

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL**

Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119780

Headteacher: Mr M Callagher

Lead inspector: Mike McLachlan

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> February 2004

Inspection number: 258605

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:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	11 - 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	878
School address:	St Vincent's Road Fulwood Preston Lancashire
Postcode:	PR2 8QY
Telephone number:	01772 716912
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Wignall
Date of previous inspection:	11 <sup>th</sup> May 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Corpus Christi is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic high school for boys and girls aged 11-16 situated in the north of Preston, Lancashire. The number of pupils at the school has risen steadily and is now 878. Pupils are drawn from a wide area, with around three quarters of pupils having to travel to school by bus. A high proportion of pupils suffer from social and economic disadvantages and at 22.5 per cent, the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above the national average. Because the school is a considerable distance from where the pupils are drawn, the school does not have access to the additional funding streams available to other school in these districts. Close liaison has been established with its five main partner primary schools ensuring good transition from primary to secondary education. About 90 per cent of pupils are British and white, the remaining 10 per cent coming from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. According to national assessments of pupils in Year 6 in primary schools and the school's own tests, the overall general level of ability on entry is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is about average, although the proportion of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need at 3 per cent is above the national average. In the main, pupils have Statements because they have moderate learning difficulties or dyslexia. A very small number have Statements because of physical or emotional and behavioural needs. There are very few pupils (seven) with English as an additional language at the school and none is in the early stages of learning English.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3654	Mike McLachlan	Lead inspector	
9052	Helen Barter	Lay inspector	
33653	Sally Robson	Team inspector	English
23082	Graham Loach	Team inspector	Mathematics
4738	David Berrisford	Team inspector	Science
17156	Edward Graham	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs
27082	Geoff Henshall	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages Citizenship
32340	Peter McKay	Team inspector	Geography History
17015	Lawrence Denholm	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
31701	Graeme Rudland	Team inspector	Music
14446	Barry Simmons	Team inspector	Physical education
20619	Jenny Hazlewood	Team inspector	Business education English as an additional language

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good and improving school with very good features.** Pupils achieve well in a caring, Christian community because of good leadership and teaching. A very good ethos leads to positive attitudes and good behaviour by the pupils. The school gives good value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- The new headteacher provides very good leadership and has quickly and sensitively created a strong team based on the well laid foundations of the previous leadership.
- The headteacher is well supported by a governing body that is able, talented and very well led and together they are providing a clear direction for rapidly improving the school.
- Overall standards in GCSE examinations are improving in line with national trends.
- The attendance of a minority of pupils in Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils are very well cared for and have a strong loyalty towards the school.
- The very good links with Preston College and other providers ensure a good curriculum in Years 10 and 11 which is improving standards and motivating pupils of all abilities.
- Planning for lessons does not always identify the needs of the most able.
- Reports to parent do not give sufficient detail of the levels pupils achieve, the areas they need to improve and targets for development.
- Overall middle management is good but is unsatisfactory in some subjects.
- Aspects of accommodation are unsatisfactory in some areas and particularly poor in music.

**Improvement since the last inspection has been good.** GCSE examination results, having dipped, are steadily improving in line with the national picture and a very good vocational curriculum has been developed. Overall, the main weaknesses identified in the last report have been addressed although the school has not improved library provision or the overall accommodation, which is in parts unsatisfactory or poor. Major refurbishment plans are in hand but are progressing slowly. A commendable feature is the way the governing body, staff and pupils have courageously remained committed to improvement after the unexpected death of the previous well-respected headteacher.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall standards of work seen during the inspection are average in Years 7 to 9 indicating good achievement because pupils start school with below average standards. Although the standards attained by the pupils in the end of Year 9 tests in 2003 were well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science, the standards of work seen are average in English and science but remain below average in mathematics. Standards seen in other subjects are average apart from art and physical education where they are above average. Compared with the achievements of schools with similar social intakes, standards are average. In 2003, by the end of Year 9, progress in mathematics and science was average but progress in English was untypically well below average, given it had been average in the previous two years.

#### Year 11 results

The table shows the standards achieved at the end of Year 11 based on average points scores in GCSE and GNVQ examinations.

Performance in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11, compared with average points	all schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
	D	D	D	D

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average*

*Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 9*

In Years 10 and 11, the standards seen in the inspection are at least average in all subjects apart from business education and this improving picture represents good overall achievement. In 2003

standards at GCSE were below national averages but were above average compared with schools with similar social intakes and just below average compared with pupils' prior attainment. In 2003, GCSE standards were above national averages in history, music, physical education and art and in line in design technology. They were below national averages in science, mathematics, English and ICT and well below in geography and modern foreign languages. The numbers of pupils achieving the top grades is lower than the national picture. Overall girls' achievement is better than boys'. Pupils from different minority ethnic groups achieve as well as their peers, as do pupils with special educational needs. The school contributes well to the pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Overall attitudes and behaviour are good. Attendance is unsatisfactory but improving.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The good teaching leads to good learning. Satisfactory but improving systems are in place to assess what the pupils know and to track their progress in Years 10 and 11 but reports to parents do not provide sufficient detail on standards achieved and how pupils may improve. The curriculum is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 but good in Years 10 and 11 because it is very effectively enriched by the very good links with Preston College and other providers which give pupils access to good practical experiences and the newer vocational courses. There is good provision for the many different cultural groups within the school. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported. The school provides very good care and guidance; pupils feel safe and secure and enjoy their time in school. Overall links with parents are satisfactory. Links with local primary schools and the communities it serves are strong, providing additional support to the pupils and the school.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership of the new headteacher is very good. He has a sensitive, consultative style with an imaginative approach to improvement. In his short time in school he has extended the skills and responsibilities of senior staff building on the good work established by his predecessor. The governing body is very well led, informed, supportive yet challenging. It has grown in strength and expertise and is clear about the priorities for improvement and the pace needed to bring about change. The governors and headteacher are well supported by committed senior managers and department leaders who are good overall and who welcome the new impetus for improvement.

### **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Few parents attended the parents meeting and responded to the questionnaires, although they and the pupils have very positive views on what the school provides and achieves. They are very supportive of the changes introduced by the new headteacher and governors. Parents are particularly positive about the accessibility of staff and the consultative style adopted by the school. Parents and pupils had some concerns over the behaviour of a minority of pupils, but behaviour during the inspection was good and was well managed by the school. Some parents felt that reports were not informative enough and inspectors agreed with this view.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

#### **The most important things the school should do to improve are:**

- reduce the proportion of authorised and unauthorised absences and ensure, as far as possible, that parents fulfil their responsibilities in this area;
- increase the number of pupils who attain the highest grades in national examinations and provide more targeted work for the most able in lessons;
- ensure reports to parents give a clear indication of the levels achieved by pupils and what the pupils need to know, do and understand to improve;
- address accommodation deficiencies particularly in music, physical education and art;
- strengthen the leadership and management of history, geography and business education;

#### **and to meet statutory requirements:**

- include information on special needs provision in the governors' annual report to parents.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall pupils' achievement is **good** because pupils start school with below average levels of achievement and the standards of work seen by the end of Year 11 are mostly average or occasionally better. Results in national tests at the end of Year 9 were below average in 2003. Results in GCSE examinations were below average in 2003 but overall the trend is one of improvement in line with the national picture.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in GCSE have been steadily improving.
- Achievement is good because the standards of work seen at the end of Years 9 and 11 are average while the overall attainment on entry to the school is below average.
- GCSE results in Year 11 are better than schools with similar free school meals though below average when compared to schools with similar attainment at the end of Year 9.
- There are fewer pupils than average achieving the highest grades in GCSE examinations.
- The numbers of pupils achieving at least one GCSE pass is below average, although in line with the schools' targets.
- Overall standards and achievement in art and physical education are above average.
- Standards are poor in business education.

#### Commentary

1. Pupils' ability on entry to the school, measured by the national tests at the end of Year 6, is below average and there are few more able pupils.

#### Key Stage 3 - Years 7 to 9

##### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 9 – average point scores in 2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.8 (33.8)	33.4(33.3)
Mathematics	33.6 (34.0)	35.4(34.7)
Science	32.1 (32.5)	33.6(33.3)

*There were 176 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. Overall standards of work seen during the inspection are average in Years 7 to 9 indicating good achievement because pupils start school with below average standards. Although results in national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 9 in 2003 are below average compared with all schools, overall they are average compared to schools with similar social intakes. Results in English declined significantly over the previous years, but the school's teacher assessments and work seen during the inspection showed a better standard. Standards in the national tests for mathematics and science are below national averages.
3. Standards of work seen during the inspection remain just below national average in mathematics but average in English and science. In 2003, by the end of Year 9, progress in mathematics and science was average but progress in English was untypically well below average, given it had been average in the previous two years. Standards in all other subjects measured by teacher assessments are in line with national averages, apart from art where they are above average. Standards of work seen are average in all subjects apart from art and

physical education where they are above average, representing good achievement given pupils' prior attainments.

