

## **Addendum to the OFSTED report on Hinde House School**

The Governing Body of Hinde House School

The recently published summary report on the school made reference to the work of the governing body and stated that:

A strong, committed and well-led governing body provides very good support for the school but **governance is unsatisfactory** because the school does not comply with the statutory requirements for collective worship.

Guidance has now been received from OFSTED that means that the main judgement quoted above needs to be changed, as many Inspectors across the country felt uneasy that the failure to comply with statutory requirements for collective worship necessitated, in OFSTED's opinion, the judgement given above in this and other schools.

The governors of Hinde House School accept that collective worship is not provided for all secondary aged pupils every day but they do ensure that the provision for the pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies are of good quality and do provide some opportunities for reflection by means of appropriate themes.

A strong, committed and well-led governing body provides very good support for the school and makes a major contribution to its leadership. The chairman of governors visits the school several times a week. Governors have a clear sense of purpose and took on the wider role of becoming governors of an all-age school with enthusiasm. They have a realistic grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and work well with the principal and senior team. They have a full involvement in planning and contribute well to the creation and implementation of the improvement plan.

In the light of the further guidance from OFSTED referred to above, the inspection team feels that **the governance of the school is good, and this should be reflected by the grade for the governance of the school on the final page of the report being changed from 5 to 3** but still feels that more could be done to ensure that the statutory requirement regarding collective worship are met.

Alan Haigh, Registered Inspector

5 December 2003



# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HINDE HOUSE SCHOOL**

Sheffield

LEA area: Sheffield

Unique reference number: 107126

Principal: Mrs S Draper

Lead inspector: Mr Alan Haigh

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> October 2003

Inspection number: 258662

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	All through, nursery to secondary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	301 primary and 950 secondary
School address:	Shiregreen Lance Sheffield
Postcode:	S5 6AG
Telephone number:	0114 2438486
Fax number:	0114 2436047
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Wozencroft
Date of previous inspection:	2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2000

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hinde House is a 3 – 16 comprehensive, mixed, community school, catering for 51 part-time nursery boys and girls, 301 primary and 950 secondary pupils. It is the only such state school in mainland Britain. It is situated in a socially and economically disadvantaged northern suburb of Sheffield, where unemployment is relatively high. About a quarter of the current Year 7 pupils transferred from Year 6 and three-quarters came from other local schools. There are about equal numbers of boys and girls in the primary phase but about 100 more boys than girls in the secondary phase. The school became all age in September 2002 following the amalgamation of a failing primary school and an existing 11 – 16 school; the primary and secondary sites are about one kilometre apart. The vast majority (about 90 per cent) of primary pupils are white, largely British. About five per cent are of Asian backgrounds and a similar proportion are from black families. About 75 per cent of the secondary pupils are white, ten per cent Asian and eight per cent black. Most of the others are mixed race. There are more than 90 refugees or asylum seekers – a well-above-average proportion. Fifty-four pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English, again an above-average proportion. Thirty one per cent of the primary pupils and 30 per cent of the secondary pupils have special educational needs (largely educational, behavioural and social difficulties) and five per cent have statements of special educational needs. These figures are also above average. About 33 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals – more than in most schools. The rate of pupil mobility at over 20 per cent is well above average with many arriving or leaving during the course of the school year. The average attainment of pupils on entry to the primary phase is very low and to the secondary phase is well below average. The school is part of an Education Action Zone and benefits from Excellence in Cities funding. It has recently received awards for Investors in People, Sportsmark, Safemark, School Achievement, Careers Education and Guidance and other aspects of its work.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2630	Alan Haigh	Lead inspector	
13448	Dawn Lloyd	Lay inspector	
3758	Anthony Barringer	Team inspector	English, English as an additional language
2491	Douglas Beaumont	Team inspector	Design and technology
10275	John Cosgrove	Team inspector	Religious education
2628	Jim Edwards	Team inspector	Citizenship, physical education
8873	Charlotte Evers	Team inspector	History
2225	Pamela Freund	Team inspector	Art
33226	Elizabeth Greensides	Team inspector	Primary English, primary information and communication technology, primary music
16971	Roger Hardaker	Team inspector	Primary mathematics, primary physical education, primary design and technology
11816	Geoff Jones	Primary co-ordinating inspector	Foundation Stage, primary science, primary religious education
31649	Richard Marsden	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
10782	Henry Moreton	Team inspector	Mathematics
20767	Jerry Royle	Team inspector	Information and communication technology, music
3937	John Seed	Team inspector	Science
2665	Susan Thomas	Team inspector	Geography, special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

