lessons where there is insufficient support for them, pupils with special educational needs do not make enough progress. The inconsistencies in the quality of help they receive accounts for pupils with special educational needs making satisfactory rather than good progress.

Sixth form

9. Comparisons with national figures are not available for 2002, but results improved significantly on 2001 when they fell below levels achieved in 2000 and were below average. The pass rate at A level rose to 94 per cent in 2002 from 86 per cent in 2001 and the proportion of higher grade passes doubled to just over a quarter of entries. In 2002, a very high proportion (81 per cent) of courses returned a 100 per cent pass rate. Over the past three years, the overall pass rate at A level has risen steadily, as have average point scores. The range of A level courses entered has risen. Results in vocational courses are lower, but this reflects lower attainment on entry and many of these students would not otherwise have participated in post-16 education in school. Art, textiles, business studies, economics, English literature, history, music and physics have maintained results at A and B grades, above the school average. Graphics, chemistry and sociology show a trend of improvement. English language has seen a fall in the proportion of A and B grades, but has included more students with lower attainment on entry. The school buys in a nationally available service to compare how

well it does in improving students' final attainment from their starting point based on attainment at the end of Year 11. In 2002, Rodillian was placed in the top 25 per cent of schools participating in the service.

10. In the subjects selected for detailed inspection, a trend of improving standards is detectable. The strongest subject is art, where standards are well above average and have been so for some time. The breadth and sensitivity of students' technique are supported by thorough research and interpretation of the work of other artists. Work in English, particularly literature, shows improved levels and results in 2002 are likely to reflect above average attainment when comparisons are available. English language standards are a little below average, but reflect good progress from the start of the course. Previously small numbers taking business study courses all passed and the increasing uptake of an expanded range of courses promises well. Work seen is in line with average standards. Signs of improvement can also be seen in mathematics and the focus science subject, biology. In the recent past, very few students have taken mathematics. Attainment on entry was very low, so that there was a high rate of failure to gain any grade at AS level. However, under the new partnership arrangement and with more realistic entry requirements at the start, there is evidence of a surge of momentum in the courses and average standards are being achieved. A level results in biology have been below or well below average, but 2002 results at AS level at end of Year 12, when a quarter of the class gained high grades, give reasonable expectation of improvement at A level. Results are just below average in A level physical education, average at AS level and work in progress is in line with average. Small numbers taking drama have gained below average results. The inspection detected a significant difference between low standards in written work and good standards in practical. Very small numbers have been able to take French thanks to consortium arrangements, but standards obtained by Rodillian students have been mainly low.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The attitudes of pupils towards school are generally satisfactory. They mostly respond well when teachers' expectations are high and demonstrate a good work ethic and determination to succeed when challenged. Pupils' attitudes to learning were less than satisfactory in just over one in 10 lessons overall, most frequently in Years 7 and 8. Older pupils also showed a lack of interest at times. For example, in some English lessons, despite good teaching, they were not willing to answer questions and only gave monosyllabic responses when pushed by the teacher. There is a policy about pupils wearing uniform, but staff do not consistently enforce it, with the consequence that many pupils ignore the school's policy and wear their own version. Many pupils show a disregard for the school environment, evident from the amount of litter that is strewn around the site.
12. Relationships between pupils and with staff are satisfactory. Most pupils are confident about approaching members of staff if they are experiencing difficulties with their academic work or have personal problems. Opportunities for collaborative or group work to further develop pupils' social skills are part of many lessons. On occasions, relationships can be strained when unkind remarks are made between pupils, particularly when pupils make an intelligent response in lessons. Most staff discouraged these remarks. Pupils are encouraged, through debate, to express their feelings on a wide range of moral and social issues. Most are tolerant of the views and opinions of their peers that differ from their own.
13. The standard of behaviour within the school is satisfactory overall. Behaviour around the school can be boisterous. Some areas are bottlenecks and very crowded at times. There was too little staff presence on the corridors to control conduct at lesson change

over times. Most pupils behave well in lessons and are willing to learn. However, a significant number of pupils have difficulty in sustaining their concentration in lessons and do not always see the value of education. This sometimes leads to disruptive behaviour that affects the learning of others. This is particularly evident in Years 7 and 8 where some groups, despite teachers' good class-management skills, consistently fail to demonstrate an acceptable standard of behaviour.

14. Incidents of bullying, when brought to the attention of the staff, are effectively dealt with. The inspection found that pupils are confident about getting help if needed.
15. The number of fixed-term exclusions has risen significantly since the previous inspection. There were 193 fixed-term exclusions involving 117 pupils during 2001/02. This is high compared with national statistics, but lower than other schools in the local area. One pupil was permanently excluded. Since the previous inspection, the area that pupils come from has changed significantly and there is a larger school population. These factors have contributed to the rise in exclusions. However, this is also a reflection of the problems that the school encounters with lack of access to external behaviour support services. Pupils often have to wait 12 months for a place in a specialist behaviour unit. The pupil enhancement centre makes a significant contribution towards reducing exclusions and represents very good value for money. However, not all teachers adopt the behaviour management strategies devised by the pupil enhancement centre to support pupils being reintegrated back into mainstream education, which undermines the effectiveness of the work carried out in the centre.
16. The development of pupils' initiative and personal responsibility is unsatisfactory. There are limited opportunities for pupils to accept responsibility within the school. The School Council meets regularly, but some pupils feel that it is not a forum where they can represent their peers effectively. Pupils in Year 8 act as school receptionists and some pupils in Year 11 have volunteered to act as mentors to Year 7 pupils this year. Many pupils have a tendency to be passive rather than active learners. Teachers have to work hard to stimulate pupils' interest in their studies, motivate them to learn and encourage them to complete their homework and GCSE coursework.
17. Attendance is poor and well below the national average. There has been a decline since the previous inspection when it was in line with national averages. Over the last three years, attendance has declined by 0.5 per cent each year and the gap between the school and national averages has increased by now to 1.6 per cent. Attendance has not been identified as a priority in the school development plan, although the school has in fact devoted considerable attention to the issue. About 40 per cent of pupils attend, on average, for less than nine tenths of the year and 20 per cent miss one fifth, or more, of the year.
18. The school has successfully addressed the key issue of punctuality from the last inspection. Though there are still transport difficulties, most pupils arrive on time. If lessons are late starting this is generally due to the distance pupils have to move between lessons. However, there are a number of pupils, who have to be chivvied to go to lessons, particularly after break and lunchtimes.
19. There are strengths within the school in the supportive relationships that exist between pupils with special educational needs and their peers. This is apparent in athletics lessons where pupils help their peers with physical disabilities with impressive sensitivity. Similarly, several Year 11 pupils volunteer to listen to younger pupils read each week.
20. Most pupils with special educational needs trust the learning support assistants, who work with them regularly, and these relationships make a major contribution to keeping

pupils motivated and working in lessons. Nevertheless, there is a significant minority of pupils, some of whom have identified emotional and behavioural needs, who are regularly awkward and challenge their teachers. Not all teachers consistently apply the school's positive strategies for managing this behaviour and on these occasions relationships deteriorate to confrontation.

Sixth form

21. The majority of students have positive attitudes to the school and to their work. They are keen to attend lessons and appreciate the help given to them by staff. However, a small minority does not attend regularly, which affects their learning and achievement. At present, arrangements for monitoring attendance are satisfactory, but as information is only shared weekly with partner schools, this means that delays occur. A new electronic system is proposed, which the school hopes will improve the situation.
22. Behaviour in lessons is always at least good. However, quite a lot of students are not active participants in class discussions, they lack confidence and are tentative when asked to express opinions.
23. Students' relationships with their peers and staff are good. By Year 13, students from the different establishments mix easily, although prior to this, school groups and factions are still evident in the common room. Currently, many students do not take responsibility for their own learning and are too dependent of their teachers, though in some subjects they respond better than in others to challenge and high expectation.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

24. Teaching is satisfactory. More than half of lessons are taught well, most at least satisfactorily, and learning is good or better in a little over half of lessons seen and very good or excellent in about a quarter. Sometimes, good teaching only elicits satisfactory learning because pupils are not as ready to learn as they should be. They allow themselves to be distracted. Teachers recall pupils' attention and usually succeed in regaining it, but the pace and flow of the lesson are interrupted. This is a more common problem with younger pupils, mainly in Years 7 and 8, but it does sometimes occur with older pupils. The better quality of learning of older pupils is reflected in the difference in results by the end of Year 9 and by the end of Year 11. The work of pupils over time represents satisfactory teaching and learning. Teaching is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science. In English, the challenge of some lessons is good, but other lessons lack flair, for example, relying on whole-class exercises worked on at the same rate, curbing the expression and development of some pupils. Planning for individual needs is often good in mathematics; the few unsatisfactory lessons arise from inexperienced behaviour management, or not working at demanding pace. Science teaching is satisfactory, with room for improvement in the variety of approach and in encouraging pupils to make links between what they learn in Years 7 to 9. Teaching of basic skills is satisfactory overall, although there is a weakness in teaching literacy, in terms of writing, in Years 7 to 9.

Start of lessons

25. Pupils are often not ready to learn when they arrive at lessons. Some teachers get over this by having well-established routines for entering, sitting down and engaging in an introductory task. The majority of lessons are started well, but some are delayed.

Support for individual learning

26. Pupils often learn well when they have access to individual support. The wisdom of the school's decision to employ additional support staff was borne out in a Year 10 mathematics lesson when learning in a small class was enhanced as the teacher, a

student teacher and a learning support assistant were able to support and challenge all pupils. When teachers' planning and preparation lead to the involvement of all pupils, as in an excellent Year 10 art lesson, the teacher can use time very well to circulate and advise individuals. Use of time is variable, but is satisfactory overall.

Involving pupils in their learning

27. Year 11 pupils engaged readily in a project about starting a new shop in business studies. The teacher had prepared them to cope well. They knew how to make an action plan, how to assess opportunities and evaluate competition. On the other hand, learning was unsatisfactory in Year 11 design and technology (resistant materials) because pupils had not been shown how to plan work methodically. A teacher of Spanish consistently builds pupils' involvement through games and competitions conducted in the foreign language and encourages them with generous praise. Some teachers use more effective methods than others. Overall, this aspect of teaching is satisfactory.

Working in groups

28. Well-organised group work is effective in engaging pupils, often more successfully than whole-class teaching, which allows some not to participate. This method allows teachers to decide where help is most needed. It was used well in a Year 7 science lesson; groups were clear about what they had to do and capable of making progress whilst the teacher circulated. In a very good food lesson in Year 8, the teacher organised small teams of pupils, who had to decide on allocating jobs to process sandwich making efficiently. The teams thought about the task well and competed enthusiastically to produce the best results. Not all lessons are planned so well, so that this aspect is only satisfactory on balance.

Varying activity

29. Offering a variety of activities maintains pace and interest. However, even in well-taught lessons, pupils fuss and chatter as soon as the teacher's introduction ends and they are required to begin work. Reflecting on this habitual delay, an effective teacher was interested in the possibility of signalling a very clear break between stages of the lesson, allowing a short respite, but then expecting intensive concentration.

Literacy

30. Strategies are being implemented in some subject areas to respond to pupils' weakness in writing, but this is not consistent and frequent enough yet. Good practice, for example, was seen in music where pupils write about what they have learned at the end of lessons and in Year 10 mathematics when some high-achieving pupils wrote explanations of investigative work. However, in some other teaching, opportunities were often missed for correcting spelling and grammar. In one subject, the only writing undertaken was a short title prefacing graphical work and simple annotations to a text. In another subject, nearly all the writing seen was in the form of short responses to questions and the presentation and quality were unsatisfactory. The impact of the literacy strategy on pupils' standards of writing is, as yet, unsatisfactory.

Numeracy

31. The introduction of the national strategy is going well and appropriate opportunities, for example in calculations in science and fieldwork skills in geography, are being taken to teach the skill well and improve standards.

Use of ICT

32. Teaching is of high quality in specialist lessons, with good access to up-to-date equipment, better than at the time of the previous inspection. However, opportunities in other subjects are still limited by resources and accommodation available.

Learning by different groups of pupils

33. Good learning by high-attaining pupils was seen in mathematics when, in a Year 9 lesson, they were grouped together and competed at an intensive pace. In history, some Year 10 pupils were asked questions that caused them to go more deeply into source material about public health at the start of last century. On the whole, though, gifted or talented pupils are not challenged sufficiently, especially in Years 7 to 9. For example, in English, it is only the most able, who achieve average standards. The quality of teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs in the main school varies considerably. The balance of strengths and weaknesses means that it is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by learning support assistants, but sometimes the teachers do not know individual learning plans as well as they should, or they are uncertain about how to make best use of the learning support assistants. In a personal, social and health education lesson with pupils from several tutor groups, two assistants worked well to develop pupils' social skills and raise their self-esteem. It is impressive that such a big school does not lose sight of individual needs. When teaching is excellent teachers take full account of individual education plans and work closely with support staff while maintaining a cracking pace and high level of challenge. Specialist teaching in small groups usually helps pupils to learn at a good rate. However, small group sessions are too long, so pupils' interest and motivation lag in the middle of sessions. There are a few pupils, who have a mother tongue that is not English. None of them are at an early stage of acquiring English and they learn as well as others. Teachers' expectations of different groups are mainly satisfactory, but not with regard to gifted and talented pupils.

Assessment

34. This is unsatisfactory. Teachers too rarely provide pupils with guidance on how to improve through focusing on subject-related targets. Weaknesses in literacy skills are infrequently corrected. Except in art, ICT and physical education, assessment systems are marred by variation in the depth and quality of day-to-day marking.

Homework

35. Inconsistencies in Years 7 to 9 in routine setting and the quality of homework mean that homework does not support learning properly or extend the most able. The situation improves in Years 10 and 11 when pupils have to meet coursework requirements. Homework is unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 9, but satisfactory overall.

Unduly negative attitudes on the part of pupils

36. These significantly detract from learning at times and, when they occur, they are a disappointing response to teachers, who are willing to share ideas and experiences. They are more readily detectable amongst younger pupils, but sometimes surface in lessons in Years 10 and 11. A well-planned music lesson was wasted when Year 7 failed to settle and their behaviour deteriorated, with several individuals showing no self-control. A group of girls in Year 8 German did not learn well because they chatted despite the teacher's lively approach. Too often, pupils give up too easily and wait passively for the teacher's help. The resistance of some pupils to being involved was shown in Year 9 food when the teacher posed a question to a pupil in order to draw her into the discussion. "Why me?" came the resentful reply. Detachment was vividly illustrated in a Year 11 mathematics lesson when pupils filled the two back rows, leaving empty desks between themselves and the teacher. This showed the importance of implementing the school's policy on seating. In mathematics with a small class of Year 8 pupils, very few carried their personal organisers in which to enter their homework, or refer to their targets. Pupils have a tendency to be "downbeat" about school, without justification. Tellingly, pupils in a Year 7 personal, social and health education lesson unthinkingly associated negative feelings with being in school, even identifying that lesson as "boring", when in fact they were clearly deeply engaged by it

and were learning well. Learning is unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and satisfactory overall.

Using “real-life” situations and different learning styles

37. The tendency to be negative was overcome in some good lessons. Learning was often good when pupils could see its relevance beyond the lesson itself. This was especially clear in classes in hairdressing and beauty at Joseph Priestley College. Here, a salon environment was completely replicated. The learning involved role-playing successful and unsuccessful approaches to customers and had a double benefit. Not only did it give pupils ideas about providing service successfully, it also equipped them with social and negotiating skills they could use in school and in their lives generally. Learning was good in Year 11 child development when pupils drew on their previous learning and their actual knowledge of young relations to compile ideas about aspects of development in 0 – 5 year old children. Pupils were invited to combine visual learning with verbal when they sketched ideas put in their minds by images in a poem in Year 10 English. The teacher’s creation of an excellent *storyboard* in art for Year 8 to discuss excited pupils’ interest; as a result, they engaged in high-level analysis and creative response to *pop art*.

Accommodation

38. Unsatisfactory accommodation is a disadvantage that contributes to some of the weaknesses in learning, for example, allowing pupils to become boisterous in crowded areas, often being uncomfortable and generally depressing expectations about school. Some classrooms are in a poor state of repair and some are cramped and have bad light and poor acoustics. However, to their great credit, the efforts of teachers usually prevent the surroundings having as much impact as might be expected.