## Key Stage 4 - Years 10 and 11

### Standards in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11 in 2003

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	39.2 (38)	52 (50)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	87 (88)	91 (91)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	93 (97)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil best 8 subjects	30.8 (34.7)	32.3 (34.7)

*There were 163 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. Standards in GCSE at five A\*-C grades have been steadily improving following a dip after the last inspection. While the school's results are below the national average for all schools, they are above average when compared to schools with similar social intakes. The GCSE results represent just below average progress when compared to pupils with similar scores in the Year 9 tests. The number of pupils achieving at least one GCSE is below average mainly due to the low attendance by a minority of disaffected pupils. The school's aims are to include and reach all pupils and significant improvements have been made to the curriculum in the upper school through links with local college. However, the accreditation of some of these courses does not count towards the GCSE statistics so that while the school makes good provision for these pupils these efforts are not recognised in the overall figures. There are few pupils achieving the highest grades and this reduces the average point scores for pupils and so places the school below similar schools in this measure. This is not overly surprising given the lower numbers of high attaining pupils starting at the school, nevertheless the school needs to improve this situation.
5. Standards seen in the inspection were average in English, mathematics and science. Standards seen were also average in history, geography, ICT, modern foreign languages and above average in physical education, music, and art. Standards remain well below average in business education. Overall standards of work seen in the wide range of courses provided by the school were good. The school set ambitious targets last year and, while they achieved these in relation to the numbers of pupils gaining at least one GCSE grade, they fell short of their target for the higher grades. They have set a higher target still for the 2005 examinations and, given the work seen during the inspection, they are on the way to meeting these targets.
6. Overall achievement is good across the school, given pupils' attainment on entry to the school. Girls achieve better than boys largely because girls' study skills and their overall attitude to learning and work are better. Pupils from minority ethnic groups are well integrated into the school and consequently achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. The few pupils who have English as an additional language make good progress in their acquisition of English. They very quickly become confident in speaking and within a short time they match their peers in their understanding and use of written language. Standards are at least in line with pupils of similar ability and often better. Achievement in national examinations is in line with expectations given their ability and these pupils make good progress. The achievement and progress of pupils with special educational needs are good. The co-ordinator for special needs provides subject teachers with comprehensive information on all the pupils identified with learning needs. Subject teachers take responsibility for writing individual education plans for each pupil concerned and these are monitored well by the co-ordinator.

## Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' have **good** attitudes to school. Their behaviour is **good** in class and around the school. The provision for their personal development through spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is **good**. Attendance is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy school life and participate well in all the activities provided.
- Pupils behave well because the school expects it of them and problems are dealt with effectively.
- Opportunities for pupils' personal development, including taking responsibility, are good.
- Attendance is below expected levels, although there has been recent improvement.

### Commentary

7. Pupils say that this is a good school where they are expected to work hard and do their best. When asked "what is the best thing about the school?", their immediate answer was "the teachers". Behaviour throughout the school is good. Pupils are positive about the code of conduct they helped to develop and say it has led to improved behaviour. While they recognise that some pupils do not always behave as well as they could, they are very certain that staff deal quickly and effectively with serious incidents. Younger pupils in Years 7 and 8 speak highly of the support and friendship offered to them by their 'buddies' who have helped them to overcome any worries about bullying and who encourage them to talk to teachers. Pupils behave well both in lessons and around the school. They move sensibly around the narrow corridors and behave calmly in the cramped dining room at lunchtime.
8. Pupils' personal development is good because the school makes good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Staff are very good role models for pupils to follow and place strong emphasis on courtesy, consideration and respect for others. As a result, pupils develop self confidence, learn to get on well with others and have good understanding and respect for others whose backgrounds or needs are different to their own. The school has a small but significant proportion of pupils from nearly all ethnic minority groups. These pupils are well integrated, contribute to all aspects of school life and the school usefully draws on their experiences to develop the cultural awareness of other pupils. Pupils are very willing to take responsibility. Bus prefects, for example, are well respected by other pupils and set the standard for behaviour on the buses. This has been highly commended by the bus company and has been used as a model for other schools in the county to follow.
9. Since the start of this year the school has set up a 'learning support unit' to cater for the needs of the most difficult pupils. The unit operates for two days a week. Clear guidelines have been established for the work of the unit and the explicit criteria for pupil referral. Only a small number of pupils are involved and a specialist teacher is used well to provide specific learning support. Pupils are returned to main school lessons when thought appropriate and are closely monitored on their return. The success of this initiative has yet to be fully assessed but it has rightly been found to be a good strategy for managing the behaviour and learning of a small number of pupils.

### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003 (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	10.1
National data:	7.2

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	1.1
National data:	1.1

*The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year*

10. Attendance is below average but is improving quickly because of good strategies adopted by the school. Rewards for good attendance, the introduction of first-day calling and good support from the educational welfare officer are having a good impact on improving the attendance of pupils in Years 7 to 9. Parents who condone their children's absence are given clear messages that this is not acceptable, although not all respond positively. Some pupils in Years 10 and 11 have poor attendance, but the vast majority attend regularly. There is noticeable improvement in attendance for many of the pupils who attend vocational courses linked to the college. Pupils' punctuality is satisfactory, although a few are late in the morning.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	781	90	4
White – Irish	6	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	24	4	1
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	25	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	4	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	9	2	0
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	6	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

11. The exclusion data refers to 62 pupils in total. The school offers very good care and guidance to pupils who are in danger of exclusion and uses this sanction only when support strategies have not worked. Exclusion levels are similar to those at the last inspection.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are **good**. The quality of assessment is **satisfactory** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers are secure and confident in their subject knowledge and establish good relationships with their pupils.
- Learning is supported well through the encouragement of high standards of behaviour in lessons.

- Procedures for assessing pupils' work are inconsistent; not all departments have established systems for providing subject specific advice that would improve pupils' performance.
- Lesson planning does not always meet the needs of the more able pupils in the group.
- There are good opportunities for independent learning, particularly in English and science.
- Classroom assistants help to support teaching and learning well for the pupils in their care, particularly so in the vocational courses and in English, science and art.

## Commentary

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 113 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (3%)	28 (25%)	42 (37%)	32 (28%)	7 (6%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

12. In Years 7 to 9 teaching and learning are good in all subjects apart from mathematics, ICT and music where they are satisfactory. The school's commitment to the implementation of the national strategy for pupils in these year groups is having a very positive impact and there are no subject areas in which teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. In Years 10 and 11, teaching and learning are good in all subjects and in the vocational courses offered in conjunction with the college, apart from ICT and music where they are satisfactory and business education where teaching is unsatisfactory. There are examples of significant strengths across a wide range of subjects. Good teaching is confident, knowledgeable and challenging, rigorous in its questioning of pupils and ensures good pupil involvement and pace to the lessons. Where teachers give clear explanations and lesson objectives are well shared, pupils' learning is underpinned and supported well. Opportunities for independent learning are much improved since the previous inspection and are particularly effective in science. Pupils enjoy working in groups; they are enthusiastic, exchange ideas, analyse results and offer hypotheses. Overall teachers establish a good working ethos and there is a good insistence on high standards of behaviour in lessons. Classroom assistants provide valuable support for pupils in their care, particularly so in English, science, art and the vocational courses.
13. Teaching and learning were unsatisfactory in 7 per cent of the lessons seen. Apart from business studies where teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory overall, these lessons were isolated cases in English, mathematics, ICT and music. Where teaching and learning are unsatisfactory, the work lacks challenge and is not planned well enough to meet the needs of the more able pupils in the group. Limited questioning techniques, on the part of some teachers, do not always encourage pupils to think deeply enough for themselves about the subject or related issues. On a few occasions, learning is restricted because teachers talk at the pupils too much and do not give them sufficient opportunity to become involved in the lessons. Pupils do not always fully understand what they need to do to improve because of a lack of subject specific advice following the marking of their work.
14. Teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs are good. Individual education plans are good and provide well focused, subject-specific targets for pupils. The support staff liaise with subject teachers so that support provided in lessons is good and contributes to the good progress and learning of the pupils concerned, although occasionally support is given to manage behaviour rather than learning. Some pupils usefully leave their subject lessons to work independently on computer programmes for literacy and numeracy and this work is monitored well. The few pupils with English as an additional language are supported well by teachers in lessons, are learning well, making good progress and are being effectively monitored. Although there is a very good summer school available to a targeted group of gifted and talented pupils across all years, there is not a clearly identified cohort of 'gifted and talented' pupils within all subject areas. Consequently there is insufficient planning of specific work to

challenge the most able pupils in many subjects. However, there are examples of good practice: in mathematics, for example, enrichment activities have been identified and there is early entry at GCSE for the most able.

15. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment are satisfactory. There are good guidelines issued to departments in the form of a well-structured assessment policy and there is good tracking of pupils' progress through the school. Target setting has been established and is used to good effect with older pupils, but has yet to be fully developed in Years 7 to 9 where pupils are unsure of their target grades. The quality of marking of pupils' work is satisfactory overall but there are significant variations. In the best practice pupils' work is regularly marked and good, constructive subject specific advice is provided. Where marking is unsatisfactory it is infrequent, provides very limited advice and there is an acceptance of poorly presented work.

## The curriculum

The curriculum is **good** overall. Opportunities for enrichment and the range of extra-curricular activities are **good**. Accommodation is **unsatisfactory**. Resources are **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision of vocational subjects in Years 10 and 11 is a strength of the curriculum.
- There is good provision for extra-curricular and enrichment activities.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory in several areas of the school.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils are prepared very well for their future careers and education.
- There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education.

## Commentary

16. The school meets the statutory requirements for a curriculum and provides a satisfactory curriculum in Years 7 to 9 and a good curriculum in the upper school. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and the pupils from the many different cultural groups within the school is good, and these pupils achieve in line with expectations. In-class support for pupils with special educational needs is good and both teachers and learning support assistants provide effective support for the pupils within their charge. The school has a clear vision for the development of the curriculum, particularly for the older 14 to 16 year old pupils. It has introduced an innovative and extensive range of vocational courses, through a very good partnership with Preston College and other providers for pupils in Years 10 and 11. These courses are taken by an increasingly large number of pupils and are proving to be very popular with pupils of all abilities. Practical and vocational courses provide pupils with good opportunities to gain accreditation in external tests and examinations ranging from foundation level courses to double award GCSEs.
17. The provision for personal, social and health education across the school is good. The personal, social and health education programme links to the new citizenship curriculum and pupils are encouraged, both in their personal, social and health education lessons and in other curriculum areas, to discuss a variety of ethical, moral and social issues. Careers education and guidance for all pupils is good. The careers programme, together with opportunities provided through the vocational course programme, is preparing the pupils very well for their future education and for the world of work. The school offers all pupils a good range of activities over and above their normal curriculum, particularly in sport and music. Throughout the year pupils are encouraged to participate in musical and drama activities, subject clubs, homework support sessions, revision clubs and trips. The provision of summer schools for pupils with differing abilities, including the more able, is a particular strength.
18. Overall resources available to the school are satisfactory. Apart from some unavoidable long term staff absences there are sufficient numbers of staff with the appropriate experience and

expertise. There is a good number of support staff but they cannot always meet the full demands of learning support required across the school. Although the funding given to the school is not enhanced by the resources available to schools with similar levels of deprivation, the school uses its financial resources well to support its principles of including all pupils. For example, it provides significant additional curriculum opportunities through the college courses and ensures pupils have access to after-school activities by providing additional buses at a nominal cost.

19. Accommodation is unsatisfactory. The poor music and unsatisfactory art and physical education provision has a direct influence on teaching and on pupils' learning. The music area provides a particularly unsatisfactory learning environment for the pupils; it has poor acoustics, it is cold and damp and it is unsuitable for practising and listening to music. Located in the same building, the library suffers from similar problems resulting in under use and a lack of investment in books and learning resources. The dining area is small and very cramped at lunchtime. Long held plans to upgrade these facilities, together with a new sports hall for physical education, have been delayed and this is starting to have an adverse impact on the morale of pupils and staff. Art is currently taught in classrooms that are too small. However, both the science and food technology departments now benefit from a recent refurbishment programme that has provided a good learning environment for the pupils.

### Care, guidance and support

Care, guidance and support are **very good**. Provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring pupils' achievements and personal development are **very good**. There is **good** involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' health and safety have a high priority.
- There is very good personal, academic and careers guidance.
- There is excellent liaison with primary school partners.
- There are very good induction arrangements for pupils entering Year 7.
- Pupils report that their views are taken seriously and acted upon.

### Commentary

20. Care, guidance and support are major strengths of the school and have a positive impact on pupils' learning. From child protection to the organisation of educational visits, policies are fully in place, understood and acted upon by all concerned. As well as formal structures, the quality of relationships and the commitment of staff create an atmosphere that is orderly and supportive, and within which children report confidence in the adults they work with. Pupils have access to very good personal support and guidance on personal, academic and careers issues.
21. Commitment to child protection has resulted in clear policies and effective procedures. The school promotes healthy living, with health and safety given a high priority, although for part of the year the heating system in the media and music block is unsatisfactory. Proper risk assessments are undertaken in appropriate areas, policies and practice are clearly understood and consistently applied and the school is fully compliant with the local education authority's policy on the management of educational visits and the maintenance of insurance and emergency procedures. In response to the pupils' questionnaire around 60 per cent of pupils thought the school was free of bullying or racial abuse and pupils report that any incidents of bullying are quickly but sensitively handled with help from staff and from senior pupils.
22. Pupils value the extra support and help from teachers at lunch breaks and the end of the day and the school is working well to enhance the role of form tutors by the development of mentoring skills. In sex and personal education, pupils receive clear guidance, with input from

both staff and visiting speakers in a context which stresses the significance of Catholic values, moral integrity and loving personal relationships. Pupils talk very positively of the quality of help they receive from and the relationships they enjoy with staff and nearly all report that there is an adult in the school they feel they could talk to. The school has a good system to celebrate success as well as flagging any problems to parents. Pupils' efforts and attainment are regularly and effectively tracked and parents helpfully notified of particularly good results during the mid term reviews. There are very good induction arrangements for pupils entering Year 7 and there is good input from the Connexions service, with a particular focus on the transition stages at Years 9 and 11. Year 10 pupils felt, however, that there was not enough guidance in Year 9 on the detailed content of GCSE programmes.

23. Pupils report that their views are taken seriously and they welcome the opportunities offered to exercise responsibility, for example in bus duties or in the 'buddy' system between Year 11 and Year 7 pupils. Form representatives and school councillors are positive about their role in ensuring that pupils' views are heard and appreciate the way in which the school listens to them. The fortnightly school council is effective both as a forum to share views and a focus for the school's charitable fund raising activities. In completing the OFSTED questionnaire, there is an overwhelmingly positive response: pupils believe this is a good school to be at.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school's partnership with parents is **satisfactory**. There are **good** links with the community. Links with other schools and colleges are **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents like the school and most are supportive of their children's learning.
- Pupils' end of year reports are unsatisfactory.
- There is an effective partnership between the school and the communities it serves.
- There are very strong and effective links with primary schools, nearby Preston College and other local colleges and providers.
- The governors' annual report to parents does not have a statement relating to special needs provision as is statutorily required.

### **Commentary**

24. Most parents are pleased with the education that the school provides. They feel that their children are happy and well cared for and that they make good progress, both academically and personally. They are particularly positive about the school's involvement in the community and the good ethos which is supported by the church. They say that this has given the school 'an inner strength' to continue providing a good education for their children during the recent changes in leadership. The small number of parents returning questionnaires and attending the pre-inspection meeting, however, is partly indicative of a parent body which is not wholly active in supporting their children's learning and is a feature which the school has identified as needing improvement.
25. Parents are well represented on the governing body and there is an active parent-teacher association whose fundraising events and activities are well supported. Attendance by parents at consultation meetings with teachers and at reviews for those with special educational needs is good. As part of the drive to improve parental involvement, the school has established a good consultative procedure at the parents' meetings and has good plans to engage parents more in their children's learning through workshops on different subjects. Some parents, however, feel that they are not as well informed as they might be about their children's progress. Inspectors agree that pupils' end-of-year reports are unsatisfactory as they do not provide sufficient information on the progress that pupils have made in each subject and do not state clearly enough what pupils need to do next to improve. Currently there is no formal reporting of

citizenship and this is unsatisfactory; however, satisfactory plans are in place to monitor and report in the current academic year.

26. The 'Building Bridges' project has played an important part in helping the school to make good use of its links with another high school and the different communities it serves. Social events hosted by pupils, church services with other primary schools, an after-school homework club and co-operative working on drugs education programmes are successful features of this project. The annual party for senior citizens organised by Year 10 pupils is a particular highlight and is much appreciated by those in the local community. Links with primary schools, particularly the five main feeder schools, are good and transition for pupils is well established. There is good liaison by the co-ordinator for special needs with primary schools to gather and collate information. There are good working relationships with external agencies and reviews are undertaken as required for the pupils who have Statements of Special Educational Need. The co-ordinator also has good links with parents. There is good documentation but this is very time-consuming and there is no use of ICT for record keeping. The school does not yet provide annual information in the governors' annual report to parents about the provision for special educational needs. The school makes very effective use of its strong links with Preston College and other local establishments to provide pupils in Years 10 and 11 with a relevant and interesting curriculum. Pupils and parents are very positive about the courses provided which encourage them to attend school and lead them towards future work and career opportunities.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher provides **very good** leadership. Governance is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the development of the school. He is a determined and motivational leader and has quickly and sensitively created a strong team based on the well laid foundations of the previous leadership.
- The governing body is very well led and has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and together with the headteacher is providing a clear direction for rapidly improving the school.
- Performance management is increasingly effective and well linked to staff development.
- Overall management at department level is good but there are weaknesses in some subjects.