peakschoolhaus ltd

BPS Business Centre  
 Brake Lane  
 Boughton  
 Nottinghamshire  
 NG22 9HQ

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

**The school is good, effective** and improving; much of its work is very good but continuing poor attendance is still holding back standards and hampering pupils' progress and achievements, particularly in the Foundation Stage and in Year 11. The school provides good value for money. Standards are generally below the national average but achievements are good in Years 1 to 9. Pupils progress well, especially in English, mathematics and science in the secondary phase and in science in the primary phase. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils try hard and are expected to do their best. Overall leadership is excellent and management is very good but governance is unsatisfactory because the school does not comply with the statutory requirements for collective worship for all pupils. All other aspects of governance are very good.

#### **The main strengths and weaknesses of the primary phase are:**

- The very good leadership and good management provided by the primary phase leader and key staff have ensured a successful start for the school.
- Procedures for improving the performance of teachers have had a positive influence on the work of the school.
- Staff apply the very good behaviour policy consistently.
- Pupils' attendance is poor.
- Good teaching involves assessing and recording what pupils can and cannot do. This information is used well to plan pupils' learning.
- The improvements in standards in English, mathematics and science at age seven and 11 are good but standards in English and mathematics are still not high enough.
- Pupils' standards in information and communication technology are not high enough because the teaching of skills is insufficient during lessons.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well by highly competent staff.

#### **The main strengths and weaknesses in the secondary phase are:**

- Pupils' achievements at age 14 are good in English, mathematics and science.
- Leadership is excellent and management is very good – the excellent quality-assurance procedures are helping raise standards.
- All pupils are highly valued and the pastoral support is very good. Good relations and racial harmony typify the exemplary inclusion practice.
- Attendance is still poor and punctuality remains unsatisfactory.
- Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum is unsatisfactory and standards suffer.
- High expectations and skilled management of pupils support good teaching and learning.
- Pupils at the early stage of speaking English as an additional language have too little support and make less progress than they should. Those receiving support progress well.
- In modern foreign languages there is a lack of challenge for higher attainers and too little support for pupils with special educational needs.

The primary phase became part of the whole school in September 2002 and has not previously had an inspection. The secondary phase continues to improve and is much more effective than at the last inspection (October 2000). It had already made improvements in coming out of special measures and excellent leadership and very strong governance and management have ensured continuing progress. Pupils' attainment has improved and standards of literacy, although below average, are improving. All pupils have clear targets in every subject. Teaching is monitored well and is much better. The plans for improving pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development have been implemented well. A deputy head provides very good leadership of the special educational needs provision. Improvements in attendance have been slight and the increasing

number of pupils arriving in the course of the year, whose commitment to school is understandably unstable, is hindering this.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

### Primary phase

Foundation Stage pupils make good progress in all the required areas of learning in the curriculum. The achievements of seven and 11 year old pupils in English, mathematics and science are good and they have made good progress in the past year. Standards for seven and 11 year olds are still well below average but pupils generally are achieving well and doing better than would be expected. The exception is ICT where pupils do not achieve well enough. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are supported very well in the classroom by well-trained classroom assistants and by the highly competent learning LSU Manager when they are in the school's 'Learning House'. Pupils' **personal development** and their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** are **good**. Attitudes to learning are satisfactory overall, although they are good for pupils aged three to seven. Behaviour is good for pupils aged three to seven and satisfactory for older pupils but attendance is poor.