Sixth form

39. Teaching is good. All teachers observed demonstrate secure subject knowledge and convey enthusiasm for the subject. They take the opportunity that sixth-form teaching offers to form relationships with their students that are very supportive of learning. A difficulty observed is that the commendable willingness of teachers to help, combined with a lack of confidence on the part of many students, sometimes leads to rather passive learning situations. Consequently the advances made by students are limited because they constantly depend on the teacher to tell them what to think.
40. Partnership teaching arrangements with other schools are showing signs of working well in mathematics. Staff encourage students to approach any mathematics teacher for assistance, irrespective of where the class is taught, reducing any disadvantage arising from the class teacher being based elsewhere and contributing to a sense of common purpose. In biology, there is sometimes a good level of challenge to individual students through questioning that makes them think independently, but, at times, the teacher’s input dominates too much. The energy that imbues the business studies department is manifested in teaching that is well planned and supportive and in helpful marking; both lead to good learning. Physical education is very well founded in very good relationships that give students clear encouragement by valuing their efforts, but students do not quite break free of the habit of undue dependence. Drama teaching contributes to improving standards in the subject through lessons that are well planned to cover the ground at a good pace and through effective assessment in which students are involved. Very good teaching in art extends beyond stimulating and succinct introductions to lead on to individualised tuition that results in very high levels of challenge and progress. Teaching is good in English, with highly competent planning accompanied by an insight into individuals’ needs, but again, students seldom challenge the teacher’s interpretations of text. In French, good opportunities are provided to use increasingly complex structures of language, supported by homework

and marking. However, learning is noticeably limited in French by the capacity of students to cope with the high level of study required. It is also the case that in a number of subjects, students have initial difficulty in adjusting to the demanding level of study required.

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

41. The overall design of the curriculum is a strength of the school, as is its careful management and the way it is kept under review. The school covers the national curriculum well and broadens it to allow a number of different pathways for pupils in Years 10 and 11.
42. The curriculum for Years 10 and 11 has undergone considerable change since the previous inspection, which has resulted in breadth that is very responsive to pupils' needs. Some students follow a course of study that will lead to them taking over 10 GCSE examinations, while others take a mixture of GCSE examination courses and vocationally orientated courses. Introduced in September 2002, GCSE applied science is proving a course that motivates pupils. From September 2002, the South Leeds Partnership, with another school and a college of further education, offers a wide range of vocational courses. The partnership arrangements are outstandingly well co-ordinated with the core programme followed in school so that pupils' learning is widely varied, but uninterrupted.
43. Several recent initiatives have increased choices for pupils less motivated by an academic curriculum and most now receive a curriculum suitable to their needs. Links with a local college enable pupils to extend their vocational experience very successfully on courses such as 'hair and beauty' and 'motor vehicle maintenance'. Teachers, support staff and pupils are enthused by the recently provided youth award course, which is successfully helping pupils to learn practical skills, organise their time and assume responsibility for practical tasks. However, this is limited to one group and some pupils, who are not involved, do not have the ideal balance for them between a vocational and academic curriculum. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs with opportunities for withdrawal for individual or small-group tuition in the specialist area in the school, as well as a good level of extra support in some lessons. To increase the confidence of these pupils, there is a programme to develop social skills and pupils' self-esteem, as well as paired reading between older and younger pupils. In general, the school seeks to make the curriculum fit the needs and aspirations of all pupils so equal opportunity is good.
44. The importance of literacy has been recognised and the school has encouraged departments to plan support into the curriculum. Most subjects draw attention to specialist words and phrases in spoken and written language, but not all subjects provide enough support or opportunity to develop writing skills satisfactorily. Numeracy is taught well. The work of the mathematics department is supported well in a number of subject areas where calculations and data are involved. As befits a school with arts college status, creative arts are of high quality and very well managed. The range of courses is good and expanding into vocational areas.
45. Careers education and guidance are very good. Students are introduced to the world of work and higher education in a well co-ordinated programme. The taught activities provide good support at the key transition points in the students' lives, particularly at the end of Year 9 and the end of Year 11. A specialist team of teachers, who are well supported in terms of material and advice by the careers co-ordinator, delivers the programme.

46. The curriculum is very much enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Many staff devote much time and energy to providing opportunities for students to extend their involvement and skills in a wide variety of subjects. There are a large number of sporting events, musical activities and creative arts classes, which are very well supported by the students. Visits to theatres, fieldwork trips and after-school revision clubs enhance learning.
47. The school has very strong links with local further- and higher-education institutions, as well as good relationships with their partner primary schools.
48. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and culture development is satisfactory. The school is aware of areas that need to be further developed to ensure that the experience of all pupils is positive and enriching.
49. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. The school has not audited or planned for this aspect carefully and, as a result, opportunities are often missed. Some subjects have identified points where spiritual development can occur. Good examples are found in geography and science where consideration of the power of nature and the origins of the universe provides opportunities for reflection. The school organises one main assembly per week for each year group. Whilst assemblies often make a positive contribution to pupils' moral and social development, the spiritual element is weaker. During the inspection, the assemblies seen were of a high quality, but did not include an act of worship. The short morning registration period does not allow assembly themes to be developed through discussion and debate. There are no moments of reflection or acts of worship. This is a breach of statutory regulations.
50. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' moral development. The school has a moral code and rules of behaviour, but behaviour does not consistently follow this. The personal, social and health education programme makes a significant contribution to moral development. Pupils in Year 10, for example, have received a presentation from the Fire Service about the dangers of joyriding and Year 9 pupils are studying crime and its affect on society. Moral choices are discussed in English when considering the marriage of John and Elizabeth Proctor in 'The Crucible'. Opportunities arise in science when studying pollution, for example, but a shortage of teaching time restricts opportunities for meaningful debate.
51. Provision for pupils' social development is satisfactory. Opportunities are taken in many lessons to develop group work skills. This is particularly evident in physical education, music and drama. In modern foreign languages, collaborative work is not systematically planned. There are no social areas within the school and this restricts the opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills. The school council meets half-termly, but many pupils say they are not aware of its role within the school.
52. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. In personal, social and health education lessons, pupils study for example, the diverse nature of British society, which addresses issues such as racism and refugees. In English, pupils are encouraged to understand the background to Martin Luther King's speeches and poetry from other cultures. Art and music make a significant contribution to this aspect of pupils' education, further extended by extra-curricular activities. There is a strong emphasis within modern foreign languages on extending pupils' awareness of different cultures, such as transport systems in Munich and architecture in Barcelona, which contributes to understanding European culture. Multi-cultural awareness on a global basis is not a strong feature of the school.

Sixth form

53. Curricular provision is good. The school has broadened its provision considerably in recent years. This is because of the South East Leeds Partnership arrangements that are in place. This enables a wide variety of Advanced Supplementary and Advanced Level subjects to be offered together with single and double award AVCE courses and intermediate GNVQ awards. In order to increase student choice some subjects are offered during twilight or evening sessions. This range ensures that students' preferences are met and offers good opportunities. This post-16 partnership was the first to be developed and it is commendable that it is continuing to be expanded at the same time as a new 14-16 partnership begins. Some students benefit from curriculum enrichment opportunities through the youth award courses linked to work placements. However, despite this wide choice, students do not receive lessons in personal, social and health education or in religious education. This is a statutory breach, as is the lack of provision for a daily act of collective worship.
54. Access to the sixth form is explained to Year 11 pupils and through the sixth-form study guide. The entry requirements for each course are clear and students are able to talk to sixth-form teachers about their choices. However, students do not have the opportunity to sample 'new' subjects such as psychology and, as a result, some find the change in approach and demands of the subject overwhelming. There are plans, for next September, to respond to this need. The mathematics department is reviewing the suitability of courses offered in light of previous low recruitment and attainment. Students do not always cope with studying at different places and this leads a minority of students to change their subject choices during the early part of Year 12.
55. Students receive good guidance on future paths to higher education or work. Structured information is given in tutorial sessions, including visits from outside speakers on a range of subjects, for example finance. Students are encouraged to attend university open days and others are helped to find work placements and apprenticeships. However, at present, there is a limited work experience programme only available to some in Year 12. The quality of the school's enrichment programme is barely satisfactory, with few students involved in activities. There is some subject-based enrichment through visits to theatres.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

56. The educational and personal support and guidance for pupils are satisfactory. However, the progress noted at the previous inspection in the definition of the role of the form tutor has not continued. There is no overall tutorial programme and not enough time is allocated to enable tutors to carry out their responsibilities effectively. Not all tutors are committed to the pastoral role and this leads to unevenness in the quality of pastoral care and support for behaviour pupils receive. A recently introduced pastoral management initiative has led to the redefinition of roles and responsibilities. Heads of year are accountable for monitoring the quality of the work of tutors, but consistency is lacking.
57. The time that tutors have with their pupils is too brief to encourage the development of constructive relationships and, in any case, the effort put in by tutors is widely variable. The system depends largely on heads of year having a very good knowledge of pupils in their year group. They work hard managing behaviour and attendance and are the main point of contact with parents. The revised behaviour-management system has placed an additional heavy workload on them. Learning mentors are working with 80 pupils in Year 10 to raise achievement. Other staff are allocated as study mentors to pupils in Year 11, who are identified as requiring additional support in preparing for examinations.

58. The personal, social and health education course effectively supports pupils' personal development and covers a wide range of topics well. Many outside speakers support the programme, which is taught by a team of specialist teachers. Pupils are prepared for the next stage of education through a very good careers education programme that raises their awareness of the importance of making appropriate choices when deciding on subjects to study at GCSE, further education, or in a future career. Excellence Challenge funding is used well to promote the aspirations of pupils to enter higher education. This includes visits and residential courses at universities.
59. Alternative curriculum arrangements for disaffected pupils in Years 10 and 11 include extended work placements and attendance at local further education colleges. These arrangements are good and enable pupils to continue to participate in worthwhile experiences that develop them on a personal level.
60. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are unsatisfactory. Attendance levels are declining. The school has supplemented the salary of the education welfare officer in order to make the post full time. Good use is made of data from a computerized system to identify decline in attendance by individuals. Improving or full attendance is rewarded, but practice is inconsistent across the school. Learning mentors play an important role in encouraging pupils to regularly attend school and continue with their studies. Currently, there is no provision for pupils' homes to be contacted on the first day of absence. The school is now in receipt of funding to install a new computerized system that will mean attendance can be monitored at each lesson and Internet home-call service will be used to check on students absent at the start of the day.
61. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are unsatisfactory. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour are recorded centrally on a database and senior managers are able to monitor them. The new behaviour management system of yellow and red cards is overused. Referrals from some departments are for relatively trivial incidents, which erodes the effectiveness of the system. Too many pupils are referred for detentions that are now unwieldy to manage, for instance, as many as 54 pupils were present on one occasion. Overuse also devalues the sanction. Some teachers see behaviour management as the responsibility of the pastoral team with the result that heads of year spend too much time dealing with these pupils, only for re-offending to occur because the class teacher has played no part in changing the situation. An analysis of the use of cards has been carried out, but as yet there is no consensus on the criteria for use. The merits system is underused, the main focus being on negative rather than rewarding positive behaviour.
62. In each year, a small group of pupils exhibit behaviour that is cause for concern. Strategies for the early identification of these pupils, particularly in Years 7 to 9, and support systems to ensure they are able to remain in mainstream education are in place. However, when pupils attempt reintegration with mainstream lessons after spending time in the enhancement centre, not all teaching staff adopt the strategies developed to support these pupils and this negates a lot of the work the centre has undertaken. Learning mentors play a very positive role in helping pupils to adjust their behaviour and improve attitudes to learning. Demand outstrips supply. They have a waiting list.
63. The internal exclusion unit, used as an alternative to external exclusion, is also used to receive pupils removed from lessons. Pupils do not follow the academic work of the lessons they are missing. Pupils removed from lessons remain for the rest of day and miss the rest of their educational entitlement. This provision is unsatisfactory in its present form. Examination of the log showed some instances of fairly trivial misbehaviour that led to removal from the lesson.

64. The arrangements for child protection are good. Arrangements for looked-after children are in place and good links are made with the relevant external agencies. The procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory, except that insufficient attention has been paid to ensuring safe movement around the corridors and up and down steps for pupils with sensory impairments. Risk assessments are not fully in place in all departments. Other minor matters of health and safety were brought to the attention of the senior management.
65. Academic guidance is satisfactory, but with some unsatisfactory features. Several departments have well-developed and coherent assessment systems, which allow pupils' performance to be recorded and tracked. These subjects use information about prior attainment to estimate potential, set targets and monitor progress. However, this is not yet whole-school practice and there are still departments where the quality of assessment is not satisfactory. Assessment of pupils by the special needs department is good.

Sixth form

66. Assessment of students' work in the sixth form is good and there is good understanding of individual students' needs. Marking is good and errors are well diagnosed. The small groups in the sixth form mean that the teachers are able to respond well to the assessment information gained to match the work to the needs of the individual students. Most departments analyse results carefully and this influences changes to teaching and learning. For example, in biology, changes were made after students were found to have weak areas in essay writing and relating one area of the syllabus with another. The art and design department makes very good diagnosis of and response to individual students' needs and their progress and achievement are monitored regularly. Some departments, for example psychology and drama, do not make sufficient use of assessment data in order to monitor students' progress from GCSE to Advanced Supplementary and Advanced Level. Curriculum planning in the sixth form is closely geared to the anticipated outcome of pupils in earlier key stages, therefore, making good use of assessment information to guide curricular planning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

67. Parents' views of the quality and effectiveness of what the school provides and achieves are satisfactory. Nine parents attended the meeting prior to the inspection and 8 per cent of parents completed the questionnaire on parent's views. This response is very low and is representative of a problem the school faces.
68. The parents, who responded to the questionnaire and attended the meeting, feel their child is making good progress and that the school has high expectations of its pupils. They would feel comfortable about approaching the school if they had any individual concerns. The general concerns they expressed were about the amount of homework that children receive, the information they receive about their child's progress and the ability of the school to work closely with its parents. A third of respondents expressed concerns about the behaviour of pupils.
69. Inspectors mainly agreed with parents' positive comments. The team felt pupils were making satisfactory progress, though it is better in Years 9 to 11 than in Years 7 and 8. The setting of homework was unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 9, but was satisfactory in extending pupils' learning in Years 10 and 11. Some pupils within the school have behavioural difficulties that affect the learning of others.

70. The quality of information provided for parents, particularly about the progress of their child, is satisfactory. Learning mentors and behavioural support staff undertake home visits and are in contact with parents on a regular basis. Heads of year involve parents when problems occur and try to develop a partnership with them in the education of their child. Parents receive an annual report followed by a consultation evening. These evenings are not well attended. The school is considering changing the format and location of these to more effectively meet the needs of its parents. Annual reports are well presented, though the quality of information they contain varies. A range of letters is sent home to parents when concerns arise about attendance or behaviour, as well as letters of congratulation when pupils have achieved well. However, the low use of merits means that the majority of letters sent home are negative in tone.
71. The contribution of parents to children's learning is satisfactory. The Parent Teacher Association organises both social and fundraising events. It is consulted by the school on a range of matters, such as the anti-bullying and homework policy. The school values its contributions. There is a relatively low attendance at parents' consultation evenings, about 55 – 60 per cent on average. Many parents are dependent on public transport and have difficulties accessing the school. Currently, the school has no arrangements to meet parents other than in school, though a recent introductory evening for new parents was successfully held in the primary school their children were coming from. A significant minority of parents do not ensure that their child attends school on a regular basis or completes their homework or coursework. This reduces the effectiveness of the school in ensuring that these pupils are able to achieve their potential in external examinations.
72. The senior learning support assistant and the special educational needs co-ordinator have good relationships with most parents. They discuss with them how families can best support pupils at home with reaching specific learning targets.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

73. On balance, leadership and management are satisfactory, although there are some unsatisfactory elements of management at all levels. The headteacher has made a sound start and enjoys the confidence of the school community. He is clear-sighted in knowing that the school has not got to where he wants it to be. He has written a new improvement plan, building on the strengths of specialist status and various partnerships and focusing on appropriate priorities, except that it does not propose fresh action on the attendance problem. He has restructured the leadership team. The team is providing good, united leadership. Strengths and successes can be seen. The school is involved in an impressive range of initiatives entailing additional grant funding. The pupil enhancement centre is a good response to the need to improve motivation of learners. Learning mentors are working well. In response to accurate analysis of the needs of learners, additional support staff have been employed. The school is highly skilled at developing constructive partnerships to extend the range of opportunities open to pupils. A well-founded initiative to improve the quality of teaching has begun to improve standards, notably in Years 7 to 9. The curriculum is well planned. Training and induction of staff are very good. These successes demonstrate a good capacity to further improve.
74. At present, the line management by the leadership team is not reaching out as fully as it should. Consequently, there is lack of cohesion at middle management level. In some faculties and subjects, strong leadership tends to be autonomous and to some extent detached from senior management. In other subjects where there is much to do to improve, managers tend to go directly to the head. English is led well, but there is no regular formal system of meetings with senior line management. In humanities,

having leaders of a lot of different areas within subjects tends to slow the pace and impetus of improvement. In aspects of design and technology and in religious education, difficulties about management have been tolerated for too long. There are inconsistencies in the way that heads of year respond to managing behaviour and exclusions, though procedures have been clarified recently. The response to poor attendance is insufficient to secure improvement. The role of the form tutor is too loosely managed to have the impact needed on pupils' motivation and compliance with school codes.