### Commentary

27. At the time of the inspection the headteacher had been in post for 11 weeks. In the very short time that he has been in post he has had a significant impact on the school. He has a very clear vision of what Corpus Christi school seeks to achieve and he has the skills, energy and determination to put into place the measures to ensure the school is successful. He is a very visible presence around the school and is very approachable to pupils, parents and staff. He and the senior management team fully share this vision for rapidly improving the school based on the firm foundations laid by the previous leadership. He is harnessing the considerable potential of staff, pupils and the governing body and much progress has been made in a short time. The school has a well-structured management system with well drawn line management responsibilities. Consequently senior managers have a clear remit focused on school improvement and have had their areas of responsibilities extended to sharpen accountability. Consultation is being developed and, through membership of working parties, pastoral groups and departmental meetings, all staff have the opportunity to have their views listened to.
28. Most departments are well led with a clear focus on raising pupils' attainment and aspirations. Departmental action plans are linked well to the overall school development plan. Heads of department are, for the most part, efficient and effective managers. This is particularly true for science, English and physical education. However, management in history and geography are

unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator for special needs provides good leadership but there is insufficient time allocated for the management of special needs provision or sufficient time to directly monitor the quality of support in the classroom. On a regular basis representatives from each department meet together with the co-ordinator as a focus working party to review special needs provision. Concerns are shared and information on pupils discussed to maximise support in the classroom. Regular meetings are also arranged by a member of the senior management team with the co-ordinator and all the support staff to review provision and assess training needs.

29. Performance records are thorough and policies for managing weak teaching and complaints are clear. In-service training for staff successfully dovetails the needs of the school with individual teachers. Considerable effort has been expended to recruit and retain high quality staff, which has resulted in the school being fully staffed for the 2003-20004 academic year. Newly qualified teachers and teachers new to the school receive a well-organised induction programme which is very successful in helping staff into the school.
30. Governance is good. The chair of the governing body leads with insight, professional skill and total commitment to the school's success. Governors bring a wide range of professional expertise, which they are glad to use to the benefit of the school. They have a very good knowledge of the school, acting as a critical friend and giving much support to the headteacher. Financial arrangements are good, managed by well experienced and skilled members of the governing body supported by the local education authority and committed and enthusiastic staff in the school. Principles of best value are used well to ensure the school gets good value for money.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	2,512,519	Balance from previous year	14,169
Total expenditure	2,463,005	Balance carried forward to the next	63,684
Expenditure per pupil	2,825		

*The balance includes £30,201 committed before the end of the financial year*

# **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4**

### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

#### **English**

Provision in English is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership of the department is inspirational and clearly focused.
- Teaching and learning are good and overall pupils achieve well.
- The Key Stage 3 Strategy has been introduced successfully and standards are improving.
- Target setting is well developed in Years 9 to 11 but not all pupils in Years 7 and 8 know how to improve.
- The library provision is poor.

#### **Commentary**

31. Results in national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were unusually well below the national average but taken over the last three years the results are in line with the national average. At the end of Year 11, the GCSE results in English language and English literature are below national averages but this represents good achievement given that, overall, pupils start school with below average attainment. Standards of work seen were average in Years 7 to 9 and above average in Years 10 and 11, representing satisfactory achievement by the end of Year 9 and good achievement at the end of Year 11. Good support in the classroom and targeted teaching result in pupils with special educational needs achieving well, as do pupils with English as an additional language and those from different ethnic minority groups. The achievement of boys and girls is similar except in English literature at Key Stage 4 where boys are performing closer to the national figure.
32. The overall quality of teaching is good and it is very good in Year 7. Good teaching is due to teachers' good subject knowledge and thorough planning. There are high expectations with regard to behaviour. Pupils and teachers have good positive relationships, enabling pupils to succeed in lessons. In Years 7 to 9 the National Literacy Strategy is being used to good effect as a foundation for future year groups. All teachers use the three-part lesson well. There are good starting activities, main sections that extend learning and lessons that end with teachers and pupils recapping what has been learned and what they need to do next. The pace of lessons is good with a variety of teaching methods and pupil groupings being used to good effect to engage and interest the pupils. In a Year 11 top ability set pupils took responsibility for their own learning and gave a presentation to their peers. Homework is used well in many lessons to support the lesson content. Weaker teaching, seen in a small minority of lessons, is characterised by lack of detailed planning with inadequate use of time. There is also a lack of variety and challenge, particularly for the most able, and pupils have little opportunity to be active in their own learning.
33. Overall learning is good in all year groups. Pupils use a wide range of activities and work in a range of groupings. They express themselves well through good writing or speaking skills. There is an emphasis on developing key skills and increasing understanding. Pupils explain what they have learnt and recall knowledge learnt in other lessons. They respond to brisk pace. Information and communication technology is integrated into schemes of work to aid learning and the department makes good use of the limited facilities available. Where learning is unsatisfactory this is due to low teacher expectation so pupils make little progress. In the unsatisfactory lessons, pupils are often unclear about what is being asked of them. The learning of all pupils is hampered by the lack of a well-resourced library so that pupils cannot

carry out further independent study. Speaking and listening skills are well developed in all year groups.

34. Assessment is satisfactory. In Years 9 to 11 pupils know what level or grade they are working at and what they need to do to get to the next level. In Years 7 and 8 assessment is not as well developed. There is some inconsistency in marking. The best marking has comments from the teacher to help pupils improve their work.
35. The department is very well led and well managed. The head of department has a clear educational vision that inspires both teachers and pupils. There is a strong team ethos with an emphasis on raising standards and reflection through joint planning and support. The head of department observes all teachers teach and provides developmental advice to all. Observation of each other is encouraged. Overall management is very good, the department is organised efficiently and staff have regular training opportunities with student teachers being welcomed. All teachers are encouraged to take an area of responsibility. Improvement has been good since the last inspection because the average attainment has increased over the last three years. The department now combines successfully English with drama and media studies. Drama is integrated into the Years 7 and 9 curriculum and is taught separately in Year 8. The lessons sampled in these subjects were well taught and pupils learning and achievement were good. This is also improving speaking and listening skills.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

36. Standards of literacy are satisfactory and overall pupils have adequate skills to access the literacy demands of other subjects. The teaching of literacy in other subjects is satisfactory. The science faculty has a good literacy policy and uses both debate and poetry in its teaching. Writing is supported through the use of writing frames for pupils particularly in geography and history. In many subjects, particularly English and modern foreign languages, the three-part lesson structure, which includes good starting tasks, well planned learning activities with good recapping of work learned at the end of the lesson, is being used well. Key words are helpfully on display in most classrooms and are made use of in a range of subjects including physical education, mathematics, art and ICT. However, as in the last inspection, the library provision is poor and has insufficient texts to support subjects. Internet access allows pupils to research topics in detail, particularly in science and English.

### **Modern foreign languages**

Provision in modern foreign languages is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are below national averages at Year 9 and Year 11 although standards of work seen indicate an improving picture.
- Leadership of the department is good.
- Teachers employ a wide range of teaching styles, which have a good impact on learning.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 receive insufficient advice on how to improve the quality of their spoken and written work.

### **Commentary**

37. Standards measured by the teachers' assessments in 2002 were below national averages but continued the gradual improvement in the number of Year 9 pupils achieving the expected grade or above. The 2003 results showed a decline, but the tests were administered at a time of disruption to staffing in the department and are therefore not a reliable indicator of the pupils' ability and attainment. This disruption may also be a contributory factor in the decline in both French and German at GCSE in 2003. Standards in French were low at grades A\*-C and in

German standards declined from being broadly in line with national averages in 2002 to below average in 2003. There was also significant underachievement in French among boys.