### Secondary phase

Performance in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
	E	E	E	E

*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.*

Pupils' **achievements** are **good** by the age of 14 and satisfactory by the age of 16. The standards of work are below average, however. Results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for 14 year olds show that pupils' standards were much better in English than those of pupils in similar schools and in line with those pupils in mathematics and science. There were slight improvements in 2003 and the school's targets were exceeded; there is an upward trend. Progress is better than in most schools in these subjects in Years 7 to 9. The GCSE results in 2002 were well below the national average and those of similar schools. The 2003 GCSE results improved, supporting a small upward trend, but below the school's targets. Girls did better than boys in the 2002 GCSE examinations but boys did better than girls in 2003. There is no pattern. Many pupils (about one in five) arrive or leave the school in the course of the school year (asylum seekers, refugees, for example) and this has an adverse effect on examination results. Standards observed remain below average for 16 year olds but many achieve well and nearly all achieve at least satisfactorily. The achievements of ethnic minority groups and pupils with special educational needs are in line with those of other pupils. A significant number of pupils at the early stage of speaking English as an additional language do not achieve well enough because they have too little support. The improvements in standards that have been observed in Years 7 to 9 over recent years are now being seen in Years 10 and 11. Pupils' **personal development** and their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** are **good**. Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are good but attendance is poor.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **good quality of education**. Overall, the **teaching is good** at all stages. Teachers manage the behaviour of pupils well and establish a good working atmosphere in most lessons, enabling good learning. Teachers have a very good grasp of how pupils are getting on and the excellent use of target grades promotes good progress. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are appropriately high. The good curriculum has strong aspects. All National Curriculum requirements are met but there are weaknesses in ICT in the primary phase. The curriculum of pupils in Years 10 and 11 has especially good features, such as work-place learning. In the

secondary phase, there is too little time for ICT, and cross-curricular provision is unsatisfactory. Care for pupils and their support and guidance are very good, as are community links.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The principal provides **excellent leadership** and the primary phase leader provides **very good leadership**, both being very well supported by highly competent and hard-working senior colleagues. The senior team provide **very good management** and quality assurance is excellent in the secondary phase. Self-evaluation is good in the primary phase. A strong, committed and well-led governing body provides very good support for the school but **governance is unsatisfactory** because the school does not comply with the statutory requirements for collective worship. The school's aims and ethos are very visible in its work. Measures to judge and ensure quality are very strong. The school runs smoothly with a clear agenda for continued improvement. There is a very good team spirit across the school – all staff and pupils are valued and respected.

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

Parents are satisfied with most of what the school offers. Pupils are proud of the school and most like attending. Parents feel that teachers expect their children to work hard and that the induction arrangements work well. Pupils agree with this. Parents and pupils agree that teaching is good but express some concerns about behaviour.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

### **Primary phase**

- Improve standards in English and mathematics in Years 1 to 6.
- Raise standards in ICT in Years 1 to 6.
- Increase levels of pupils' attendance even further.

### **Secondary phase**

- Continue to work on improving attendance and punctuality.
- Improve the provision for ICT by increasing resources and time devoted to it.
- Provide more support for pupils who are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language.
- Improve provision for modern foreign languages by increasing challenge for higher attainers and providing more support for those with special educational needs.
- and, to meet statutory requirements,
- Ensure all pupils attend a daily act of collective worship.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

##### **Primary phase**

The standards of children by the end of the Foundation Stage are low compared with the levels expected, in the more important areas of their learning. Standards for the school's seven and 11 year olds are well below the national averages. Infant and junior pupils have made good gains in their learning and have improved their attainment levels in reading and writing but the improvements have not been as fast for the older junior pupils because there are many gaps in their knowledge and understanding emanating from previous years. Pupils achieve well at all stages.