75. There is good leadership in special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator and the senior learning support assistant are a new team, who have worked together effectively and speedily to organise the provision for pupils with special educational needs, which is now satisfactory. Administrative improvements, better communications and efficient deployment of assistants are in place. These improvements make management satisfactory with the capacity to further improve through monitoring classroom use of support and the impact of initiatives.
76. Governors give whole-hearted support to the school, but again there is a mixture of strengths and weaknesses. There is a conscientiously managed committee system and regular reports are received to monitor progress and development. Financial management is particularly good; a large budget is finely balanced. Spending decisions are related to priorities and the outcomes achieved represent satisfactory value for money. Resources are good, especially in terms of ICT, but the very difficult challenges of the dilapidated and inadequate accommodation cannot be met from the normal budget, so a private finance initiative is being actively pursued. Some information that should be provided for parents is not in the school brochure. Governors are in breach of statutory requirements regarding providing personal, social and health education and religious education in the sixth form and a daily act of collective worship in the school. The most significant failure to meet statutory requirements is in respect of the action plan in response to the previous inspection report. There is no evidence that the more wide-ranging issues raised have been addressed with any long-term effect by the governing body, though improvements have been made in ICT and history. Although governors are engaged in providing an organised system of accountability, it is not yet established.
77. In terms of best value, the school is good at consulting, as witnessed by the exceptionally effective partnerships with a partner school as an arts college, with Royds School and Joseph Priestley College in providing extended curriculum opportunities 14–19 and with primary schools. It competes well, constantly looking for opportunities to bid for additional grant funding. In terms of making comparisons with other schools' performance on which it then acts and in challenging individuals and teams to do better, the school is insufficiently effective. This latter feature is particularly unsatisfactory in respect of systematically monitoring and improving the quality of teaching even though a good framework and criteria for optional application by departments have been developed.
78. There are sufficient specialist teachers in all subjects, except in religious education and technology, and the school is well supported by the non-teaching staff. Overall, the number, qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff are well matched to the demands of the curriculum in both the main school and the sixth form. Good features of the staffing are the learning mentors and behaviour support workers. Performance management is effective in supporting the professional development of the teaching staff, but challenging targets are not consistently affecting how staff teach. Arrangements for the induction of newly qualified teachers are good. A good feature of staff development is the range of support provided for staff in terms of whole-school and career needs. The school has gained Investors in People status.

79. The quality of accommodation is unsatisfactory and has an adverse effect on attitudes. Old buildings, supplemented by flat-roofed additions with design faults, provide an unattractive setting with many problems, such as water leaking through ceilings, lack of fire stops and uneven surfaces both internally and externally. The site is too small for the number of pupils now on roll. Only the old grammar school lavatories and additional changing room facilities, available during lessons only. The dining rooms are very well managed, but do not have the capacity to be a social space. Litter and dilapidation give a very bad impression. Up to 30 classrooms fail to meet minimum requirements on size and outside 'huts' are in an unacceptable condition. Unsurprisingly, both teachers and pupils find the learning environment depressing. The school is well aware of shortcomings and several initiatives are in hand to improve matters, including arrangements for more efficient cleaning. On the positive side, a new mathematics block has recently opened and the effective use of income from the school's new status as a performing arts college now provides very good accommodation for the teaching and practice of music. Many teachers have made commendable efforts to mitigate the effect of their surroundings so that most inspectors report little evidence of any negative impact on learning. The library provides good accommodation, except for the area reserved for the sixth form, which is too small for the number of students.
80. Learning resources are generally adequate, but there is some unevenness of provision. In music and the performing arts, for example, rooms have excellent state-of-the-art equipment and pupils have access to sophisticated cameras, recording and editing equipment, which they use extensively in their work. In other areas, however, textbook provision is barely adequate; the library is under-stocked (particularly for sixth-form work), while resources in technology - particularly in the workshops - are very poor. The ICT department has given a new lease of life to old computers, which are used as network terminals. The provision of ICT access both in the department and across the school is generally adequate.

Sixth Form

81. Leadership and management of the sixth form are satisfactory. The partnership arrangement is running smoothly with the partnership director monitoring and co-ordinating the various factions effectively. He chairs regular meetings, which are held between senior managers of the different establishments, ensuring clarity of vision and direction, as well as ensuring that any curriculum, timetabling or liaison problems are kept to a minimum. Within the school a head of sixth form is responsible for pastoral matters. However, within the school sixth form current monitoring of pupil progress and quality of teaching, conducted by taking an overview by surveying students' opinions, lacks rigour and is unsatisfactory.
82. Subject leadership is generally good, which ensures that links between the partnership schools are effective when teaching is shared. Heads of department have a clear view of students' progress. However, tracking does not occur in psychology. As a result, some students have not been properly advised in respect of studying this subject.
83. A detailed analysis of funding is carried out to ensure monies are used effectively within the partnership. The funding received for the sixth form is spent appropriately on providing for the students. The partnership arrangement has enabled some subjects, which are under-subscribed, to continue and also to allow new subjects to be introduced to the curriculum. The principles of best value are applied and this ensures that the sixth form is cost effective.

84. Overall, the governing body fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily with an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the sixth form. It has not ensured, however, that provision for religious education and a daily act of collective worship meets statutory requirements.
85. Accommodation in the sixth form area is poor, with little recreational space and no rooms appropriate to private study.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

86. To build on the satisfactory start made by the new leadership in tackling inherited weaknesses and addressing increasingly challenging circumstances, the governors and staff should take the following actions:
1. Tighten up management procedures so that:
 - The monitoring of teaching and learning is given immediate priority;
 - Senior and middle managers in academic and pastoral roles are clear about what is expected of them;
 - Policies are followed through consistently in detail;
 - Governors extend target setting and general accountability as widely and rapidly as possible to challenge individuals and teams to do better.

(Paragraphs 56, 74 and 76 – 78)
 2. Raise standards in Years 7 to 9 and improve pupils' writing by:
 - Continuing to develop teaching and learning in line with national strategies for Key Stage 3;
 - Providing more opportunities, especially in Years 7 to 9, to practise accurate, well-presented, extended writing;
 - Ensuring that pupils understand the key principles of the literacy strategy and how it links all subjects.

(Paragraphs 1, 4, 24, 30 and 89)
 3. Improve assessment by:
 - Consistent, high-quality marking that guides improvement and supports literacy skills;
 - Setting subject-related targets based on a clear view of how individuals and groups are progressing.

(Paragraphs 34 and 65)
 4. Improve pupils' expectations of themselves and their pride in their school by:
 - Expecting the best of pupils and avoiding confrontation and excessive use of school sanctions;
 - If there is recourse to exclusion, internal or external, ensuring work is provided and supporting reintegration after exclusion by consistently following recommended strategies;
 - Involving all tutors in supporting behaviour and building on the work of learning mentors;
 - Improving opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities around the school;
 - Giving clear signals about what is expected at different stages of the lesson and taking every opportunity to emphasise the worth and relevance of learning;
 - Choosing learning styles that actively involve pupils;
 - Implementing the seating policy.

(Paragraphs 11, 13, 15, 16, 20, 24, 29, 36 – 38, 50, 56, 57, 59 and 61 – 63)

5. Give high priority through the school development plan to improving attendance by:
- Ensuring that tutors fully support the work of heads of year;
 - Supporting pupils in reintegration following absence;
 - Considering how best to approach parents, who condone the absence of their children.

(Paragraphs 17, 57, 60 and 71)

6. Sustain efforts to radically improve accommodation.

(Paragraphs 38, 79)

7. Improve teaching, learning and management in design and technology (graphics, resistant materials and systems and control) and religious education, paying particular attention to the areas specified for improvement in the subject section of this report.

(Paragraphs 6, 27, 74, 115 –140 and 185 – 190)

Sixth form

- (1) Encourage students to take more active responsibility for independent study and to challenge each other and their teachers.

(Paragraphs 40, 193, 201, 212 and 232)

- (2) Develop systematic procedures for maintaining an overview of students' progress and for monitoring the quality of teaching.

(Paragraph 81)

- (3) Develop a sixth-form enrichment programme to complement their formal studies.

(Paragraph 55 and 66)

- (4) Respond imaginatively to the requirement to provide for personal and religious education by engaging young adults in serious consideration of the complex issues of contemporary society.

(Paragraphs 53 and 84)

- (5) Provide better social and study facilities for sixth formers.

(Paragraph 85)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	Years 7 – 11	149
	Sixth form	27
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils		50

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Years 7 - 11							
Number	3	32	51	49	13	1	0
Percentage	2	21	34	32	8	1	0
Sixth form							
Number	1	5	17	3	1	0	0
Percentage	3	18	62	11	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	1253	149
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	213	

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	30	
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	222	

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	13

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	25
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	29

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	89.4
National comparative data	91

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.3
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	144	113	257

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	68	84	75
	Girls	86	80	63
	Total	154	164	138
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	60 (69)	64 (62)	54 (60)
	National	66 (64)	67 (66)	66 (66)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	21 (17)	35 (36)	20 (23)
	National	32 (31)	45 (43)	33 (34)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	85	73	67
	Girls	91	55	61
	Total	176	128	128
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	70 (67)	50 (53)	50 (74)
	National	67 (65)	70 (68)	67 (64)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	33 (28)	26 (24)	23 (27)
	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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	154	101	255

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	57	137	146
	Girls	53	97	98
	Total	110	234	244
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	43 (32)	92 (95)	96 (99)
	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	37.2
	National	39.8

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

Attainment at the end of the sixth form (Year 13)

		For candidates entered for GCE A / AS / Advanced GNVQ / VCE examinations		
		Boys	Girls	All
School	Number of candidates	27	31	58
	Average point score per candidate	210.4	208.8	209.3
National	Average point score per candidate			*

- national comparisons are not published yet

		For candidates entered for GCE A / AS examinations 2001			For candidates entered for Advanced GNVQ / VCE examinations 2001		
		Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All
School	Number of candidates	25	28	52	8	7	15
	Average point score per candidate	13.8	12.1	12.9	9.4	10.6	10.2
National	Average point score per candidate	16.9	17.9	17.4	9.8	11.4	10.6

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
1392	185	1
3		
4		
3		
2	1	
4		
2		
2		
3	5	
5		
5	1	
4	1	

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 – Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	78
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.86

Education support staff: Y7– Y13

Total number of education support staff	35
Total aggregate hours worked per week	1176

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	77.7%
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y13

Key Stage 2	N/a
Key Stage 3	25.85
Key Stage 4	23.43

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001 - 2002
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	£
Total income	4 289 845
Total expenditure	4 287 341
Expenditure per pupil	2951
Balance brought forward from previous year	62 780
Balance carried forward to next year	65 280

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	27
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	26
<hr/>	
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	4
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

7%

Number of questionnaires sent out

1280

Number of questionnaires returned

99

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	29	54	9	8	0
My child is making good progress in school.	39	52	5	3	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	17	45	27	6	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	44	18	12	2
The teaching is good.	27	52	12	2	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	42	17	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	39	6	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	34	5	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	28	42	21	4	5
The school is well led and managed.	28	44	13	2	13
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	47	11	5	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	47	6	3	12

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

ENGLISH

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

Strengths

- The lower-attaining pupils progress well because of the additional provision made for them.
- Pupils make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills.
- There is an improving trend in GCSE results.

Areas for improvement

- The standard of pupils' writing is too low.
- There is inconsistency in teaching methods, particularly in the use of assessment procedures.
- The most competent pupils are not being challenged sufficiently.

87. The proportion of pupils obtaining a grade in the A* to C range in the 2002 GCSE English language examinations was close to average. The girls did better than the boys, but the difference was similar to that seen nationally. The results represent satisfactory achievement when account is taken of pupils' attainment at the beginning of the course. They are also a significant improvement on the results attained at the previous inspection when standards were well below average. There has been a steady improvement in examination results in recent years. Nearly all pupils obtained a grade in English language and pupils with special educational needs were, therefore, making satisfactory progress in line with that of their peers.
88. Attainment in the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 9 was below the national average. The proportion of pupils obtaining Level 5 or above was close to the average, but at Level 6 or above it was below. Achievement was satisfactory given pupils' below average standards in the subject on entry to the school. When compared to their national counterparts, the girls under-performed by a smaller margin than the boys. The trend of recent years has been for the results to be below average apart from 2001 when they were in line with national expectations. A similar variation was seen at the time of the previous inspection. The results were similar to those obtained in mathematics and science.
89. The standards of written work seen at the end of Year 11 reflect the levels of attainment in the GCSE examinations. The most competent pupils are working at national average standards and are able to write analytically. Their skills account for the rising trend in standards, but there are still a number of pupils, whose writing is marred by inaccuracies and poor grammar. Overall, the quality of writing is below what is expected, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. By the end of Year 9, written standards are below average and the weakness is in the inability of all, but the most competent pupils, to write logically and accurately at length using varied sentence structures and a range of appropriate vocabulary. Their styles are limited and they are not learning to write for different purposes. The challenge facing the department is to improve pupils' writing skills even though achievement by the end of Year 9 and the end of Year 11 is satisfactory when judged against levels of prior attainment. Pupils' reading skills are better and are at expected levels. They understand a range of texts and can infer meaning from what they read. When reading aloud they do so with reasonable levels of fluency and expression. The least competent pupils make particularly good progress in developing their reading skills because of the additional

provision made for them. The nature of the issues pupils encounter in their reading affords opportunities for them to develop their social and cultural awareness. There are opportunities provided in group discussions for pupils to reflect on the values and beliefs of others. Standards of speaking and listening are in line with national averages and pupils' achievement in these skills is good. There are a few pupils, however, who do not have a good command of Standard English and do not know when it should be used. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are variable. The majority of pupils came to lessons well prepared and ready to learn. There was no disruption in lessons, but there were occasions when pupils were deliberately unresponsive or inattentive and failed to learn as they should. Year 11 pupils, for example, failed to develop sufficient understanding of persuasive writing techniques because of such poor attitudes and, as a consequence, their own persuasive writing was superficial and brief.

90. Literacy in general is below average. Content is usually adequate, but is undermined by inaccuracy and sometimes by poor presentation. There is a weakness in achieving extended writing. Standards of writing are weak in all years, except for the most competent pupils. Many pupils are not able to adapt their writing to the varying demands of the curriculum. In some subjects, opportunities for writing are limited because of the use of worksheets and this restricts the development of pupils' extended writing skills. Apart from the work of the highest-attaining pupils, writing lacks fluency and the number of pupils, who have problems with spelling, punctuation and grammar, is high. Reading standards are better and broadly in line with expectations, with most pupils being able to read accurately. Standards of speaking and listening are also broadly average, but there are pupils, who lack confidence when called upon to speak formally to the class or to a large group. This impairs standards in English, which are below average and only the most competent pupils are attaining average standards by the end of Year 11. Standards in mathematics have been well below average, but are showing signs of improvement in response to new teaching approaches.
91. The standard of teaching is satisfactory and progress is as expected. All teachers have a secure command of their subject and the lessons seen in the course of the inspection were well planned. In the best lessons, much was expected of pupils and the level of work was demanding. In a Year 10 lesson on *The Crucible*, because of the teacher's ability to pose searching questions, pupils understood the moral issues being explored in the play. Teaching was also highly effective when it required pupils to provide evidence in support of their interpretation of a text. Year 9 pupils found this approach stimulating in their reading of Martin Luther King's "freedom" speech and, as a result, they were able to identify the techniques he used to inspire his audience. They enjoyed the challenge of the work and made good progress. Teachers give of their time outside the classroom to extend pupils' enjoyment of the subject through a range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and their learning is enhanced when in-class support is provided and when teaching in small groups helps them to develop their reading and writing skills. Some lessons in drama, which is taught separately from English in the expressive arts faculty, were observed. The lessons were satisfactory or good and contribute well to the development of pupils' speaking and listening.
92. Some teaching failed to stimulate a liking for the subject. Such teaching relied heavily on worksheets. This enabled the less competent pupils to progress well because the sheets guided them every step of the way through the learning process. The needs of the more competent pupils were poorly served, however, because they were not given opportunities for open-ended, creative work. The most competent pupils in a Year 11 lesson, for example, could not develop their ability to balance fact and opinion in their own writing because they were constrained by a worksheet, which required brief answers to simple questions.

93. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The newly appointed head of department has achieved a great deal in a short time, particularly in establishing clear and shared planning. The work of the deputy is clearly defined and together they form an effective team. Significant improvements have been made in the subject's assessment procedures, but the procedures are not applied consistently by all teachers, particularly in their marking. Teaching is monitored regularly, but the means for the subject to share and develop good practice are not yet sufficiently developed. The department is well resourced and it benefits greatly from the work of the support technician. ICT is used satisfactorily to enhance presentation of final drafts. Accommodation, however, is unsatisfactory and the learning environment is dreary because fabric and fittings are worn out. There has been improvement since the last inspection, particularly in resource provision and the development of schemes of work.

MATHEMATICS

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

Strengths

- The department is well led and managed.
- Teachers are committed to improving pupils' learning and attainment.
- Action plans for improving standards are in place.
- An effective pupil-tracking system is being developed and is now in use.

Areas for improvement

- Results in national tests and examinations are below national averages.
- Pupils cannot access information communication technology (ICT) facilities.
- There is no monitoring of teaching, resulting in inconsistency in presentation of pupils' work and its day-to-day assessment.
- Departmental documentation is insufficient to sustain future development.

94. Pupils enter the school with below average ability in mathematics. In 2002, results in national tests for 14-year-olds were below the national average, which was a slight dip in an otherwise rising trend. When compared to similar schools, results were average overall, but were still below expectation in relationship to their ability on entry to the school. This represented underachievement for pupils, especially for those expecting to gain the higher levels. This was largely due to a lot of staff turnover within the department, which affected continuity of pupils' learning. Pupils' performance in mathematics was close to that in English and above that in science. Teachers' assessments of pupils' potential results were well below their actual test performances. This indicated low expectations of pupils' ability to do well. Girls' performance in tests was better than that of boys when compared with national expectations.
95. Standards in the work of 14-year-olds are average. Progress during most lessons is good and pupils are achieving well. This is due to the improved teaching since the last inspection, which has developed pupils' interest in the subject. The general level of numeracy is satisfactory and has been enhanced by the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy in Years 7 to 9. The standard of numeracy in other subjects is good. This is shown, for example, in pupils' accurate calculation of data in science and in simulated fieldwork exercises in geography. However, pupils' graphic work is often of a poor quality, with many drawing freehand those diagrams, which required accurate presentation. There is a wide variation in the quality of presentation of pupils' work in books, indicating differing qualities of response to different teachers. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress during lessons due to the careful planning of teachers and good support from classroom support assistants. In all years, pupils from different heritages achieve well, in line with others of similar ability.

96. In 2002, results in GCSE examinations in Year 11 were below average. The percentage achieving A* to C grades was below expectation when compared to similar schools, based on their free school meals category. This represented underachievement for pupils across Years 10 and 11. Results in 2002 were better than those of 2001. Generally, boys did better than girls in attaining A* to C grades because an excessive number of girls attained grade D. Again, staffing difficulties affected learning. Both boys' and girls' performances were average compared to other subjects they studied.
97. Standards seen in the work of 16-year-olds are below average. However, an increasing proportion of pupils is being entered for the higher-tier GCSE examination. Across Years 10 and 11, most pupils achieve well because teaching is good and improves their attitudes to learning. However, there are a few pupils with very immature learning skills and sometimes teaching does not make enough impression on these pupils, which results in unsatisfactory behaviour. This has an adverse effect on the learning of all pupils in these groups. This was seen in a Year 11 class revising for examinations. A minority of pupils required so much of the teacher's attention, due to their behaviour, that progress for all pupils was reduced. Standards are improving in Year 10 and better attitudes to learning are evident. Attitudes were excellent in a Year 10 class for gifted pupils, who are sitting GCSE examinations a year early. They were eager to succeed in their learning. Generally, pupils' presentation of their work is variable, with poor attention to diagrams and constructions. Numeracy skills are often good, but there is an uncertainty by many in the use of algebra. Pupils with special educational needs are represented in classes of all abilities and make good progress in line with others of similar ability.
98. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good features. There are few unsatisfactory lessons. The best teaching is typified by well-planned, challenging lessons in which teachers have a good understanding of the needs of their pupils. This was evident in a Year 10 lesson for a group of very low-attaining pupils in which the teacher provided a range of activities and exercises to challenge their understanding of perimeter. Pupils were well supported by learning assistants, who encouraged them in their learning. The high quality of teachers' subject knowledge and the use of a wide variety of teaching styles enable pupils to learn well. Where teaching was unsatisfactory this was due to slow pace, which resulted in insufficient progress by pupils. The assessment of pupils' progress is regularly carried out with tests at the end of topics. Results are recorded on the department's new and developing tracking system. However, the day-to-day assessment policy being applied to pupils' books is unsuccessful in providing useful analysis of progress or suitable targets for improvement.
99. The new head of department provides good leadership and management. He has the support of all teachers in the department, who are committed to improving standards of attainment of pupils. He has introduced an action plan, which is having an immediate impact on standards and on pupils' learning and he has clear objectives for future developments within the subject. Currently, there is no monitoring of teaching, resulting in variations in application of agreed policies. Required elements of ICT are not being taught due to limited access to whole-school facilities. However, all mathematics rooms are wired for use of computers and the department is awaiting delivery of its own equipment later this year. The current quality of departmental documentation is insufficient to provide for consistent practices across the department or development beyond the immediate emergency actions being implemented. Staffing of the department is satisfactory. The new accommodation for mathematics has provided an opportunity to enhance the quality of learning for pupils by providing a pleasant and stimulating work area in which pupils can learn well. Improvement since the last inspection of standards and provision for pupils has faltered in recent years.

However, current changes in staffing and management have resulted in satisfactory improvement. The department has good capacity to continue to improve further.

SCIENCE

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

Strengths

- Teaching in Years 7 to 9 is good.
- There are thorough procedures for tracking pupils and setting targets.
- GCSE applied science has been successfully introduced in Year 10.
- Teaching and learning styles are being broadened.
- Leadership and management of the department are good.

Areas for improvement

- Standards at the end of Year 9 and at GCSE were well below average in 2002.
- The need for prompt and effective action when pupils are identified as underachieving, particularly in Years 10 and 11.
- There is no formal system for monitoring on a regular basis to help raise standards of all teaching to that of the best.
- The use of ICT is restricted by a lack of resources.

100. Standards are below average. The results of national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2002 were well below average. However, results have risen from being very low in recent years and standards seen in Year 9 during inspection were better than the level of test results. Attainment at GCSE was well below average in the separate sciences in 2002. Standards in combined science were well below average in both 2002 and 2001. Overall, standards at GCSE were well below average. Standards in Year 11 have improved, but are still below average.

101. In the best lessons, pupils show a positive attitude to their work and make good progress as a result of good teaching. Relationships are good and the pupils become actively involved. Teachers have high expectations and lessons are well planned with a variety of activity to sustain pupils' concentration. Lessons are conducted at a good pace and questioning is used effectively to check and develop pupils' understanding. Activities are well chosen and offer suitable challenge. Effective use is made of teaching aids such as models, ICT simulations, videos, demonstrations and, in one case, a game. Teachers pay attention to literacy issues with emphasis on key words and the use of science dictionaries and matching word activities. Pupils' understanding of particle theory was developed well when the teacher used pupils themselves to model the behaviour of particles. A few lessons lack clear time-scales and tasks are unchallenging, which reduces learning to satisfactory at best. In these lessons, the teacher's explanation is not full enough and materials are not matched to the ability of the pupils. There are more good lessons with younger pupils than with older pupils. Progress by pupils with special educational needs is good and for pupils, who are gifted and talented, is satisfactory. There is no difference in attainment between boys and girls.

102. Teaching is satisfactory overall and the teaching of Years 7 and 8 is good. A particular strength is well-planned lessons with a good variety of activity and a good pace. Explanation is very clear and pupils are encouraged to make predictions. Good use is made of practical activities, models and demonstrations to explain concepts. Pupils' attitudes are less positive in Year 9, however, and this has a negative impact upon progress and standards attained. Some pupils are not engaged by the curriculum

despite the efforts of the teachers. Some lessons lack variety and are not well structured. Some work lacks sufficient challenge. Pupils' practical skills are sound. In the current Year 11, assessment shows pupils in the separate sciences are doing less well than expected. However, steps are being taken to improve the learning of older pupils. The introduction of a modular science course is having a positive impact upon standards, which are higher in Year 10 than Year 11. The most successful development is the GCSE applied science course, introduced in Year 10 last year. Pupils taking this option enjoy the assignment-based approach and current standards represent good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Progress by gifted or talented pupils is unsatisfactory in Years 10 and 11. There is no difference in the attainment of boys and girls. The range of learning opportunities in Years 10 and 11 is currently restricted by the time allocation being significantly below the recommended level. There is insufficient emphasis upon independent work, in particular independent investigative work. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but there is variation in the system used and in the quality and depth of marking. Development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is satisfactory. Science makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum is enriched by activities such as Eco-Week and Science Week.

103. Since the last inspection, standards at the end of Year 9 and Year 11 have dropped to below average. There is evidence from the inspection, however, of improving standards. The new head of department has had a significant impact in a relatively short space of time. A modular science course has been introduced in Years 10 and 11 and, this year, GCSE applied science was started. Use of ICT has been increased, but is currently restricted by a lack of resources. As a result, pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop their skills in this area. Teaching and learning styles are being broadened. Very thorough procedures for tracking pupils and setting targets have been put in place. These initiatives are having a positive impact upon standards. In view of recent improvements, progress since the last inspection is satisfactory.
104. Leadership and management of the department are good. The head of department has put in place effective measures to raise standards. Underachievement in some groups in Years 10 and 11 is to some extent being addressed through syllabus change, but that in itself is not enough to secure improvement. There is at present no formal system to regularly monitor the quality of teaching in order to help raise the standard of all teaching to that of the best.

ART AND DESIGN

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

Strengths

- Pupils achieve well above the national expectation by the end of Years 9 and 11 and have good attitudes to the subject across the school.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- There is a high expectation by the teachers and the pupils respond well to the challenge.
- There is very good management and leadership of the subject and a very high commitment to succeed.
- The provision of resources and the use of ICT are very good.

Areas for improvement

- Accommodation is inadequate.
- Self-evaluation in sketchbooks.

105. On entry to the school, many pupils have limited experiences of the subject. By the end of Year 9 and 11, the majority of pupils, both boys and girls, are attaining well above average standards and achieve very well. At present, the school enters Year 11 pupils for the GCSE and GNVQ examinations. Due to the very good subject expertise of the teachers and the overall very good quality of teaching, pupils in the 2002 GCSE examinations attained well above the national expectation. Over time, similar results have been maintained. Girls sometimes do better than boys. This is due to some extent to the higher number of girls studying the subject and the school has done well to raise boys' attainment. Since the last inspection, standards at the end of Years 9 and 11 have substantially risen from average levels of attainment. This very good improvement is due to the overall high quality of teaching, the very thorough assessment of the pupils' achievements and the very strong leadership of the head of art and design.
106. By the end of Year 9, pupils show high levels of confidence in the use of a wide range of media and materials, covering two and three dimensions. For example, pupils in Year 9, supported by excellent teaching, use their developing awareness of the work of artists, who have done figure drawing, by responding very well to the explanations and illustrations provided by their teacher on how to proportion the figure before drawing in the figure in detail. The pupils' literacy standards are satisfactorily supported by the use of key words and inspiration from poetry. The application of numeracy is satisfactorily developed. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal, spiritual, social, moral and cultural development and there is good inclusion and equality of access and opportunity.
107. By the end of Year 11, pupils continue to achieve very well, attaining well above average standards. They are prepared very thoroughly for their GCSE and GNVQ examinations. In the 2002 GCSE examination, the majority of pupils attained the higher A* to C grades. In a Year 10 lesson, the pupils, supported by excellent teaching, very successfully developed a mixed-media booklet. In taking great care with technique, interpretation and presentation, they show a very good understanding and control of the media being used.
108. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. During the period of inspection, the quality of teaching never fell below good and a majority of excellent teaching and very good teaching was seen. Teachers are supported by very good schemes of work and the very good input by the head of department, who provides plans that interpret and extend the adopted commercial schemes and examination requirements. Aided by the good monitoring of pupils' subject performance, the good procedures for and the use of assessment, the teachers show good awareness of the individual needs of the pupils. They have a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject, high expectations, use time well and very effectively support the pupils' work as they progress. Older pupils, in particular from Year 10, are starting to make satisfactory use of their sketchbooks and notebooks, with some carefully presenting and developing their work. However, this is an area for further development. Not all sketchbooks show sufficient self-evaluation and comment by the pupils to support the reasons for an analysis of their work, although the analysis is usually shown in their well-presented portfolios of their work.
109. The majority of pupils show high levels of enthusiasm, motivation and interest in their work. Overall, their attitudes are good. When motivated by their teachers they readily apply themselves, working at a very good rate with very good levels of understanding.
110. The curriculum provides a very good range of learning opportunities. Resources, supported by the very good use of ICT, are very good. The head of art and design makes a very good use of available funds. His very good leadership and management

support standards and teaching very effectively. The wide range of displays in the art room and around the school supports and values the pupils' work. The accommodation is in need of re-development. Some of the classrooms are cramped and when class sizes are high there is insufficient space to work. The unsafe practice concerning the use of the kiln at the last inspection has been overcome where it is now locked and isolated when firing is taking place.

CITIZENSHIP

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

Strengths

- Citizenship education is clearly provided for in personal, social and health education lessons.
- Introduction of the good citizen award.
- Resources and links to awards are good.

Areas for improvement

- The links between citizenship issues and other subjects.
- The amount of discussion and enquiry work.
- The links between citizenship and other aspects of the school's life.

111. Overall, standards of work are average in all year groups. Pupils are mostly interested in their work and achievement by all abilities is satisfactory. However, poor listening and communication skills restrict discussion and overall progress in some lessons, especially where pupils' interest and concentration is not engaged. For example, a rather pedestrian approach and lack of structured debate and analysis within a Year 9 lesson, focussing on juvenile crime, meant that pupils were often not fully involved in their learning and unable to give clear reasons for their opinions. On the other hand, pupils can demonstrate deep engagement and sympathy as in a Year 7 lesson when a member of the class read out what she had written about the death of a grandparent.
112. Citizenship is taught to pupils in Years 7 to 9 by specialist teachers through personal, social and health education lessons. It has been carefully planned and up-to-date resources are provided. Resources are reviewed regularly so that material is current and relevant to the pupils. A range of certificates is awarded to challenge and reward pupils, who are also able to gain a good citizen award. This can be for any work done during lessons, or in extra-curricular activities. Despite an audit of citizenship provision by individual faculties, very few have planned opportunities to link citizenship to their subject. Some, for example science and performing arts, contribute well to pupils' understanding of citizenship. In science, for example, there are references in lessons to the effects of pollution, nuclear power and cloning. However, these references are often superficial and do not include extended discussion and debate. Other opportunities were observed during the inspection: for example in history, when pupils discussed the development of the National Health Service and the 1976 Race Relations Act, but these are not explicitly linked to citizenship. There is good practice where there are clear and obvious connections between citizenship and subject content, for example, slavery and poverty reflected in blues music, and where there is commitment on behalf of the staff.
113. At present, pupils in Years 10 and 11 share the time for citizenship lessons within a carousel arrangement and the subject is not taught in the sixth form. The school recognises that these arrangements are unsatisfactory and are under review. Pupils use files to record their work in citizenship lessons and also other occasions, which

enables progress to be monitored accurately. Certificates are awarded, endorsed by a nationally recognised organisation.

114. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader is committed, knowledgeable and has identified ways through a detailed development plan to raise the profile of the subject through the school, but there is still some way to go in firming up links with other departments.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

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

Strengths

- The good teaching in some design and technology subjects.
- The good standards achieved in some GCSE courses.
- The increasing use of ICT for research, graphics and computer-aided design and manufacture.

Areas for improvement

- The leadership and management of the faculty, including the guidance handbook.
- The standard of attainment at GCSE level in the under-performing design and technology subjects.
- The poor level of practical skills and technological knowledge by the end of Year 9, particularly for resistant materials.
- The assessment system to record attainment and progress and to inform planning.
- The remodelling and refurbishment of teaching rooms to meet the needs of the design and technology curriculum.
- The stock of consumable materials and resources to improve teaching and learning opportunities.

115. The teachers' assessments for design and technology at the end of Year 9 show that the number of pupils reaching the expected Level 5 is well below the national average. The assessments show that girls are performing better than boys and are only just below the national average.

116. At the end of Year 11 in 2002, the overall GCSE results were below the national average for design and technology. However, there is a great variation in the results across the faculty. For GCSE courses in resistant materials, graphics and systems and control courses, the results were well below national comparators. The results for food and child development are above average. For textiles, the results were well above. The overall results are similar to those for the whole school. The results in all the design and technology courses have followed a similar pattern over a number of years with no indication of improvement in the under-performing courses.

117. On entry, the standard of pupils is below the national average. Work is satisfactory, but with some examples of good outcomes in resistant materials, textiles and food in Years 7 to 9.

118. Pupils are developing a satisfactory understanding of the design process. The quality of presentation varies from rough sketches through to a few good-quality outcomes using computer graphics. The best work is seen where pupils have access to a good range of resources for research and design development.

119. In resistant materials, pupils experience a limited range of techniques. Practical skills are generally poor when working with wood and metal. Pupils are starting to develop good skills in using computer-aided design and manufacture equipment through a simple task to design and model flat-pack furniture. A limited number of projects are undertaken using electronics, mechanisms, structures and simple control systems. Work is of a poor quality when pupils undertake making without proper planning and working drawings. By the end of Year 9, pupils have not acquired a good range of practical skills or knowledge of resistant materials.
120. In the food courses, pupils are learning good food preparation skills, with emphasis on hygiene and safe working practices. Pupils know about the use of equipment and kitchen planning. They undertake food investigations well and make good use of nutritional and sensory analysis. Pupils are using ICT well for research, word processing and handling data.
121. In textiles, pupils are developing a good understanding of fabrics and fibres and their properties and uses. They have learnt a variety of basic assembly techniques and have undertaken several tasks to develop good practical skills. Pupils make good use of the design process to undertake research, develop ideas and to evaluate existing products.
122. In the graphics course, pupils are developing satisfactory skills in freehand sketching, perspective, the use of colour and rendering techniques and formal drawing. However, in resistant materials, opportunities are often not taken to use, develop and extend graphical skills through the designing and making of products.
123. Standards are only just satisfactory for the majority of pupils following the GCSE resistant materials course. However, in many instances, folios show limited research and the creative development of design ideas. Some do not provide clear information for making. The development of design thinking is restricted by the range of resources available. Several pupils have made very good use of computer-aided design and manufacture facilities to make components. The poor motivation shown by some pupils is affecting the quality of the work and the standards being attained.
124. For pupils following the GCSE graphics course, the standard of coursework is only just satisfactory. There are examples of good graphical skills and some originality in the development of designs and presentation. In some instances, pupils use a wider range of skills and also make good use of ICT to develop graphical outcomes. However, motivation is poor and for many pupils the work is below their expected capability.
125. The standard of GCSE coursework in food is good. Folios are well organised and demonstrate a good use of the design process, with good research and an understanding of the making processes. Some pupils make good use of ICT for nutritional and sensory analysis and research on the Internet.
126. In textiles, standards are very good with pupils demonstrating a high level of designing and making capability. Research is wide ranging and design development is good. There is good ongoing evaluation and decision making throughout the folios. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of materials and techniques. Graphical presentation is good. Appropriate use is made of ICT for research, word processing, graphics and data handling. Pupils are well motivated.
127. In child development and health and social care courses, the standard of work is good. Workbooks are well organised and show good progression in knowledge and understanding. Pupils are interested and well motivated.

128. The standards are good for pupils following the GNVQ manufacturing course. Pupils have acquired a good understanding of making processes and batch production. They work effectively in teams to complete manufacturing tasks. This course is not being continued in the next academic year.
129. There are no planned strategies in place to address the specific learning needs of individual pupils, but they are well supported by teachers. They tend to spend more time with pupils, who have learning difficulties, and the progress of these pupils is similar to their year group as a whole.
130. Behaviour in lessons is variable. Attendance is also a problem with some pupils and this limits their progress and learning. Motivation is poor in the unsatisfactory courses.
131. The overall standard of teaching is satisfactory, but no better than that in resistant materials, graphics and systems and control, where pupils do not have an overview of the subjects to guide their learning. There are instances of good and very good teaching in child development and food technology, where pupils understand well what they are required to do. In one lesson, teaching was unsatisfactory. The faculty is not monitoring and evaluating teaching and good practice is not being shared.
132. More equipment is needed to broaden and extend activities for computer-aided design and manufacture and systems and control. Progress in the use of ICT in lessons is limited by the number of computers available in the faculty. In some instances, teachers teach outside their specialism within the faculty because of an imbalance in staffing.
133. The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 offers a good range, including a vocational option in Health and Social Care.
134. A computer-based assessment system to record and monitor pupil learning and progress is in place. However, this system is not being used by all staff to record assessment information to set targets or to inform planning.
135. There is a great variation in the quality of visual display in each of the teaching rooms. Where display is good it is used well as a resource to support teaching and to extend the learning of pupils. The use of homework to extend and reinforce learning is variable across the faculty. There is a club for talented and gifted pupils and this involves product development using computer-aided design and manufacture. Pupils work on car designs to enter the Formula One competition. They won the last event for this competition.
136. Leadership in the faculty is poor and there is no clear vision for future development. A permanent head of faculty has not been in place for nearly two years and responsibilities have been divided between the faculty staff. This has led to fragmentation. The faculty does not have a development plan. An appointment has now been made for the next academic year. Monitoring by senior management is unsatisfactory.
137. Rooms are generally in a poor condition and in need of remodelling and refurbishment. In the workshop rooms, conditions are not conducive for learning and do not promote the ethos needed to interest or stimulate pupils. In the food rooms, there is a waste of space and the location of some cookers presents safety concerns. The textiles room is a stimulating teaching area for design and making.
138. Equipment is generally in poor condition and in need of upgrading and extending. In the workshop rooms, there is a shortage of basic hand-tools and small equipment.

Storage is a problem throughout the faculty. The current level of capitation is insufficient to provide the resources, consumables and equipment required for the teaching of the design and technology curriculum. The stock of consumable material is poor. Some teachers are raising money through fundraising activities to purchase essential materials.

139. Full risk assessments have not been carried out for three years.

140. The faculty has not improved since the last inspection and the issues that were identified at the time have not been addressed.

GEOGRAPHY

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

Strengths

- Hard-working teachers use their good specialist knowledge, together with careful planning to prepare interesting lessons that encourage pupils to learn.
- The development of fieldwork strategies and investigation skills is a strength of the department and helps many pupils to achieve higher GCSE grades.
- The progress made by pupils in Years 10 and 11 leads to good achievement by those, who complete the course.
- The systematic collection and detailed analysis of GCSE course performance data results in adjustments to teaching approaches that reflect individual learning needs and so leads to improving standards year on year.

Areas for improvement

- Attainment at the end of Year 9 and Year 11.
- Organisation and assessment in Years 7 to 9.
- Reviewing the new schemes of work in order to provide more opportunities for formal speaking and for sustained writing.
- More systematic monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9.

141. Pupils enter with varied primary school experiences of geography, so that standards are below average. The current Year 9 pupils are achieving standards that are lower than those found nationally, especially when work depends on longer written explanations.

142. Entry to the GCSE course is not restricted and the subject is particularly popular with lower-attaining pupils, who like the practical skills involved and many of whom make good progress. Achievement in fieldwork in Years 10 and 11 is better than that found nationally and is a strength of the subject. Pupils make good use of their numeracy skills to collect and record data carefully. Limited writing skills reduces the number of completed coursework files and limits success in the exams.

143. In 2002, GCSE performance was below national expectations and reflects the high proportion of pupils, who are not confident or fluent writers. However, these results confirm a trend of improvement recorded by the school over the previous three years.

144. Overall, teaching is satisfactory and in the best lessons it is good or very good. Where pupils bring positive attitudes to the classroom, the pace of lessons is brisk as they respond to teachers' careful planning. Lessons have a clear structure and teachers share learning objectives with pupils and review them at the end of lessons. 'Warm-up' activities test their memory of previous lessons. A lively game of 'place bingo' in Year 9

reminded pupils of key features of Italy and India while developing awareness of the similarities between them. In a significant minority of lessons in Years 7 to 9, pupils are uncooperative and learning opportunities are wasted. In these lessons, pupils do not listen carefully to teachers or each other, progress is slow and they are liable to skimp on written work. In lessons where there is additional classroom support, pupils with statements of educational need make good progress, whilst in other lessons they make satisfactory progress. Specialist rooms display and celebrate examples of good-quality work, but no use is made of National Curriculum levels descriptions and this reduces their teaching impact. Pupils use computers with confidence and are able to download material selectively from the Internet. A Year 9 project on weather in European cities produced a number of good reports. However, limited access to computer suites prevents teachers from using computers sufficiently often and sending pupils to the resources centre reduces monitoring and support. Effective use is made of the one interactive whiteboard, but this is insufficient to meet the department's teaching needs.

145. There is a new detailed syllabus in Years 7 to 9. Some units are trying to cover too much detail. Higher attaining pupils do not get as far as teachers expect, so that pupils do not get sufficient opportunity to develop skills of thinking carefully or to produce longer spoken and written answers. Practical work is of a higher standard. Pupils use atlases efficiently to locate places and features and their map and diagram work is neat. Recent restrictions in taking pupils out of school have been circumvented by teachers designing 'virtual' fieldwork where pupils are given information that they then treat as if they have collected it themselves. They become increasingly skilled in representing information visually in graphs and maps helped by good numeracy skills. Older pupils undertake a range of original practical research as in studies of central Wakefield, Flamborough Head beach profiles and the economic effect of the White Rose Centre.
146. Overall, leadership and management in geography are satisfactory and management of the GCSE provision is good. Lines of responsibility within the humanities faculty are diffuse, with two staff having separate responsibilities for Years 7-9 humanities and for the GCSE geography course. Responsibilities for other subjects limit the time available for monitoring of marking and teaching, resulting in unhelpful variations in practice. Assessment is unsatisfactory. The department does not share with pupils descriptions of geographical skills nor indicate individual progress targets. Consequently, pupils do not know how they are progressing and cannot talk about how they can improve their work. There is no detailed pupil-performance information in Years 7-9 and no effective tracking of progress made by higher attainers. In contrast, management in Years 10 and 11 focuses exclusively on geography. The school's data system provides clear attainment targets and teachers use detailed analysis of pupils' work to provide individual advice.
147. Despite weaknesses in the management of Years 7 to 9, the department has made good progress in those areas for improvement identified in the previous report.

HISTORY

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

Strengths

- The good teaching supported by good subject knowledge.
- The enthusiasm of the teaching staff.
- The good quality and range of teaching resources.
- A new GCSE course that provides more interest for the pupils.

Areas for improvement

- The presentation of pupils' written work and the quality of literacy.
- The achievement of boys at the end of Year 9.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.
- The use and application of information and communication technology to enrich learning.

148. Standards of work seen during the inspection were average. Teaching by subject-specialist staff is good and contributes well to pupils' learning. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 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 underdeveloped literacy skills hamper many pupils. In Years 10 and 11, good teaching contributes to good progress. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and those, who are designated as gifted and talented, is satisfactory. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

149. In the 2002 teacher assessments for Year 9, pupils achieved in line with the national average. There was underachievement by boys, whilst the girls did very much better than average. In the GCSE examinations in 2002, pupils achieved standards below the national average. These results were similar to those of previous years. To address the problem, the department has introduced a new GCSE course into Year 10. Observations made during the inspection show that this course has been successful, pupil attitudes are good and they are making good progress.

150. Across Years 7 to 9, most teaching is satisfactory and enables pupils to make satisfactory progress with their learning. Good subject knowledge, enthusiastic teachers and lesson planning are strengths that support pupils well with their learning. However, in some lessons, challenging behaviour by pupils slowed the pace of learning. At the end of Year 9, standards of work seen are average. Pupils have a developing knowledge and understanding of each of the topics studied and a growing ability with the use of historical skills. For example, in a Year 8 lesson, pupils could use pictorial sources to distinguish changes in religion during the reign of Edward VI. Good teaching was seen in Year 9 and pupils were developing a good knowledge and understanding of conditions in the trenches during the First World War. Teachers made good use of video and pupils were well supported by high-quality study guides. The use of lesson-starter activities is developing and was effectively used with one Year 9 group. The use of lesson objectives and unit-planning guides are effective with helping pupils to organise their work. However, poor levels of literacy limit the progress of many pupils. The department is implementing approaches to support pupils' writing, but more work is needed. Spelling and grammar are weak and pupils need greater help with extended writing. Often, work is poorly presented and not completed. Most pupils demonstrate satisfactory attitudes to their work and make satisfactory progress. However, some pupils misbehave and this has a negative impact on learning.

151. In Years 10 and 11, teaching is good overall, with examples of very good teaching taking place. Class teachers' very secure subject knowledge helps inform planning

very well. Features of the very good lessons are the use of lesson starters, good questioning skills, high expectations and a variety of learning strategies. By the end of Year 11, pupils have developed a knowledge and understanding of the topics studied on their GCSE course. They have developed a satisfactory level of skills. In a very good Year 10 lesson, pupils were successfully studying the topic of 20th century public health as a unit of study in the new GCSE course. They could define and use key terms such as infant mortality and national insurance. They developed a good understanding of why it was necessary to introduce public health reforms. In a Year 11 lesson, low-ability pupils could use and apply information from sources on propaganda during the First World War. However, they had greater difficulty recalling factual information to provide context for their answers. This weakness is why many pupils perform badly in examinations. To address this, the department has produced good-quality revision materials and offers additional opportunities for classes after school and during holiday periods. Overall, pupils in Years 10 and 11 display good attitudes to their work and make good progress with their learning.

152. History offers a satisfactory curriculum, which in Year 10 is enriched through educational visits that are part of the new GCSE course. The department has begun to implement the National Key Stage 3 Strategy for literacy, but pupils' standards are still unsatisfactory. The use of number is limited and pupils need to develop more skills to interpret statistical sources. There is not enough use of information and communication technology to support their learning. The department makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' personal development, especially by promoting an understanding of social and moral issues. Support for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory; when additional support is available progress is good. The planning of extension work for gifted and talented pupils is underdeveloped. Marking and assessment procedures are satisfactory, but the department does not then use this well enough to take an overview that influences the planning of the curriculum.
153. The leadership and management of the department are now satisfactory. Good progress has been made with addressing the issues identified in the previous inspection report. The quality of staffing and resources is good and accommodation is satisfactory. Performance management and staff development are having a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching. However, approaches to monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and other aspects of the work of the department are unsatisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Strengths

- Consistent high quality of most teaching.
- Very well designed programme structure and content for all pupils in Key Stage 3.
- Good range of academic and vocational provision in the sixth form, with increasingly good results.
- Very good faculty and departmental management, targeted on curriculum and achievement.
- Good use of ICT in major curricular areas, particularly in art, technology and performing arts.
- The creation of an attractive and welcoming environment from very poor accommodation.

Areas for improvement

- Examination results in GCSE remain well below national averages.
- The poor quality of furnishing and accommodation in the faculty.
- Limited access to and use of ICT resources in some major departments.
- Further development of subject-based links and resources on the school's Intranet.