38. However, recent changes in staffing have brought stability to the department and the standards seen in lessons and in pupils' work throughout the school are in line with national expectations and, in the current Year 8, pupils' standards are above average. In Year 9, standards are average representing good overall achievement given the pupils' limited skills on entry to the school. There is a high standard of accuracy in pupils' work, but there is little opportunity for extended writing and challenge in the other skills of speaking and listening to help pupils access and achieve the higher levels. In Years 10 and 11 pupils are attaining satisfactorily and as expected given their capabilities, but they do not receive sufficient information on what they have done well and what they need to do to improve to sufficiently raise the quality of their language and standards overall. Their speaking and writing, though strong in content, does not contain the range of vocabulary, style and construction necessary to enable the pupils to gain the higher marks in examinations. Achievement is good in Years 7 to 9, satisfactory in Years 10 and 11 and satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in mixed ability groups and in small sets where they are supported well by targeted teaching and well planned work as the department has much more information on and input into the individual education plans of these pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language and from different ethnic minority groups achieve in line with their abilities and prior attainment.
39. Teaching and learning are good and are benefiting from a period of stability. Most lessons seen were good or better. Teachers employ a wide range of teaching styles, which have a good impact on learning. The lessons have a brisk pace, offer a good variety of activities and games and 'fun' elements increase pupils', and particularly boys', involvement and enthusiasm. Teachers plan activities well, allowing pupils every opportunity to work independently in pairs or groups. There is a strong emphasis on literacy skills and understanding of grammar. Homework is used well for reinforcement and consolidation of learning, but the marking and grading of work in Years 10 and 11 are less consistent than in Years 7 to 9. The data gained from assessing key pieces of work are beginning to be applied to enable more rigorous target setting and for predicting future progress and attainment.
40. The new head of department provides good leadership, has a clear vision and direction and is well supported by a committed team. Management is satisfactory, given that the many initiatives for raising standards and the department's profile have still to be fully implemented. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching are carried out satisfactorily under the school's performance management scheme, but members of the team do not yet have the opportunity to share good practice by observing each other. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. Progress is good in Years 7 and 8, particularly in pupils' responsiveness in class and ability to express their own ideas. The use of ICT is developing, but restricted access to computer rooms is currently a barrier to allowing pupils equal opportunity to enhance their learning and raise attainment.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Examination results are below national standards and fell in 2003.
- There is a whole team commitment to the raising of standards.
- Good vision and clarity of leadership are provided by the head of department.
- Opportunities for early examination entry have led to high GCSE grades in top sets.
- There is some unsatisfactory marking with little diagnostic feedback.
- There is insufficient use of ICT within the teaching of mathematics.

## Commentary

41. Achievement in Years 7 to 9 in mathematics is satisfactory. In 2003 standards attained in national tests at the end of Year 9 were below the national average, although above the average when compared with schools in similar circumstances. Girls' attainment was better than that of the boys. Trends in results over recent years have been downwards and below the national trend. In work seen during the inspection pupils' attainment by the age of 14 is below national expectations but improving; this improvement is likely to continue as a result of the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. There is some low achievement in lower ability sets; this is a reflection of low expectations of some teachers and an acceptance of poor presentation of work.
42. The percentage of pupils obtaining a GCSE grade A\* to C in 2003 was below the national average and below the level obtained in 2002. The performance of girls was better than that of the boys. In work seen during the inspection pupils' attainment by the age of 16 is in line with national expectations and achievement is good when prior attainment levels are taken into account. Teachers are working hard to raise pupils' expectations, particularly in the higher ability sets where entries at intermediate level in Year 10 are encouraging pupils to achieve at the highest levels in Year 11.
43. Teaching overall is satisfactory with some examples of good and very good practice, particularly in Years 10 and 11. The National Numeracy Strategy is embedded within the teaching of mathematics; the starter sessions are enjoyed by pupils and ensure that most lessons start in a relaxed and productive manner. The majority of pupils are set work that is suited to their abilities and teachers are aware of and respond well to the individual education plans that are provided for pupils with special educational needs. There is very little unsatisfactory teaching and in half of the lessons observed during the inspection teaching was good or very good. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils in the top ability sets and demonstrate good classroom management skills; this leads to good behaviour and the acquisition of new skills and knowledge. There are elements of unsatisfactory teaching in lessons where insufficient account is taken of the wide range of ability within some middle ability sets and, as a result, there is not enough challenge for the more able pupils in these groups. A lack of access to the ICT rooms results in insufficient opportunities for pupils to use information technology to support their learning in mathematics.
44. Pupils' work is regularly marked but there is insufficient use of constructive advice to help improve future performance. The relatively weak performance of boys is partially a reflection of poorly presented work that goes unchecked. Pupils' prior attainment is used as a basis for planning work. The use of data as a tool for setting targets and monitoring progress is used well in Years 10 and 11; further development is planned in order to include all year groups. The great majority of pupils are motivated by the enthusiasm of their teachers and contribute well to class discussion and questioning. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good and are built upon trust, respect and good humour. The welcome that teachers extend to pupils as they enter the classroom creates a good work ethos and helps lessons to start promptly and purposefully.
45. Leadership of the department is good because the head of department has a clear vision for improving standards. He has identified and prioritised the issues that need to be addressed and has policies and plans in place to make things happen. He is a good role model for other teachers, has high expectations for the pupils and has gained the respect and commitment of colleagues within the department. Overall management is satisfactory. Satisfactory systems for recording assessment and producing targets have been established and implemented. A helpful departmental handbook has been produced and new schemes of work introduced. An area for development is the monitoring of marking to ensure that pupils receive diagnostic assessment and maintain an acceptable standard of presentation. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory because the department has had to overcome severe staffing

difficulties and is adopting strategies to raise standards at both key stages, although suitable access to and use of ICT to aid learning remains an unresolved issue.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

46. Provision is satisfactory. The National Numeracy Strategy has been fully embraced within the teaching of mathematics and is beginning to raise standards of attainment at all levels. Pupils are able to apply their numeracy skills in most subject areas. In physical education, for example, pupils measure heartbeats, draw graphs and interpret data. In art pupils show an understanding of perspective and are able to work to scale. In science pupils display good understanding of graphs; they are able to interpret charts and can transpose formulae. Good numeracy skills are also evident within the vocational courses provided via the college. Plans to introduce numeracy across the curriculum are in place and a co-ordinator has recently been appointed. A good policy document has been produced that is ready for consideration by all faculties.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership and management provided by the head of department and key members of staff are very good.
- Teaching is almost always good and frequently very good, with examples of excellent practice.
- Pupils make good progress and they enjoy their science lessons. However, the most able pupils are insufficiently challenged in some lessons.
- The quality of guidance for improvement provided to pupils through the marking of their workbooks is inconsistent.
- The current balance between the time allocated for science in Years 10 and 11 is inappropriate and is putting undue pressure on the teaching of Year 11 pupils.
- The support provided by the technicians is good.

#### **Commentary**

47. Attainment in GCSE has been steadily improving in recent years and virtually all pupils secured a grade in their recent examinations. This compares well with the national statistics. Whilst still below the national norms for pupils of similar age, the number of pupils achieving the higher grades in the dual award examination has also been rising steadily. In tests at the end of Year 9, attainment remains below national norms for this age group. However, despite a slight fall back in results for 2003, attainment in these Year 9 tests has been rising steadily since the last inspection. The number of pupils achieving the higher levels in these tests is in line with those attained in similar schools.
48. Inspection findings are that standards at the end of Year 9 and Year 11 are currently in line with pupils in similar schools and most pupils, including those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language, are achieving well and are on course for achieving their target grades. Written work is generally well presented. Pupils draw graphs with accuracy and are becoming more familiar with the correct use of scientific terminology. Older pupils use a variety of different writing styles in their work and some confidently word process their course work. Younger pupils are acquiring a good range of skills and understanding in all areas of the science curriculum. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are making good progress with their modular course and are demonstrating increasing confidence in their investigative work.
49. Teaching is good overall in the department and frequently very good. Teachers are well qualified, enthusiastic and have a good understanding of their subject. Relationships between the teachers and pupils are good. Most lessons have good pace and challenge with high

expectations of the pupils. Teachers use a wide range of questioning to test prior knowledge and to check progress. Teachers encourage pupils to consider the wider social and environmental issues of science. This is effective and encourages a lively debate amongst the pupils. Good use is being made of ICT resources to enrich the learning experiences for the pupils. Starter activities provide a good stimulus for the main learning activities and draw upon a range of relevant examples. Review sessions in most cases test pupils' understanding of what the lessons have covered. In some lessons there is insufficient variety of activities to meet the needs of the wide range of abilities within the group, particularly those of the most able pupils who could be challenged still further. Pupils' work is regularly marked, but there are inconsistencies in the quality of guidance given to the pupils as to what is required in order to improve their grade. The support provided by the technicians adds considerable value to the department and to the learning experiences of the pupils.