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

- Although well below average, standards in science are improving rapidly for infant and junior pupils.
- English and mathematics standards for seven and 11 year old pupils are well below average.
- Infant and junior pupils are achieving well in English, mathematics and science.
- Standards in the Foundation Stage are very low in communication, language and literacy as well as in mathematical development but the children achieve well.
- Pupils' skills and achievements in ICT are unsatisfactory.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

##### **Commentary**

1. When Bracken Hill Primary School closed, it became the primary phase of Hinde House School in September 2002. It opened with an almost entirely new teaching staff and its entirely new senior management team set about the difficult task of raising pupils' standards and improving their attitudes and behaviour. It is difficult to achieve an undertaking such as making a strong impact on raising low standards successfully in this short space of time. It is even more difficult to accomplish this with older junior pupils because they have more to catch up than the infants. Nevertheless, compared with the infant pupils' results in the last year of Bracken Hill Primary School, the latest results in the annual National Curriculum tests in 2003 show that 50 per cent more seven year olds in Hinde House School reached the expected level for their age in reading and 30 per cent more in mathematics. Improvements in writing were not as marked because only two per cent more pupils reached the expected level than the year before. The same comparison shows that 50 per cent more 11 year olds reached the expected level for their age in English, 45 per cent more in mathematics and nearly 50 per cent more in science. However, both sets of latest results for 2003 are still well below average compared with the most recent national figures, but the rate of improvement indicates very clearly the extent to which the school is successfully raising pupils' standards.
2. Children's standards in the Foundation Stage are very low in communication, language and literacy as well as in mathematical development. They have not been attending school long enough for the good teaching to have enough impact on improving their attainments sufficiently. Standards in children's personal, social and emotional development as well as in their knowledge and understanding of the world are well below the levels expected. Standards in physical and creative development are below the levels expected for this age group. In the short time children have been attending school they have achieved well and are making good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding.
3. The proportion of pupils reaching the levels expected for seven and 11 year olds in English, mathematics and science is well below average. Many 11 year olds have long-standing gaps in their knowledge and understanding of mathematics that the school is currently repairing. In

many cases this is a long process and makes it difficult for the school's national test results in mathematics for 11 year olds to improve quickly.

4. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs often achieve well in relation to individual targets. These pupils are given plenty of opportunities for practical involvement in learning which successfully engage them. Many have low attainment levels but sensitive support from teachers and other adults ensures progress and a sense of success. Teachers carefully plan work to cater for the needs of all pupils in their class. Pupils with higher capabilities in English, mathematics and science are provided with challenging work that extends their knowledge, skills and understanding. Gifted and talented pupils and those speaking English as an additional language achieve well.
5. Pupils' standards of literacy and numeracy are well below average but are improving well. ICT skills for seven and 11 year old pupils are well below the levels expected and pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory. Pupils are not taught the necessary skills frequently enough to make the progress they should. The personal ICT skills of a few teachers are not sufficient for them to demonstrate confidently the range of required competences.

### Secondary phase

Pupils' **achievements** are mostly good by the age of 14 and generally satisfactory by the age of 16. The standards of work are below average, however, at all stages.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well by the age of 14, especially in English, mathematics and science.
- Results in the 2002 National Curriculum English tests for 14 year olds were much better than those in similar schools.
- National Curriculum test results for 14 year olds are improving faster than results nationally.
- The GCSE results are well below the national average but are improving slowly.
- Standards in ICT across the curriculum are not high enough.
- In modern foreign languages, the most able and those with special educational needs do not achieve well enough.

### Commentary

#### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 9 – average point scores in 2002**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	34.2 (32.0)	33.3 (33.0)
Mathematics	31.6 (31.6)	34.7 (34.4)
Science	30.9 (30.4)	33.3 (33.1)

*There were 180 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

6. Results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for 14 year olds show that pupils' standards were much better in English than those of pupils in similar schools and in line with those pupils in mathematics and science. There were slight improvements in 2003 in all three subjects and the school's targets were exceeded; there is an upward trend. Progress is better than in most schools in these subjects in Years 7 to 9.
7. The upward trend in results in the tests taken by 14 year olds is faster than the national one. There is no pattern in the relative performances of boys and girls but in 2001 and 2002 boys' results were relatively better than girls'. School analyses show that there is no significant difference in the overall performances of different groups of pupils.