154. The school offers good provision in ICT, which not only builds a foundation of core ICT skills, but contributes to learning in a number of other curricular areas. However, the shortage of ICT resources in mathematics means that in this subject the full statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are not currently met, while ICT usage in modern languages and humanities is not yet fully developed.

155. Teacher-assessed SATS results at the end of Year 9 show levels of attainment for the most recent year that are below the national average and below the school's own best results: from 1999 to 2001. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 or above rose to 77 percent, but fell last year to only 54 per cent. However, children enter the school with lower than average scores in both English and mathematics, so the attainment still represents satisfactory progress.

156. The proportion of pupils gaining passes at A* to C is well below the national average. But the profile of students on entry again suggests that progress and achievement are satisfactory, while the school has succeeded in maintaining standards of achievement despite a large increase in the take-up of the subject over recent years. Results in intermediate GNVQ are consistently good and well above national averages both in overall passes and in the number of merits and distinctions achieved.

157. Some teaching is quite outstanding and most is good or better with well-prepared materials, an effective range of strategies and conscientious attention to individual students. Teachers show high levels of preparation and are well organised for their lessons, which have clear objectives that support the pupils in their learning and form part of a clearly understood structure. Teachers explain the technical language of computing and encourage pupils to use it correctly, being particularly helpful to those with poorer reading skills, who benefit from this opportunity to extend vocabulary, where excellent wall displays contribute to literacy. Staff are scrupulous in ensuring that their teaching has an effective impact on pupils' learning - cross checking for understanding when they are talking to the whole class, for example, and devoting close attention to pupils as they undertake group or individual tasks.

158. The best teaching not only helps students develop ICT competence, but creates situations where they can work effectively with each other in pairs or in groups and encourages them to articulate clear responses to their work. There is generally good behaviour in ICT rooms and good habits of work, but some disruptive and unacceptable behaviour. This was especially acute in Year 10 and in one Year 7 class, was observed where there was a substantial minority of pupils, whose failure of self control and inability to co-operate thwarted even very good teaching.
159. ICT is managed within a combined business studies/ICT faculty, with a faculty director and shared deputy posts separately covering ICT and business studies. Both at faculty and departmental level leadership and management are good.
160. The creation of an ICT strategy committee comprising the headteacher, the school's business manager, the school's ICT link governor, the head of faculty and the network manager secures a coherent strategic vision for ICT investment and development. This ensures that the principles of best value are applied in ongoing investment in ICT across the school. The appointment of a network manager has helped maintain and develop a robust physical infrastructure for the school's ICT usage.
161. Within the faculty, departmental IT systems for recording all student data are extensively used and generally well maintained.
162. Co-ordination of training for staff in other departments has been handled well, but limited access to facilities is holding back the potential effect on learning in other subjects. The funding attracted by specialist school status in the performing arts has been heavily invested in music and media technology, where hardware provision is outstandingly good.
163. Along with a necessary focus on physical provision, the ICT development plan concentrates on learning and attainment, systems for evaluation of pupil work and staff performance. Timescales, priorities and responsible persons are clearly designated. There is a good response to specific issues (e.g. use of value-added analysis) identified in meetings with link governors. Minutes of faculty meetings are not merely records of discussion, but contain clearly articulated action points.
164. There has been substantial improvement in ICT resources and provision since the last inspection. Major investment in infrastructure and staff training leaves the school both with a well-skilled staff and a pupil-to-computer ratio, which is now satisfactory, while curricular provision in ICT is coherent and relevant to the school's intake.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Overall, the quality of provision in modern languages is **satisfactory** in French and Spanish and **unsatisfactory** in German.

Strengths

- Girls did better in GCSE Spanish in 2002 than girls nationally.
- There is some good and very good teaching in Spanish.
- The faculty is forging good links with primary schools in an effort to improve pupils' attitudes to learning languages.
- Committed leadership is well supported by a hard-working team of teachers.

Areas for improvement

- GCSE results, especially for boys, are well below the national average and have declined steadily in German.
- Non-specialist teaching in German has an adverse impact on learning.
- Too many pupils have negative attitudes and are not prepared to learn.
- Basic systems for marking, assessment and setting homework are not in place, indicating weaknesses in routine management.
- The narrow range of available resources and some aspects of accommodation hinder progress in learning.

165. GCSE results for 2002 at grades A* to C in French were low for both boys and girls. Performance across the full range, A* to G, was also well below the national average. Results in German were very low, especially for boys. Results have declined steadily over the last three years, to some extent because specialist teachers have not been replaced. Spanish results improved considerably in 2002, though they remained well below the national average. However, girls did better than girls nationally. Pupils did worse in modern languages than in their other subjects, though girls did better than boys in all three languages. Results were affected by poor attendance and disruption due to staff absences. There were extremely few high grades, indicating unsatisfactory achievement by gifted pupils.

166. In lessons and other work seen, attainment by the end of Year 9 is below national expectations in all three languages, although this represents satisfactory achievement for the majority of pupils, relative to their level of attainment on entry to the school. Higher attainers approach average standards in listening and reading. In writing, they lack opportunities for extended work in Years 7 and 8. Other pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve lower standards. Boys are more likely to volunteer answers, but girls are more likely to be accurate. There is no evidence of above average standards from gifted pupils.

167. By the end of Year 11, standards are below average. This indicates some improvement, relative to 2002 GCSE results, and satisfactory achievement in Years 10 and 11. Progress is better in French and Spanish than in German, with a pleasing level of effort improving standards in lower sets, especially in Spanish. The new optional status of modern languages in Year 10 is improving levels of attainment. The best work seen was in French written coursework in Year 10. In Year 11, higher attainers achieve only average standards, with little evidence of high grades in any skill. They write adequately on topics such as fitness, the school of the future and past holidays, including different tenses, but making a lot of basic errors. Other pupils write less ambitiously and have continued problems in applying grammatical rules, such as capital letters for nouns in German and accents in French past participles. Standards in comprehension link to pupils' ability to recall vocabulary, which varies considerably. Oral standards improve as pupils benefit from contact with foreign-language assistants,

especially in French. However, most pupils find it difficult to produce language from memory. Girls do better than boys, being more confident and more accurate in their work.

168. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. There is good and very good teaching in Spanish and some unsatisfactory teaching in German due to staff teaching outside their accredited languages. Whilst subject knowledge is generally satisfactory, teachers tend to use too much English in lessons, diminishing the impact of their expertise on listening and speaking skills. Teaching of basic skills is satisfactory, with some focus on grammatical awareness and increasing promotion of ICT skills. Planning for individual lessons is satisfactory. However, the range of activities and teaching methods is restricted by the paucity of essential resources, in particular to present new language and reinforce learning through visual stimuli. Consequently, the routine of lessons is repetitive and risks boring pupils. In the best lessons, teachers use their initiative to overcome such problems. They use the foreign language consistently, match work to ability and find ways to offer visual reinforcement. Consequently, a lower-attaining Spanish group in Year 11 was well motivated and made very good progress in understanding passages about school and in voicing their opinions.
169. Unfortunately, in most lessons, it is clear from comments and body language that large numbers of pupils lack commitment or interest. There is too much unfinished and untidy work in exercise books and little homework done. In these circumstances, teachers do remarkably well to manage behaviour, keep pupils on task and build good relationships, which ensure that some learning takes place. They target questions fairly, so that all pupils can feel involved, irrespective of gender, ethnicity or ability. A strong focus on the customs of relevant countries contributes well to pupils' cultural development. The weakness in long-term planning is that few opportunities arise for pupils to work independently and produce language creatively without relying on teachers or written support. Marking is unsatisfactory. There is no agreed system and pupils do not receive guidance on their progress and how they can improve. Similarly, homework is not set regularly and is not used to extend gifted pupils. In both cases, opportunities are lost to improve both attitudes and standards.
170. A hard-working team shares the drive of committed leadership to prioritise the improvement in attitudes as a first step to raising standards. To this end, teachers invest a substantial amount of time working in primary schools and there is an increased focus on using ICT in lessons. However, management of work within the school lacks rigour. There is no routine monitoring of teaching and learning through observation of lessons or sampling of books. Unsatisfactory procedures in Years 7 to 9 lead to inaccurate teachers' assessments. Schemes of work are not very helpful and planning for development in the subject lacks sharpness. While the acquisition of new computers represents a positive step, there are insufficient textbooks, no readers, only one overhead projector and no computer software to support language learning. An interactive whiteboard and the faculty television await repair. Most accommodation is satisfactory, but two teachers are isolated in outside temporary classrooms, which are unpleasant, lack fire extinguishers and prevent full access to resources. Since the previous inspection, standards have declined and attitudes have deteriorated so that improvement has been unsatisfactory. Though there are currently signs of improvement in Spanish, the failure to attract specialist teaching for German restricts capacity for improvement in that language.

MUSIC

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

Strengths

- Standards attained by pupils in Years 10 and 11 are good.
- Good teaching for pupils in Years 10 and 11 from knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff.
- Extensive range and quality of extra-curricular activities.
- Accommodation and resources are very good.

Areas for improvement

- Pupils are not aware of their progress in relation to national standards.
- Behaviour of some pupils in Years 7 to 9 has a negative effect on progress.
- Pupils in Years 7 to 9 do not sing regularly.

171. The assessment by teachers of pupils' work at the age of 14 indicates attainment for both boys and girls that is above national expectations, with girls' attainment higher than boys. However, these figures are not mirrored by work seen in class during the inspection and are acknowledged by the department to be over generous and not collected using sufficiently effective procedures. A new system is now in place. The evidence from inspection is that attainment is average with a number of pupils attaining above expected standards. Only a small number of pupils study music for GCSE examination, but in 2002 all pupils attained A*-G grade with the majority of the group, both boys and girls, gaining A*-C. No pupils attained the highest grades.

172. The more competent pupils in Years 7 to 9 compose and perform rhythmically accurate and musically inventive ensemble pieces developing musical motifs. Year 8 pupils used the theme from 'Carmen' and interspersed it with other rhythmic and melodic material to create a very effective piece. Their use of musical language is good, especially in some thoughtful and critical written analysis of peers' performances. Achievement in lessons is often good, including for those pupils with special educational needs and, who are gifted and talented. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress by the age of 14, but good progress by the age of 16 years. Pupils in Year 10 demonstrate a very good understanding of the use of cadences and chords in order to structure and compose pieces. Some pupils are able to compose in a variety of musical styles using complex rhythmic and harmonic patterns. For example, pupils' 'Western' compositions have lilting rhythms and idiomatic melodic lines giving a strong "cowboy" image.

173. Teaching is satisfactory for pupils in Years 7 to 9 and good for those in Years 10 and 11. However, during the inspection examples of very good teaching were seen for all pupils. There was some unsatisfactory teaching. Despite good efforts of the teachers, pupils, who have negative, intolerant attitudes to each other and their learning, disrupt lessons. This behaviour means that the overall progress and learning in these lessons are unsatisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use clear examples and explanations. Occasionally, hurried endings of lessons limit the benefit of teaching on learning as there isn't time to review the lesson. Skills are practised and evaluated regularly, although, at present, singing in class is limited. Pupils evaluate their practical work regularly both orally and in written form using their music log books. Describing their achievements in writing enables them to reflect on their achievements and to set targets for the next lesson. The pupils in Years 10 and 11 are enabled to develop good independent learning through structured worksheets that develop their knowledge and understanding of music history, terms and conventions. Pupils want to succeed and the rigorous, consistent and effective marking ensures that they know how to do better. Pupils are generally given clear parameters for practical work, when this does not

happen they do not remain focussed and time is wasted. Pupils are competent users of information and communication technology and benefit from the extensive amount of computer and keyboard equipment within the department. They use composing programs with ease and this benefits all pupils, especially those, who find traditional scoring and notation difficult.

174. Since the previous inspection there have been changes to the structure of the department within the performing arts faculty and the head of department is new to the post. As a result, at present, leadership and management are satisfactory. All members of the department, including visiting staff, contribute their individual strengths and professional expertise to specific areas. The department documentation is thorough and has embraced new initiatives and built upon the established good practise initiated by the performing arts faculty. There is a strong sense of teamwork and co-operation within the department, which is enhanced by the very good technical support provided. Assessment does not convey clearly to pupils how they are progressing in relation to national standards.
175. The variety of extra-curricular activities that are offered and the accommodation within the department are very good. The wide range of teaching and rehearsal areas enables a variety of music making to take place. Quality and commitment from those who attend is high. Teachers give freely of their time at lunchtimes and after school. This ensures that pupils have ample opportunities to practise and develop their skills. Electronic resources are excellent. There are strong links with local primary schools where teachers work on a regular basis. Concerts are held regularly, including the swing band performing regularly within the local community.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

Strengths

- Good leadership of the department.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- Good-quality teaching.

Areas for improvement

- The extent of pupils' involvement in planning and evaluating their work.
- The condition of the surface of the netball courts.
- The shabby impression given by indoor accommodation.
- The lack of opportunity to experience dance in the curriculum of Years 10 and 11.

176. There has been a significant improvement in the number of pupils gaining the higher A*-C grade passes in the GCSE examination since the time of the previous inspection. In July 2002, the number of pupils gaining the higher grade passes was just below the national average, but the numbers of pupils gaining the wider A*-G passes was better than the national average. The results compare very favourably with the results achieved by the same pupils in other subjects.
177. Pupils arrive from their primary schools with a wide range of physical education skills, with some below that expected. They settle into the school quickly, make good progress and, by the time they are 14 years old, most of them attain levels of performance that are in line with national expectations. By the end of Year 9 most pupils are able to apply techniques, skills and rules to aspects of the physical education curriculum, most notably to rugby league, basketball, soccer and netball. Basic skills in these sports are well developed and provide a sound platform for further developments.

178. Pupils continue to make good progress during Years 10 and 11 and by the time they are 16 are attaining levels that are at least in line with those attained nationally and a significant number are doing even better. In health-related fitness lessons, they learn to understand the effects of exercise on their bodies and how to prepare themselves properly for physical activities. They are developing good skills in a range of sporting activities and are able to apply the skills they have practised in full games. They are able to undertake a range of roles including performing, officiating and coaching. Pupils in the examination groups are developing understanding in both the theoretical and practical aspects of the subject. They are becoming confident in their use of the technical language of the subject and most are providing work folders that are well presented and detailed. However, a few examination candidates' progress is inhibited by poor literacy skills.
179. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated and are given much sensitive support by teachers and most reach a very satisfactory level of attainment. Talented pupils are encouraged to extend their skills both in school lessons and with outside clubs.
180. The school has a justifiably high reputation for the sporting performances of its many school teams and individual students. Many have represented Yorkshire in a range of activities and a few have gone on to compete in national competitions. A student in Year 9 competed with distinction in the recent World Dwarf Olympic games.
181. The overall standard of teaching is good. All lessons observed were judged to be at least satisfactory and the majority of lessons were judged to be good or very good. A secure knowledge of the subject is regularly conveyed to the pupils through effective demonstration and good teacher-directed question and answer sessions. Good discipline, which stresses respect, co-operation and effective class management, is a feature of most lessons. Teachers inject fun and enjoyment into their lessons, ensuring that all pupils are given tasks that are sufficiently challenging. Pupils respond very positively to this good-quality teaching. They are enthusiastic, generally well behaved and most are prepared to work hard. Their enjoyment of their lessons is very evident.
182. The curriculum is good, although there is no dance in Years 10 and 11 and staff, including non-specialists, give very freely of their time to provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities that are very well supported.
183. This is a well-led and well-managed department. High-quality documentation covers all aspects of the department's work and helps the delivery of the subject. Departmental displays around the school effectively stimulate pupils' interest in the subject. The accommodation provision is good, although the indoor facilities are in need of refurbishment and the netball court needs resurfacing. Teachers in the department work effectively as a team, support each other and show a strong commitment to their pupils.
184. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection. A new and effective assessment system has been introduced, which relates attainment to National Curriculum levels and has helped improve attainment. There has been a significant improvement in the number of pupils gaining the higher grade passes in the GCSE examination in physical education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

Strengths

- Good-quality teaching in Years 10 and 11.
- The contribution of new staff.

Areas for improvement

- The management of the subject at departmental level, including monitoring and evaluating the work of the department.
- The development of schemes of work to guide teachers.
- The assessment of pupils' work.
- The consistency and quality of marking.