50. Pupils demonstrate a positive approach to their work in science. They undertake practical work carefully and sensibly and they work together well when working in groups. Most pupils are prepared to join in class discussions and to volunteer answers to questions. The majority are becoming increasingly confident in undertaking a scientific investigation. Pupils enjoy their science lessons and respond well to the challenges presented.
51. This is a very well led department. The head of department provides clear and effective leadership and has established a shared vision and agreed values for the department and effectively devolves responsibilities to members of the department. Key priorities have been identified for raising standards and these are beginning to take effect. The department has identified good cross-curricular links to support pupils' learning particularly in the development of literacy and in the promotion of citizenship throughout the science curriculum. The department now benefits from good accommodation following recent refurbishment. The preparation rooms, however, are now in urgent need of similar refurbishment. Display work throughout the department is very good and contributes towards providing a good learning environment for the pupils. The uneven distribution of teaching periods between Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory and results in pupils having less contact with their teachers at the most important time, that is, leading up to their examinations in Year 11. Since the last inspection there have been significant changes in the areas of staffing, curriculum and assessment. The department has made good progress in responding to these changes and these are starting to be reflected in the rising standards in science.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards at the end of Year 9 are good and pupils achieve well as a result of the good implementation of the national strategy for ICT.
- Standards in 2003 GCSE examinations were below the national average and the school's average.
- The standard and quantity of work seen during the inspection represent good achievement in Years 7 to 9 and satisfactory achievement overall.
- There is inadequate differentiation of methods and materials both for more able pupils and those with educational or behavioural problems.
- The leadership and management of the department are developing systems and practice which will bring about improvements in standards and teaching.
- There is very good extra-curricular provision for gifted and talented pupils.
- ICT contributes strongly to provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- There has been major investment in resources, infrastructure and training.

## Commentary

52. Standards are above average at the end of Year 9, where results in the teacher assessed tests show 70 per cent of pupils achieving Level 5 or above, against a national average of 62 per cent. The performance for girls has been particularly strong over the previous three years. Standards in the 2003 GCSE examinations were below school and national averages with only 33 per cent of pupils achieving grade C or better and no passes at the highest grade A\*. The department is working particularly hard with pupils currently in Years 10 and 11 to reverse that dip in attainment.
53. Standards of work seen in Years 7 to 9 were above average and this represents good achievement. Standards seen in Years 10 and 11 are average and achievement is satisfactory. Through a combination of positive attitudes and attention to the detail of presentation, girls achieved better than boys both in examinations and in the work scrutinised. Overall pupils with special educational needs achieve well given their prior attainment. Increasingly good implementation of the recent national strategy for ICT for Years 7 to 9 is improving achievement particularly in Year 7.
54. Teaching is only satisfactory at both key stages, although there are good features, as more than half of ICT teaching is currently undertaken by temporary or supply staff. Good management and deployment of staff enable pupils in Years 10 and 11 to receive strong specialist input, with a correspondingly positive and growing impact on their standards and achievement. The best teaching is characterised by strong planning, engagement with all pupils, robust demands on performance and hard work, as well as high energy levels and a sense of fun. Assessment is thorough, with helpful feedback and accurate diagnostic comments which help the pupils know what to do to improve. In a minority of lessons, where teaching or learning are less than satisfactory, the misbehaviour of groups or individuals dominate the lesson or materials and pace set by the teacher are inappropriate for the group. In a significant minority of lessons, there is an inadequate range of teaching and learning methods and materials both for more able children and those with educational or behavioural problems so these pupils are not always fully involved in or challenged by the work in lessons.
55. Leadership and management of the department are satisfactory with good features leading to an orderly and positive environment in which a shared approach is grounded in good lesson plans, schemes of work and imaginative teaching materials. The department is well placed to secure improvements in the quality of teaching and the standards achieved. There is increasingly good use of data in the analysis of performance, with a particular focus on strengthening achievement at GCSE. This good work is constrained by the poorly designed and the inflexible accommodation, particularly in the media centre, which limits the range of teaching and learning strategies that can be used. Overall improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory as there has been major investment in resources, infrastructure and training since the previous inspection which is beginning to improve standards.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

56. Provision in ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory. The use of ICT contributes effectively to learning and achievement in a number of subjects. ICT makes a strong contribution to provision for children with special educational needs, with a good programme for supervised individual access to specialist learning software. Pupils use computers effectively in word processing, presentation, research, the manipulation of sounds or data. Spreadsheets are used to analyse information from data capture and data logging. There is particularly good use of ICT in science, as well as in English, religious education, history and physical education. The school has invested extensively in the hardware and in the staff training. However, teachers report difficulty in gaining sufficient access to bookable ICT rooms and provision for ICT in mathematics is not yet sufficiently developed. Strong teacher commitment offers good

lunchtime and afternoon clubs, extra-curricular provision for gifted and talented pupils and contribution to the summer school for children from partner primary schools.

## HUMANITIES

### Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Unsatisfactory leadership and management have failed to raise the popularity of geography as a GCSE subject.
- In Years 7 to 9 pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching.
- Development planning does not focus on raising standards.
- Effective support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to achieve well.

#### Commentary

57. Standards overall are average. The results of the 2003 teacher-assessed tests at the end of Year 9 were close to the national average. The 2003 GCSE results, based on an extremely small entry, were very low in contrast to the standards achieved in the previous two years, which were much closer to average. Inspection evidence indicates standards in all years are now broadly average. Pupils enter the school with below average levels of geographical knowledge and understanding. In Years 7 to 9 they develop basic skills of map reading and interpretation and improve their knowledge of the location of places. They record information in maps, graphs and diagrams and most use vocabulary accurately in descriptive and explanatory writing. However, few pupils can draw and link evidence from a range of sources to support conclusions. Given their starting point the progress made by the majority of pupils by the end of Year 9 represents good achievement. Girls show better general study skills than boys in the presentation and organisation of their work. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are given materials well matched to their capabilities and receive very good help from special support assistants. The achievement of the very small number of pupils taking geography in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory; but few produce the more complex explanations required to achieve the very highest GCSE grades.
58. Teaching and learning are good overall, with some very good teaching in Years 7 to 9. Pupils learn well when teachers set them clear objectives, which build on what they have done previously, and engage them on varied tasks structured with increasing levels of challenge. Literacy is developed effectively through frequent reference to keywords and support for writing. Teachers know pupils well and give them good individual support with helpful written and oral guidance on how to improve. However, given the lack of grades and levels used in assessing their work, pupils are not informed of their progress in relation to national standards. Most pupils respond with hard work and good behaviour. However, when they are inactive for long periods or being given information rather than finding it for themselves, they lose concentration and are less productive. The achievement of the highest attainers would be raised even further if they were given more demanding tasks. Homework projects offer good opportunities for independent research and enquiry.
59. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Too little has been done to raise the profile of the subject to improve the take up for GCSE. Department planning does not set clear objectives expressed in terms of actions to raise standards, placing a greater emphasis on the acquisition of resources. Effective procedures to monitor and evaluate the work of the department are not yet in place. Geography assessment data is not analysed and used sufficiently to identify how pupils could achieve even more. The curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 9 does not offer opportunities for all pupils to undertake off-site fieldwork. Overall, improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. Standards and teaching

have improved, materials are better matched to needs and there are more textbooks and audio-visual aids. The department has more ICT equipment that, despite its age and poor quality, will provide a useful resource but is not yet fully operational.

## History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching.
- Leadership is unsatisfactory because planning does not have sufficient focus on raising standards.
- Pupils have positive attitudes, work hard and behave well.
- There are no effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the department.

### Commentary

60. Standards are average overall. The 2003 teacher-assessed results at the end of Year 9 were close to the national average and broadly match standards seen in the inspection, which indicate fewer pupils working at the very highest National Curriculum levels. The 2003 GCSE results were well above average, though the level of entry was only about one third of that nationally. The standards of work of pupils currently in Years 10 and 11 are average.
61. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of history when they start in Year 7 are below average and many have low levels of literacy. They make good progress, achieving well in developing basic knowledge and skills and by the end of Year 9 use chronology and vocabulary accurately in describing events and changes. Most interpret written and pictorial sources of evidence well to support written explanations. However, only the highest attaining pupils write at any length to assess the importance of different causes and question the reliability of source materials. Those who study history for GCSE are successful because they develop the skills needed to analyse sources systematically and in detail. Throughout the school almost all pupils work enthusiastically and productively and overall achievement is good. A very small minority do not respond to the good teaching they receive, show minimal interest and make less progress. Girls achieve better than boys because they have better general study skills. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are given good individual support in tackling tasks matched to their capabilities. Those with low levels of literacy are given support with writing and are given ample opportunity to express their knowledge orally.
62. Pupils in all years learn well because teaching is good and sometimes very good. Lessons are well planned with clear objectives and are linked clearly to previous learning, so pupils understand what they are doing. Classroom management is a strength and lessons take place at a good pace with pupils rarely passive. Teachers have high expectations, know the capabilities of pupils and set them challenging but manageable tasks. In lessons teachers check what pupils know and understand through frequent questioning; homework is used effectively to reinforce work in class. Marking gives pupils helpful guidance on improvement, though this is sometimes directed at presentation and organisation rather than learning in history.
63. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The head of department, who also assumes responsibility for humanities, is aware of the need to improve but has yet to implement a coherent plan which sets clear objectives for raising achievement even further. Strategies focus mainly on acquiring resources, without enough consideration of their impact. The department does not generate enough history-based assessment data to monitor the performance of pupils. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is not effective in establishing good practice across the humanities area. Levels of entry at GCSE are low despite consistently good results but opportunities to raise the subject's profile have been missed. The

commissioning of recently acquired ICT equipment, despite its age and poor quality, is a matter of some urgency given the continued lack of access to ICT. Progress since the previous inspection has been satisfactory, with improvements in standards, achievement and teaching. The department has strengths, particularly the quality of teaching, and the capacity to improve further, given adequate resourcing and management support.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

### **Design and technology**

The provision for design and technology is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Effective leadership and management of the department leads to good teamwork and planning.
- Good standards are achieved in food and graphic products in both key stages.
- The good assessment in Years 10 and 11 provides pupils with clear guidance on how to improve their work.
- There is too little emphasis on tasks involving design-based activities in Years 7, 8 and 9.
- There is limited teaching in Years 7, 8 and 9 of aspects relating to mechanisms, structures and computer aided design and manufacture.

#### **Commentary**

64. The standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 9 in 2003 are similar to the national averages for design and technology. In lessons, standards and achievement are satisfactory overall but good in food and graphic products. Pupils gain a good breadth of experience using a wide range of practical skills and materials but there is not enough work involving design-based activities. There is also limited coverage of technological aspects relating to mechanisms, structures and computer aided design and manufacture. Overall, there is limited technological challenge in the work for pupils. GCSE results in 2003 are close to the national averages for food, systems and control and resistant materials but above average in graphic products. In lessons, the overall standards and achievement are good, particularly in food and graphic products. Folios are generally good and graphically well presented but the full use of ICT is not always exploited. Pupils do not experience the use of computer aided design and manufacture to raise the standard of their work to gain higher grades.
65. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Where lessons are good they are planned well, expectations are clear and lesson objectives are clearly shared with pupils. In lessons that are satisfactory there is limited challenge, particularly for the most able, and progress is often slow. The teachers work well with pupils and this contributes to good progress in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress because of these good relationships and the individual support they receive. Workshop accommodation is satisfactory. The teaching rooms for food provide a high quality of provision. The resources for teaching are satisfactory but are limited for pupil research. There is no technician support in the workshop and food areas. This places extra demands on the teaching staff in these areas. Display is of a satisfactory standard and effectively used as a resource for teaching and to identify standards through using examples of work produced by pupils to show expectations of quality, content and presentation.
66. The leadership of the department is good and the staff work well together as a team. The management of the department is good and there are clear schemes of work and policies in place. Assessment practice is just becoming established in Years 7 to 9 across the different material areas. In Years 10 and 11, assessment is more thorough and provides good information to pupils on their progress and actions for improvement. The head of department monitors teaching but good practice is not always shared between staff to raise standards. The department has identified key development issues to raise achievement. There has been good

progress since the previous inspection. The accommodation for food teaching has been improved. Results have improved for GCSE courses. There is good leadership and management of the department. However, there is insufficient use of ICT and limited teaching of aspects relating to mechanisms, structures and computer aided design and manufacture. The department continues to be without technician support.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

### **Art**

The provision in art is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and areas for improvement**

- The quality of teaching is good with some features of very good teaching.
- Assessment is well established and providing constructive feedback for improvement.
- The provision of curriculum time for teaching in Years 7, 8 and 9 is not the same for all pupils leading to unsatisfactory differences in their experience of art.
- There is little use of ICT as an artistic medium.
- The accommodation for art is unsatisfactory and this has an impact on the quality of teaching and learning.

#### **Commentary**

67. The standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 9 in 2003 are close to the national expectations; however, in lessons seen during the inspection, achievement and standards are good. Most pupils gain a good experience in using a variety of media but with limited opportunities for working in three dimensions. The work is challenging and pupils make good use of resource material including reference to the work of other artists and cultures. Pupils use sketchbooks as a resource to record ideas and techniques but the use of these varies from unsatisfactory to good. The time for teaching in Years 7, 8 and 9 is unsatisfactory as it is not the same for all pupils. This reduces the teaching and learning opportunities available to the department to provide a broad experience of art for all pupils. The GCSE results in 2003 are close to national averages and in the previous year they were above average. In the lessons seen and in work scrutinised during the inspection, achievement is good and standards are above average and some pupils demonstrate creativity and originality in their work. Pupils undertake good research to develop ideas and different graphical techniques. Good use is made of sketchbooks.
68. The overall quality of teaching is good with some features of very good teaching. Planning is good and lesson objectives are shared well with the pupils. Teachers have clear expectations of standards of presentation and behaviour. Their good rapport with pupils contributes to the good progress. Good use is made of ICT as a resource and for research but pupils' skills are not well developed in using ICT to produce original artwork. Homework is used well to extend learning. Teachers are aware of the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and special educational needs and, through good support and personal attention, they ensure progress is made with learning; consequently, these pupils achieve well.
69. The leadership of the department is good with a clear ethos and high expectations for work and behaviour. The management of the department is good and there are well-planned schemes of work and policies in place. The head of department effectively monitors teaching. Assessment practice is well established across both key stages including self-assessment by pupils. Key issues are identified through a development plan to raise achievement. Display is effective and used throughout the department and in the main school to demonstrate standards. There are good extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to complete their projects. The accommodation for art is unsatisfactory as both art rooms are too small and in urgent need of refurbishment. This has a detrimental impact on the image of the subject and constrains the overall experiences

and achievement of pupils. Since the previous inspection there has been satisfactory progress as overall standards at the end of Year 9 and at GCSE level have improved.

## Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The accommodation for the subject is very poor.
- Pupils achieve good GCSE results.
- The department is well managed and provides good opportunities for pupils to learn to play instruments.
- There are weaknesses in the teaching of Year 9 pupils and in the assessment of pupils' work.

### Commentary

70. At the end of Year 9, standards achieved and the standards of work seen were below average but this represents satisfactory achievement as pupils arrive in the school with standards that are below average. The relatively small numbers of pupils who take the GCSE course achieve well and attain results which are above national norms as those who enter the course already have relatively high levels of musical accomplishment. They achieve better grades than they do in their other subjects because of the support they receive from the teacher in a small group. In Year 7 pupils quickly learn to read and perform rhythm patterns. They compose simple tunes using keyboards. By the end of Year 9, pupils have worked in a range of styles although their performing techniques are not well developed. In Years 10 and 11, standards of work seen are good and pupils achieve well. Pupils compose fluently making good use of ICT to support them.
71. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although the long term absence of a teacher means that some classes in Years 7 to 9 are not currently receiving their musical entitlement. The best teaching was seen with Year 7 groups where well-explained structured tasks provided good opportunities for pupils of different abilities, including pupils with special educational needs, to achieve in line with their prior abilities. Good teaching is also characterised by a firm but supportive approach that encourages good behaviour. The least successful teaching was seen in Year 9 where the activities did not support musical learning and pupils became disengaged. Some lessons involve too much copying at the expense of involvement in musical activity. In the assessment of pupils' work there is insufficient emphasis on what pupils have achieved and what they need to do to improve.
72. The accommodation is in a very poor state of repair and sound insulation is non-existent. On colder days, the temperature in the music rooms is below the level at which it is reasonable to expect pupils to work. The resources are good but the small number of computers means that pupils in Years 7 to 9 are not able to access them to support their music making.
73. Leadership is satisfactory. The teacher in charge of music has a commitment to the development of the subject, although inadequacies in the accommodation make it difficult to move things forward. The department is well managed within these constraints and the provision of instrumental tuition is organised very efficiently. The department has made satisfactory progress since the time of the previous inspection: extra-curricular groups have been revived and the development of steel pan ensembles offers pupils in each year group opportunity to develop good ensemble skills and explore music of a different culture. The number of pupils learning to play musical instruments has increased over the past year and there is now a range of well-led extra-curricular activities.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong leadership, clear direction and a positive ethos characterise the management of the department.
- There are many extra-curricular activities that are well supported by enthusiastic groups of pupils.
- Pupils have a very positive attitude to the subject.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory.
- The assessment procedures do not always help pupils understand what they need to do to improve.