185. In 2002, the non-statutory teacher assessments for Year 9 were incomplete. Where they exist they show that pupils achieved below the national average. In the GCSE examinations in 2002, the examination board acknowledged the loss of the papers from the school. Estimated grades showed performance to be well below average. The most recent results for 2001 show pupils' performance to be well below average.

186. Standards of work seen during the inspection were unsatisfactory. Too much teaching is by non-specialist staff, who lack detailed subject knowledge and are not adequately supported with subject guidance. Overall, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory. They are better in Years 10 and 11. Pupils' achievements in relation to standards are better. They make satisfactory progress in Years 7 to 9, but poorly presented work and weak literacy skills hamper the progress of many pupils. In Years 10 and 11, good teaching contributes to good progress. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and those, who are designated as gifted and talented, is satisfactory. The subject is not well managed and there has been unsatisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

187. Across Years 7 to 9 the quality of teaching ranges from unsatisfactory to good. Overall, learning is satisfactory. Unsatisfactory teaching was characterised by the failure to effectively manage pupils' behaviour, or to use appropriate activities to challenge pupils. For example, in a Year 8 lesson, pupils were set the task of designing a travel brochure for Amritsar. Although many enjoyed the task, time was not used effectively. Pupils spent too long drawing and colouring their work and added little detail about the religious beliefs and characteristics of the society. When teaching was good pupils made better progress with their learning. In a good Year 9 lesson on the Christian responses to good and evil, the teacher established high expectations for behaviour and standards of work. A learning assistant provided good support for pupils with special educational needs. The lesson was delivered with pace and the pupils made good progress with assembling information for a presentation. Overall, standards across Years 7 to 9 are unsatisfactory. The quality of written work is very limited and most writing is confined to simple short answers. Literacy skills are weak and the presentation of work is often poor. Pupils have an unsatisfactory knowledge and understanding of the units of study. For example, they cannot recognise books of the Bible and whether they belong to the New or Old Testaments. Pupils cannot explain the characteristics of the Christian view of God nor can they provide examples of why suffering and evil exist.

188. In Years 10 and 11, the quality of teaching is good and pupils make good progress with their learning. In a very good Year 10 lesson on social harmony, pupils worked effectively in groups to prepare presentations. The teacher established high

expectations and lesson planning and organisation were very effective. There was very good guidance given to the pupils, which enabled them to work effectively with each other. Pupils demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of Christian and Islamic attitudes towards the roles of men and women and to Britain as a multi-faith society. A learning support assistant provided good support for pupils with special educational needs. In a Year 11 lesson on abortion, pupils worked well to produce a role-play to reflect the different attitudes of a Christian, an atheist and a Muslim. Progress seen in lessons was good, but over time it is unsatisfactory and standards of pupils' work are below average. There is insufficient extended writing and levels of literacy are unsatisfactory. Knowledge and understanding of the units of study are unsatisfactory. There are too many gaps in pupils' written work and presentation is often poor.

189. Curriculum provision is unsatisfactory. The written schemes of work are incomplete. There is no planning for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is no planning for citizenship. When additional help is provided for pupils with special educational needs they make good progress. However, provision for pupils with special needs and those designated as gifted and talented is underdeveloped. Assessment procedures are being developed in line with national guidelines, but there is no comprehensive picture of pupils' performance across the school. The quality of marking is poor, there is little guidance given to pupils and there is too much work that has not been marked on a regular basis.
190. Leadership and management of the department are unsatisfactory. Although the quality of teaching is satisfactory too much is delivered by non-specialists, who lack the subject expertise to effectively develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. The lack of coherent subject guidance and the co-ordination of a large team are additional weaknesses. The quality of accommodation is satisfactory and there is some good-quality display in the main teaching rooms. Provision of resources is unsatisfactory; there are insufficient textbooks and artefacts. Approaches to monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and other aspects of the department are unsatisfactory.

PART E: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

In the inspection, nine subjects and courses were inspected and are reported on in detail. Work in other subjects and courses was sampled and contributed to the overall picture of teaching and learning in the school.

The table below shows entry and performance information for courses completed in 2002, for which national comparisons are not yet published.

GCE AS level courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art	4	100		0		40	
Art (Graphics)	7	100		0		37	
Art (Textiles)	5	100		0		36	
Biology	12	84		25		31	
Business Studies	16	94		43		37.5	
Chemistry	4	75		0		22	
Computing	4	100		25		42	
Drama	6	100		16		28.3	
Economics	11	100		54		43.6	
English Language	13	85		38		36.9	
English Literature	11	82		27		28.2	
French	2	0		0		0	
Geography	1	100		0		50	
General Studies	5	20		0		6	
German	1	100		0		10	
History	2	50		50		25	
Law	18	73		22		26.6	
Mathematics	15	13		0		4.7	
Media Studies	12	92		25		37.5	
Physics	7	72		14		20	
Psychology	12	75		16		20.8	
Sociology	12	90		33		34.2	
Spanish	2	100		0		35	
Sports Studies	4	50		0		12.5	

GCE A level and AVCE courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art	4	100		75		8	
Graphics	5	100		41		6	
Textiles	1	100		60		7	
Biology	9	78		22		3	
Bus Stud	9	100		44		6.7	
Chemistry	2	100		50		6	
Drama	7	100		29		5.7	
Economics	5	83		34		5.3	
English Language	13	100		8		5	
English Literature	6	100		34		6.3	
General Studies	10	100		20		4.6	
Geography	3	100		0		6	
German	1	100		0		6	
History	5	100		60		6.8	
Law	6	100		0		3.7	
Mathematics	8	63		25		3.5	
Media	11	100		27		5.8	
Music	1	100		0		6	
Physics	4	100		25		6.5	
Psychology	11	91		27		4.7	
Sociology	7	100		83.4		8	
Sports/PE	6	83		0		2.6	

Intermediate vocational qualifications

Qualification	No in final year	% gaining qualification		% gaining merit		% gaining distinction	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
AVCE		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art	2	100					
Business	5	100					
Health and social care	5	100		20			
Information and communications technology	3	100					
Science	1	100					

SUBJECTS AND COURSES GROUPED IN CURRICULUM AREAS

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCES

Mathematics

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

Strengths

- Leadership and management are good.
- The standard of teaching is good.
- Linked provision of courses offers good learning opportunities for students.
- Realistic requirements for entry to advanced courses has improved the quality of learning.

Areas for improvement

- Take-up of the course by students is very low.
- Standards attained in examinations are below average.
- Day-to-day assessment of students' work lacks specific targets for improvement.

191. Students' work from A level and AS level courses was inspected. There was no observation of Year 13 classes, or further mathematics lessons as they are taught in the partner institution. Year 12 lessons are taught on both sites and some have a mixture of students from both schools. The number of students entering mathematics courses in the sixth form is very low. The level of ability on entry to these courses, until September 2002, has been below average; mostly recruited from intermediate GCSE courses.

192. A level results in 2002, at the end of Year 13, were well below average. However, the very small number of candidates makes further comparisons invalid. This continued the trend of low achievement evident over the past three years. 2002 AS results were well below average, if compared to the 2001 national data. Of the 15 students entered for the examination, only two were successful in gaining a grade and progressed to study A level mathematics. Analysis of students' performances indicates that results were below expectations, representing underachievement. There has been disruption in subject management and staffing during the critical years for these students, which adversely affected their progress and attainment.

193. The standard of work produced by current Year 13 students is above average. Work shows fluency, well-expanded answers and sound methodology. No lessons were observed with Year 13 students, but files show evidence of independent learning and self-assessment of progress. The progress in lessons of Year 12 students is good. The standard of students in Year 12 is average overall, but extends over the full range of ability expected of advanced level students. However, many students lack confidence in applying their understanding of mathematics to new situations. This was evident in a lesson on statistics in which students needed a lot of encouragement to apply what they knew to examination questions. Year 12 students learn well during lessons. They display good understanding and produce solid methodology and accurate solutions. Students are gaining in maturity in their learning and relationships, but some are reluctant to voice their understanding or concerns during lessons. Students mix well with those from their partnership school. To avoid the difficulty of access to their teachers when based on a different site, teachers encourage students to seek help from any mathematics teacher and to view both schools as one. Small

group sizes further enhance the learning opportunities for students. Here, the free flow of ideas between teachers and students ensures that each student has full understanding of the developing topic.

194. The teaching of AS level mathematics is good. The high quality of teachers' subject knowledge ensures insightful delivery of new ideas to students. Teachers have a good understanding of students' abilities and are able to target their questioning to ensure students are learning well. Lessons are typified by high expectations that students will follow the development of new ideas. However, often too much assistance is offered, which reduces the challenge to students to think for themselves. Well-targeted lessons, focusing on students' difficulties, help them gain confidence in their ability to tackle different styles of questions. However, the day-to-day assessment of students' work lacks evidence of identification of errors and of targets to improve attainment. Very good student-teacher relationships within the classroom and the willingness of teachers to assist students at any time are developing students' willingness to seek support for their learning. Students are taking increasing responsibility for their own learning and by Year 13 this is evident in the work of students.
195. New management and leadership are good. There is good support by talented teachers, who share the goal of improving standards. The sharing of teaching with the partnership school has led to students being able to study mathematics with a wider combination of other subjects. The small numbers wishing to study further mathematics are able to do so within this partnership. New entry requirements to advanced courses have resulted in recruitment of students, who are more suited to the study of advanced mathematics and, thus, have a greater probability of success. Recruitment to mathematics courses has been low. A review of the courses offered is underway to provide a wider range of courses for students for whom advanced mathematics is unsuitable.
196. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. The results have fluctuated widely and there has been underachievement in past years. The current students are achieving well and are in line to gain their target grades. Current stability of staffing and changes to management have rectified the underachievement evident in recent years and plans for further developments in the provision of ICT resources place the department in a good position for growth.

Biology

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

Strengths

- Good teaching by a team of subject specialists, who present the subject in different ways.
- Good leadership by the head of faculty, who monitors well the work of the department.
- Very good relationships between the teachers and students, which helps learning.

Areas for improvement

- In some lessons, there are insufficient opportunities for students to work on their own to develop independence as learners.
- Occasionally, teachers talk for too long and so students are not presented with sufficient intellectual challenge.
- The skills of writing both for answering longer questions and writing essays need developing.

197. In the years up to 2002, the attainment of the small number of students taking A level biology has been below or well below national results with few candidates attaining higher grades. In the first AS results in 2001, almost one fifth of all candidates attained a higher grade A or B and this improved to one quarter in 2002. However, not every student in either 2001 or 2002 attained a pass grade at A level. All students start the course having attained at least grade C in GCSE double award science and most make satisfactory progress given their starting points. However, in 2002, there were several students, who failed to attain their expected grade; one or two of these did not attend lessons regularly.
198. The standards of work seen reflect the examination results with a wide range of attainment within each group. In one lesson, the majority of Year 12 students had more difficulty than is usual in explaining how the structure of DNA could be altered to help cure a disease. In another, their attainment was more in line with what is expected when they could explain how different chemical processes in the body are affected by exercise. In Year 13, the majority of students were in line with expected levels when they critically analysed results from a practical exercise and suggested improvements.
199. Leadership of the subject is good. Each year the head of faculty analyses examination results to identify areas of weakness, which may lead to underachievement. Last year's analysis identified weak areas in coursework, essay writing and in relating one area of the syllabus to another. Steps have already been taken to address these weaknesses.
200. Students' attitudes to the subject are good and there are very good relationships between staff and students. Students appreciate the extra help offered to them by staff both in and out of lessons and are helped to develop their maturity and social skills when they support lower-school pupils in Ecoweek.
201. Teaching is good overall and sometimes very good. Staff have very good subject knowledge and bring a range of experience in different fields of biology. In the better lessons, there are plenty of opportunities for students to work on their own and develop independence as learners. Teachers help this process by the use of challenging and probing questions designed to make students think for themselves. Practical activities are used well to support theory. However, in the lessons where there is too much teacher input and students take little part, learning is restricted. Whilst some students learn well, for the majority, learning is satisfactory as they rely on the teacher too much.
202. There are no specific laboratories for use by the sixth form and resources are adequate, including textbook provision. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

BUSINESS

Business Studies

Overall, the quality of provision in business studies is **good**.

Strengths

- All students entered for business education examinations in the last three years have obtained pass grades.
- The achievement of students is good.
- The quality of teaching is good with teachers using their knowledge of the subject to explain issues and support students well.
- The leadership and management of the business studies department are good.

Areas for improvement

- The retention rate for students following the Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education course.
- Links with business in order to allow students to apply business theories more effectively.

203. The department offers AS, A level, AVCE and GNVQ intermediate courses in business education and retention rates are good, except in AVCE.

204. Small numbers of candidates have followed business education courses in recent years. In 2002, all nine candidates entered for the A-level examination obtained pass grades, including four with grade Bs. Students entered for the AVCE and GNVQ intermediate examinations also passed. In 2000 and 2001, all candidates entered for business education examinations obtained pass grades.

205. By the end of Year 13, standards in work seen during the inspection were in line with the national average. Most students have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of management theories and business and marketing strategies. They can apply what they have learned successfully to case studies of firms and are able to use information and communication technology effectively to carry out research and to complete notes and assignments. Year 13 students following the AVCE course in business were able to carry out convincing comparisons of the customer care services provided by two large limited public companies basing their findings clearly on primary and secondary data. The achievement of students is good. They make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of business concepts and applying what they have learnt to business situations.

206. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned with clear objectives and a detailed structure that includes a range of appropriate teaching approaches and case studies provides access to up-to-date business information. Teachers use their knowledge of the subject to explain issues and support students well. Marking is helpful and done on a regular basis to provide feedback to students working on assignments. Good relationships are a feature of all business education lessons. Therefore, the quality of learning is good. Students are well motivated and their views of the subject are positive.

207. The leadership and management of the business studies department are good. Courses are well co-ordinated by the head of business studies, leading a small team of specialist teachers. The helpful departmental handbook contains appropriate documentation and a clear development plan; monitoring and evaluation procedures are good. A suite of rooms provides a business-like learning environment and students

benefit from good resources. The department has made good progress since the last inspection. There has been the successful application of information and communication technology in business education courses. Links with business have provided good learning opportunities for students.

HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE and TRAVEL

Physical Education

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

Strengths

- Good teaching.
- Enthusiastic students.

Areas for improvement

- Develop the independent learning skills of the students.

208. As part of a consortium of three institutions the department is offering students the opportunity to take both AS and A level physical education examinations. This offer has been taken up by enthusiastic groups of students. In July 2002, the students taking the A level course gained grades that reflected their AS grade passes and were just below the national average. Four students took the AS examinations and all gained pass grade marks that were in line with the national average.
209. The standards reached by current Year 13 students, as seen in lessons and in their written work, are in line with the national average and reflect their AS results. Teachers adopt a challenging and positive approach to their work that enables students to use their skills of analysis to draw out ideas. Students show a high level of commitment to their work and have produced very good coursework folders. They write at length on a variety of topics such as drug abuse in sport, effective sponsorship and the influence of media in sport. Students are able to ask perceptive questions of the teachers using appropriate technical language. Most display a range of good discussion skills as they discuss, argue and defend viewpoints. Students were observed debating the influence of the English public school system and were able to put forward their view vigorously and with conviction.
210. Students in Year 12 have made good progress since they started the course in September 2002. In lessons, they work conscientiously, are attentive and concentrate well. They show real rapport with their teachers and relationships when working in groups are good. Most are moving on successfully from their GCSE work into new aspects. Students were observed discussing the difference between excellence and elitism in sport and were able to make highly perceptive suggestions on how a national strategy for achieving excellence in sport could be implemented.
211. The students have very positive views of the subject and the teaching they receive. The course has lived up to the expectations of most of them and they are thoroughly enjoying the subject.
212. The teaching is of good quality and has a significant impact on students' achievement. Their enthusiasm for the subject and wide subject knowledge enable staff to interest and motivate students. Teachers are aware of the different ways in which students learn and they work hard to use methods and to provide them with resources to meet their needs. However, students need to be more independent when researching their

topics and not rely too heavily on their teachers to provide them with everything they need.