### Commentary

74. The majority of pupils in Years 7 to 9 are attaining at or above the level expected nationally. Pupils achieve well since when they start school they often have poor physical education skills. In games activities and gymnastics pupils achieve well and are developing the skills for them to compete successfully in a range of sporting activities. Pupils understand the need to prepare for physical activity and put this knowledge into practice well at the beginning of lessons. Pupils continue to make good progress and achieve well during Years 10 and 11, and by the time they are 16 years old their attainment is at least in line with national expectations, with a significant number, particularly those in the examination groups, doing even better. Pupils are developing good skills in a range of sporting activities and apply the skills they have practised into full game situations. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into lessons. They are given much support both by teachers and fellow pupils and most reach satisfactory levels of attainment. Talented pupils are identified and are encouraged to extend their skills both in and out of school.
75. The good quality teaching noted at the last inspection has been maintained. Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and lessons are well structured, with a variety of activities, and are conducted at a lively pace. Teachers provide an environment in lessons in which all pupils regardless of ability, gender or background feel valued for both effort and achievement. Pupils respond very positively to the enthusiasm and energy of their teachers. They work hard and invariably behave well. Their enjoyment of the subject is very evident.
76. Strong leadership and a positive ethos characterise the management of the department. The schemes of work and supporting documentation are of high quality. The indoor accommodation is very limited and the school urgently needs the planned new sports hall. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The department has developed good procedures for recording and tracking pupils' attainment and reporting National Curriculum levels reached by the end of Year 9. However, the department does not use these levels regularly throughout the years in order to help pupils understand what they need to do next to improve their standards.

## BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

### Business studies

Provision in business studies is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results in GCSE have fallen significantly on previous years because of staffing disruption.
- Achievement is unsatisfactory because pupils find it difficult to use knowledge in new contexts.
- Marking is not used well enough to show pupils how to improve their work.

- Pupils have very good access to computers for presenting work and research, but too few text books are available.

## Commentary

77. Standards in business studies are unsatisfactory. GCSE results have previously been average, but have fallen significantly and were well below average in 2003. The main reasons are that there is no specialist teaching and data was incorrectly used to identify the most appropriate examination level which led to the fall in examination results in 2003. Standards seen in lessons are below average and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Pupils lack independent learning skills and notebooks show that they tend to copy out their research rather than summarising findings to establish a firmer understanding of business concepts. Pupils with special educational needs do not make enough progress. Although they are identified in lesson planning, there are no activities planned to meet their specific needs.
78. Overall teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. Relationships are good and the methods used maintain good attitudes and behaviour in lessons. Questioning is used well to review prior learning at the start of lessons, but as the lesson progresses there is not enough emphasis on the development and application of business theory or on independent learning so that pupils are unable to apply their knowledge to new contexts and situations. Pupils have good ICT skills and are keen to use computers to enhance the presentation of their work, and enjoy using the internet for research. They focus quickly on web sites selected for them by their teacher but they have difficulty in understanding the nature of the questions set and lack of well structured and challenging work means they do not make enough progress. Overall, marking is carried out regularly but not always well enough so that Year 10 pupils do not have enough guidance to help them improve, some inaccurate work is accepted as good standard, and spelling and grammatical errors are not always corrected. The coursework assignment for Year 11 pupils has been reviewed after feedback from the external examiner and pupils are given good opportunities to reflect on their teacher's comments and improve their work.
79. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory because there has been no whole school system in place to ensure support and guidance is available, given the long term absence of the teacher in charge. There are no other business specialists with whom to share good practice and there are no effective schemes of work to aid the planning of lessons and sequencing of work. Pupil data is now used well to predict examination grades but there is no formal monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom to ensure that pupils are on track to meet their target grades. There is very good access to computers to support learning during lessons, but there are not enough current and appropriate textbooks to meet examination requirements. Improvement since the previous inspection is unsatisfactory.

## Work-related learning

### The following courses were sampled during the inspection

- GCSE in Child Development
- Applied GCSE in Engineering
- Foundation Certificate in Building Craft Operations
- NVQ 1 Hair and Beauty
- GNVQ intermediate Hospitality and Catering

Provision for work-related learning is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management of support for pupils attending college courses is excellent.
- The broad programme of practical courses successfully meets the needs of the full ability range.
- Pupils respond positively to the high expectations of teaching and support staff.

- Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching and excellent access to college resources.

## Commentary

80. Provision for work-related learning has improved significantly since the last inspection. The very wide range of vocational GCSE and work-related courses provided by school through the college meets the broad needs of pupils very well. The programme is popular with pupils and over half of pupils in Years 10 and 11 attend one of the courses. Pupils are enthusiastic about the relevance to their future careers. The courses have been successfully targeted at the full range of pupils so the needs of the most able and those with special educational needs or motivational and attitudinal problems are well catered for. For example, an enrichment session in interior design and decorating has been introduced after school for a small group of able pupils and this widens their vocational experience.
81. Overall, achievement is good. Attendance for some pupils at the college is better than previous experience would predict and pupils mature from the experience, which leads to better behaviour in school. All pupils progress well, they enjoy their vocational choices and work hard in most lessons, particularly in the practical sessions in workshops. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support from the special support assistants and their achievement in practical sessions is better than expected.
82. Pupils learn well because of good teaching. College tutors are experienced practitioners in their vocational areas and plan a range of activities which successfully engage and motivate pupils. Attention for health and safety in the workshops is paramount. Pupils receive very good support from tutors and technicians who work alongside them. Pupils collaborate very well in teams in the engineering workshop where they manufacture an engine. Pupils are keen to participate and make good progress on a variety of tasks in the hairdressing salon; for example, they meet clients whilst on reception duty and offer simple hair care under supervision. In building crafts, pupils have a basic working knowledge of painting, decorating, plumbing, joinery and electrical work benefit from the short-term goals set during their time in each area. In hospitality and catering all pupils participate well when discussing the needs of hotel clients, but the required level of theory on the intermediate course is too challenging for pupils with low prior attainment. In child development pupils apply their knowledge of play well to prepare games which they plan to use in their individual study of a child. The quality of assessment is good. Homework and written work are marked regularly and formative assessment in lessons is used well to engage pupils and help them improve. When practical competences are assessed, the immediate feedback to pupils acts as a positive motivator.
83. Some Year 11 boys, at risk of being excluded, have work experience each week with local employers. This has a positive effect and has led to pupils' improved attendance and motivation. All have the promise of future employment or a modern apprenticeship. Work experience is well planned to link with vocational courses and enables pupils to acquire employability skills. The work experience logbooks are a valuable addition to pupils' progress files.
84. Resources used in all college courses are excellent and emulate those in the working world. Pupils have good access to ICT to enhance presentation of work and research. Some lessons are held in school and, although tutors bring relevant resources, the classroom environment for learning is not as effective as at the college.
85. Leadership and management are excellent. There is a strong partnership between school and college which plans and provides courses very effectively. There are frequent meetings between senior and middle management to share experiences and promulgate good practice. Teachers and special support assistants ensure the welfare of pupils; they accompany pupils on their journey between school and college and monitor attitudes and behaviour out of lessons. The provision is under regular review by the steering group. College tutors meet regularly with the school's design technology staff and achievements are monitored against

performance data. College tutors prepare reports each term for their pupils and attend parents' meetings to discuss individual progress.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

### **Citizenship**

Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Leadership is good.
- The programme and the assessment model are in place, but not yet fully tried and tested.
- Pupils have a positive attitude towards the subject, but because teachers do not always make learning objectives explicit, they are not always aware of the elements of citizenship they have learned.

#### **Commentary**

86. The requirements of the citizenship programme are taught through fortnightly personal, social and health education lessons, in form tutorial time and within the schemes of work of specific subjects. Pupils have good opportunities to examine and debate moral, social and environmental issues within a number of subjects, including history, science and, particularly, religious education. The latter stresses the importance of multi-cultural awareness and, in Years 10 and 11, confronts controversial issues such as abortion and aspects of sexuality from several points of view, as well as those of the Church. This helps to ensure that pupils are fulfilling the requirements of the course and covering the range of topics offered. Standards and achievement in both key stages are therefore satisfactory.
87. The positive attitude of pupils towards the lessons seen indicates that teaching is at least good. The use of visiting speakers has had a very good impact on learning and has challenged pupils to think clearly and to form opinions on subjects such as recycling, conception and birth control, and future personal planning. Although teachers are required to make it clear to pupils when an element of citizenship is being covered in a lesson, they do not always make the learning objectives explicit so that pupils are readily able to state what they have learned. A citizenship week is planned to finalise assessment for each pupil but no intermediate assessments are yet undertaken and this is a weakness in the planning for the course.
88. Effective leadership has ensured full coverage of all aspects of citizenship. A very detailed audit across all subjects of the curriculum has been carried out and has formed the basis of a comprehensive programme. There is a firm assessment model contributing to pupils' personal development and awareness of citizenship issues. Pupils will comment on their learning, co-ordinate what has been covered in different subjects and add what they have achieved personally in school and outside school into a record of achievement. Though this programme is well led and organised, its effectiveness cannot be judged until the system has worked through. Management is therefore currently satisfactory. Citizenship was not inspected at the time of the previous report.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).*