213. The department is well managed, with a clear sense of direction. Planning and documentation are good and help the effective delivery of the subject. Access to information and communication technology is available in school and students often use their own computers to present their work and to gain more information about particular topics.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

Drama and theatre studies

Overall, the quality of provision in drama and theatre studies is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Good teaching enables students to achieve well in lessons.
- Students have positive attitudes, work hard and enjoy the practical nature of the subject.
- The subject makes good contributions to the teaching of key skills and to students' personal development.
- Good use is being made of additional funding to enhance resources and to increase the range of extra-curricular opportunities.

Areas for improvement

- Students do not write enough about their experiences and opinions and this impedes their performance in the written AS and A level papers.
- Not enough use is made of the analysis of assessment data to identify how attainment can be improved.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory.

214. Attainment is below average. Numbers taking the subject in recent years have been too small to make further comparisons with national data. All but two of the seven candidates in 2002 achieved grades slightly lower than those predicted by their performance in their GCSE examinations. Although more girls than boys take the subject there is no evidence of any significant difference in their performance.

215. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are below average, but the standards achieved in practical work are significantly better than those achieved in the written aspects of the subject. In the lessons observed and in the devised work recorded on video, students display satisfactory performance skills. They are able to sustain character in scripted work, use space creatively, vary voice and movement appropriately and respond to others in the drama. They have reasonable knowledge of practitioners such as Stanislavski and Brecht. Higher-attaining students act with conviction, vary pace and tone and contribute imaginative ideas about staging and style to move the drama on. Average- and lower-attaining students exhibit a narrower range of skills and find it more difficult to sustain focus, but nevertheless enjoy their drama and make good creative and imaginative effort. Students' achievement is reduced, however, by below average attainment in writing. The writing that they do, even reviews and reflections on live performances, tend to be in the form of notes, rarely revised and expanded or marked by teachers and only very occasionally sustained at any length. This means that when they take written examination papers they are inexperienced at developing their ideas and opinions about plays, performances and related issues in writing. These observations are confirmed by the lower grades awarded in the written papers.

216. They display positive attitudes towards the subject, enjoying its practical nature and collaborating well to produce effective pieces of theatre. They spend many of their free lessons rehearsing and improving their work and researching information from the Internet.
217. The quality of teaching and learning overall is good. Lessons are well planned to provide students with a good range of challenging activities taken at a brisk pace, but with time to reflect on what they have achieved and how to improve. The use of assessment in lessons is good and students are well involved in assessing their own and others' work. In one Year 12 lesson when students rapidly adapted their performance at regular intervals to the styles suggested by the teacher, they learnt much about the way a script can be interpreted in different ways. In two Year 13 lessons, students working on a performance of 'Low Level Panic' were helped to deepen their understanding of the characters by creating a preliminary story for them and using this to inform characterisation. Teachers ensure that good opportunities are provided for the development of the key skills of working together and problem solving and the subject also makes a positive contribution to students' personal development. Students experience a sense of achievement through their performing work and the texts they study offer many opportunities to consider a range of moral and social issues.
218. The recently appointed head of department is well supported by more experienced members of the performing arts faculty. Good schemes of work are being developed, but they require more writing experiences and examination practice. A related area still to be addressed is the use made of assessment data to monitor students' progress and inform the modification of the curriculum. A strength of the department's work is the range and quality of enhancement activities. There are opportunities to perform in the annual musical and, in conjunction with Leeds Metropolitan University, to work with professional actors. A good number of theatre visits are offered. A particular highlight is the annual visit to London to see productions both at the Globe Theatre and in the West End. Funding from the school's status as a Performing Arts College has been well used to increase the resources available, including a new digital and programmable lighting board and a high-quality sound system. The accommodation is unsatisfactory; spaces are not well maintained and many fittings are broken. However, using the additional funding, a technician has been appointed and he is already tackling some of these problems as well as installing network connections to improve the access to information and communication technology. Improvement since the previous inspection is good. This is an improving department and is well placed to effect further improvement.

ART AND DESIGN

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

Strengths

- Standards are well above the national average and have risen significantly since the last inspection.
- Students make very good progress and achieve very well.
- Students show high levels of interest, enthusiasm and motivation and relationships are good.
- The quality of teachers' planning and subject knowledge is very good.
- Very good management and teamwork.

Areas for improvement

- The accommodation is too cramped and too small for older students.
- The numbers of students studying the subject at AS and A2 levels.

219. As the students were working on examinations during the period of inspection no teaching was seen. Judgements are made from samples of work, discussions with teachers and students, displays and the grading of the assignments being completed during their examination.

220. The standards students achieve in their AS and A level studies and examinations are well above the average of the national expectation. Standards have considerably increased since the last inspection. In the 2001 examinations, students attained well above average levels. Most students attained the higher A and B grades. In the as yet unvalidated 2002 examinations, students' overall attainment was also high. In the recently introduced vocational course, the AVCE, where students study alongside another local school, well above average standards were attained in the 2001 examination. There is no significant difference in attainment between male and female students.

221. In Year 12, students sustain and develop their skills from their GCSE course and are able to interpret these skills in drawing and painting and three-dimensional work in greater depth. Across Years 12 and 13, sketchbooks, portfolios of work and displays demonstrate a wealth of research and experimentation that is transferred into final projects that are of a high quality. They show a very good development of technique and ideas and a good understanding of design and composition. Students apply their well-developed skills with a feeling and sensitivity for the media being used. They show a very good analysis of their work influenced across a wide and relevant range of research involving the interpretation of the work of many artists. They show a very good application of their information and communication technology (ICT) skills in image distortion and development to produce work, influenced by their wide range of research, in their own styles.

222. The quality of teachers' planning is very good. There is a very good scheme of work that interprets very well the examination board requirements. There is a very good quality and range of learning opportunities and good equality of access and opportunity. This input supports very well the students' acquisition of skill, knowledge and understanding. Most teaching is planned for on an individual basis within the small groups. This is supported by a very good diagnosis of and provision for individual learning needs and a high quality and accessibility of information, advice and guidance provided to the students, who have a very good self-knowledge of their learning. Progress and achievement are monitored regularly and students know what they need to do to improve. A good range of opportunities is provided for two- and three-dimensional work.

223. Students respond very positively to the high-quality sensitive help given. They use their time well, taking great care with the development and presentation of their work, striving successfully to achieve well. They benefit from challenging targets and activities. They show high levels of interest, motivation and enthusiasm for their work. An increasing number of students go onto higher studies in art and design when they leave the school.
224. There is very good leadership of the sixth-form course by the head of art and design. The very good teamwork supported by the other two teachers, who teach the course, ensures varied teaching styles and gives the students very good levels of individual help to check progress and suggest development and research needs. Resources are very good with the students making very good use of the wide range of opportunities to use ICT. The sole drawback is that accommodation is in need of re-decoration and refurbishment and provides the students with limited space and opportunities to suitably store their work, or to leave it out while it is being developed.

HUMANITIES

Psychology

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

Strengths

- Students make good progress, especially in Year 12, as the result of good teaching by very knowledgeable specialist staff.
- Effective use of computer technology by students and staff motivates the students and improves the quality of their learning.
- Carefully selected additional course materials improve the balance and range of reading across the course modules.
- The South East Leeds Partnership arrangements extend the range of subjects provided post-16 to include psychology for students, who might otherwise have to go elsewhere.

Areas for improvement

- Transfer arrangements from GCSE do not adequately prepare students for the very different learning styles of post-16 provision.
- Unclear lines of management responsibility reduce the impact of the monitoring and analysis of teaching and learning.
- Provision of specialist texts in the learning resources centre is inadequate both for the number of students and for the range of aspects studied.

225. The South East Leeds Partnership arrangement includes psychology and supports a relatively small, but growing number of students. A visiting teacher from Joseph Priestly College provides the AS course at Rodillian School while the Year 13 students go to the college for their lessons.
226. Psychology is a recently introduced subject. In 2001, four candidates all achieved pass grades, although none earned the higher A-B grades. The standards achieved in 2002, as reported by the school, indicate that in AS (Year 12) two thirds of students, who entered for the exam, obtained A-E pass grades, with about a fifth obtaining higher A-C grades.
227. Students in Year 11 receive a description of the A Level course, but last year did not have an opportunity to sample the styles of teaching and learning. Year 12 students find the change in approach from GCSE very challenging. They feel overwhelmed by the reading demands and the new ideas and specialist terms they meet. The school

encourages all students with a genuine interest to start the subject, but, in each of the last two years, about a quarter did not continue after experiencing the first month of the course. A decision made by the college to enter Year 12 students for a module exam at the end of the first term resulted in 80 per cent achieving unclassified 'U' grades. Students stated that they had not yet received any information about their performance and could only suggest that they had not completed sufficient reading. Overall, students make satisfactory progress and those entering the course with lower GCSE grades achieve well. Work seen confirms that standards generally are rising as students and teachers come to understand the assessment processes, especially for the practical coursework.

228. There were very limited opportunities to observe teaching during the inspection, but interviews with students and examination of work files confirm that standards of teaching and learning are good overall. Students know their predicted grades, but these are often higher than work discussions would suggest. The one lesson seen combined very good teaching with effective group work. Students can suggest simple examples that link with research findings, but do not sufficiently analyse and compare different theories. Students' anecdotal approach tends to discourage them from developing the more advanced skills of analysis and this can lose marks in the longer exam questions. The course is carefully structured and good planning includes a range of teacher-selected and photocopied reading. However, there is heavy reliance on the main course text and the very limited additional specialist textbook resources do not sufficiently encourage independent reading or learning, especially by students in Year 13. Internal timetable arrangements in Rodillian mean that there is no specialist room in which to locate psychology journals and articles or to display students' work. Use of computer technology is good, as in one lesson where Year 12 students made confident and effective use of PowerPoint projection to share their analyses of experimental data. Students appreciate the quality of their lessons and the good one-to-one support from their teacher, but Year 13 only meet with their college-based tutor once a week. They report that this delay can reduce the quality of some of their assignments.
229. Leadership and management in psychology are unsatisfactory. The use of the college-school link has resulted in provision of an extra, and increasingly popular, A Level course. However, because of the way the subject has been added to the curriculum, there is no clear overall subject leadership and management. This has resulted in some significant shortcomings in monitoring teaching, tracking student progress, providing background resources, agreeing on course and exam entry requirements and briefing students adequately.

ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

English

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

Strengths

- Teaching is good, particularly in the areas of curriculum planning and lesson preparation.
- Teachers work collaboratively to share good practice.

Areas for improvement

- There are too few male students studying the subject and the standards attained by those who do are low.
- Students fail to contribute their own ideas and views in lessons and they rely too heavily on the teacher.

230. Results in the 2001 English Literature Advanced level examinations for the female Year 13 cohort were below average. All students passed, but none attained at the higher grades. Achievement, however, was satisfactory when account is taken of their levels of attainment on entry to the course. There was a marked improvement in results in 2002 when more than half of the students obtained a grade A or B. The publication of national comparison data is likely to show that standards in 2002 were above average. Results in 2001 were similar to those obtained at the time of the previous inspection, but the 2002 results were better. The standards attained by the female students in the 2001 AS English literature examinations at the end of Year 12 were above average and the progress they made was, therefore, good. The male students, however, performed poorly and their results were well below average. Results in 2002 were better with all students attaining at expected levels. Retention rates from Year 12 to Year 13 are good.
231. Results in the 2001 English language A level examinations were below average for both the male and female students, but, again, progress over time was satisfactory. Female students attained national average standards in the 2001 Advanced Supplementary examinations, but the male students' results were below national expectations. Advanced level results in 2002 were an improvement on 2001 and students attained at expected levels. Progress was good.
232. The average standard of English literature work seen in Year 13 during the course of the inspection reflects students' levels of attainment in the 2002 AS level examinations. The quality of work is better than at the time of the previous inspection when attainment was below average. Students' extended critical writing shows they have developed appropriate skills and confidence in literary analysis and they make good use of the language of literary criticism when expressing their ideas. However, there was an absence of active student participation in lessons. They were attentive and conscientious, but passive in their responses and they expected the teacher to do the work for them. In the lesson seen on the World War One poets, students took notes and responded to questions, but they did not come forward with their own ideas and they seldom challenged or questioned the teacher. The standards of work seen in Advanced level English language reflect the students' attainment at the end of Year 12 with the young women meeting national expectations. Achievement in both the Advanced level subjects is satisfactory.
233. Levels of achievement in the Year 12 courses were also satisfactory. The standard of work seen in the Year 12 AS English literature course was close to national averages, but no students were working at levels equivalent to the higher grades. They were

confident in putting forward their own views and supporting them with textual references. They were actively engaged in the lesson on the poetry of Christine Rossetti, for example, and understood the narrative, themes and symbolism of 'Goblin Market'. The length of the lesson, however, adversely affected the extent of their learning. Students cannot be expected to sustain for two hours the full intellectual effort the course requires. Standards in the Year 12 AS English language course were in line with expectations.

234. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a thorough command of their subject. They also know the students well, having taught many of them when they were in the main school. Planning is detailed and thorough and addresses students' individual needs. Support is targeted effectively in lessons to help the least competent and challenge the able. The quality of lesson preparation is a strength of the teaching and it is having an impact on raising students' confidence. Teachers have a thorough understanding of the requirements of the examination boards and so discipline their students to write concisely. Teachers also offer guidance outside of lessons and this inclusive approach contributes significantly to the satisfactory levels of achievement. Students speak highly of the support they receive and appreciate the provision made to extend their enjoyment and understanding of the subject outside of taught time.
235. The leadership and management of the subject at post-16 level are good. There are appropriate systems in place to monitor students' performance and teachers work closely together so that best practice is shared. In discussing their work, teachers are open to new ideas and are able to evaluate strengths and areas for development. They also make provision outside of taught time for students to increase their understanding and enjoyment of the subject. Improvement since the last inspection has been good because the curriculum provision is now broader and more responsive to the needs of students. Media Studies is also offered and students achieve well because of the very good quality of the teaching and the good resources.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

FRENCH

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

Strengths

- Joint provision arrangements are working well, giving access to further study of the language.
- Good teaching promotes high standards.
- Good use is made of authentic materials, with the foreign-language assistant making a significant contribution.

Areas for improvement

- Some students' prior attainment does not provide a sound basis for the AS course.
- Poor attendance obviates the impact of good teaching.

236. Joint provision with a neighbouring school has allowed very small numbers of students to continue to study French in the sixth form. In 2002, one female student gained an A grade in the GCE A-level examination, building on high grades at GCSE and AS level. At AS level, one female student was ungraded.
237. Currently, students in both years are struggling to make progress, largely due to the fact that C grades at GCSE have not given them the depth of language knowledge needed to embark on a demanding course. In addition, persistent poor attendance has affected progress. In the Year 12 lesson seen, there was little to oral discussion and

some weak pronunciation. Written work contains a lot of basic errors, with no evidence of completed extended writing. But, standards are better in Year 13, demonstrating improvement over time in Year 13.

238. In the two lessons seen, teaching was good in Year 12 and very good in Year 13, where very able students made very good progress in discussing a range of prescribed topics and current events. Good subject knowledge allows the teacher to conduct lessons almost entirely in French, providing a good model and improving listening skills. However, there should be more insistence on students using French as routine, especially in Year 12. Planning and methods are good, ensuring coverage of the syllabus and the range of skills. Activities are well varied to encompass discussion of prescribed topics and grammatical acquisition and there is good flexibility to allow consideration of current events such as the war in Iraq. Consequently, students learn to propose arguments and to accept or challenge the views of others as they apply increasingly complex language. An experienced foreign-language assistant makes a significant contribution, both in class and in individual sessions, to improve pronunciation and accuracy. She also supplements teachers' efforts to provide interesting and relevant authentic materials to stimulate work. Students are encouraged to research topics, especially by using the Internet in their study time. Marking is good. Errors are well diagnosed and small group sizes allow individual discussion of these, with clear direction on future improvement. Homework is set regularly and promotes independence in learning.
239. Joint arrangements are well managed. Schemes of work are basic, but provide a suitable framework for study. Regular contact between teachers from the two schools enables them to share a clear view of students' progress. However, given this information, teachers seem unwilling to dissuade struggling students from continuing studies, which are unlikely to lead to a worthwhile accreditation. Travel arrangements between the two schools seem satisfactory, but time was lost at the start of all lessons observed as most students arrived late, even where they did not need to travel. Though the nature of much of the work improves students' moral, social and cultural development, there are currently no arrangements for further enrichment through visits, or links with schools abroad. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection, with good teaching sustained.