8. Pupils' achievements in Years 7 to 9 are good overall and better than would be expected when their prior attainment is considered in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, history, physical education and citizenship. They are, however, only satisfactory in art, geography, modern foreign languages and religious education and less than satisfactory in ICT and music. The standard of work seen was below average overall although it was in line with what is normally seen for 14 year olds in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, physical education and citizenship. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in Years 7 to 9 and make good progress in response to challenging targets and effective specialist teaching and support. The gifted and talented pupils and those with English as an additional language who receive support achieve well.

**Standards in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11 in 2002**

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	18.0 (23.0)	50.0 (48.0)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	76.0 (83.0)	91.0 (91.0)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	86.0 (90.0)	96.0 (96.0)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	23.9 (27.8)	39.8 (39.0)

*There were 188 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

9. The GCSE results in 2002 were well below the national average and those of similar schools. The 2003 GCSE results improved, supporting a small upward trend, but were below the school's ambitious targets. Girls did better than boys in the 2002 GCSE examinations but boys did better than girls in 2003. There is no pattern.
10. Standards observed were below average for 16 year olds overall but many achieve well and nearly all achieve at least satisfactorily. Standards are in line with those in most schools in art, design and technology, physical education and citizenship but below average in all other subjects and well below in modern foreign languages. Achievement at this stage is good and better than would be expected in science, design and technology, history, physical education and citizenship but unsatisfactory and lower than it should be in ICT and music. It is satisfactory in all other subjects.
11. The achievements of ethnic minority groups and pupils with special educational needs are in line with those of other pupils. The school maintains extensive records of the progress of pupils with special educational needs and sets challenging targets, which are generally met and sometimes exceeded.
12. The higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged in modern foreign languages and make insufficient progress. Pupils with special educational needs also progress too slowly in modern foreign languages as work is often poorly matched to their needs. The gifted and talented pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall in most subjects. The pupils who speak English as an additional language who receive support achieve well but there is not enough support for all of them and a significant number make insufficient progress because of this.
13. Many pupils (about one in five) join or leave the school in the course of the school year (asylum seekers, refugees, for example) and this has an adverse effect on examination results. The school does all it can to support them and minimise their disadvantages. The improvements in standards that have been observed in Years 7 to 9 over recent years are now being seen in Years 10 and 11.
14. Pupils' English language and literacy skills are not as good as those seen in most schools but are improving following a significant effort by the school. Group work is rare in most subjects and talk is not planned into lessons as an essential way of learning. Pupils are seldom expected to present ideas to the whole class. Extended oral contributions are rare. Overall, the

standard of speaking and listening throughout the curriculum is below average. In the majority of subjects, pupils read well enough to understand reading materials presented to them. Pupils present written work carefully in all subjects.

15. Pupils' competence in mathematics is also below average but the progress made by them in using mathematics across the curriculum is good, particularly between the ages of 11 to 14. Standards of numeracy are improving but are below national expectations. There are good examples of the use of mathematics in geography and history that include estimation skills as well as data analysis and presentation skills.
16. Pupils' competence in the use of ICT across the curriculum is poor, largely because access to computers is inadequate. The ratio of computers to pupils is less than average. This is presenting a problem for some subjects as access to the well-used computer suites is restricted and not always available when needed. Good practice, however, was seen in design and technology using a range of programs to support pupils' technology skills. Effective use was also observed in music using programs to develop composing skills. With the exception of art and science, use in all other subjects is unsatisfactory.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

### **Primary and secondary phases**

Pupils' personal development and attitudes to learning are good. Behaviour, especially of pupils in the secondary phase, is mainly good, sometimes very good or excellent, although there is some poor behaviour from a small minority of pupils. Relationships throughout the school are good. Attendance is poor and punctuality is unsatisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning; they are well motivated and keen to succeed.
- Pupils are proud of their school and join in activities enthusiastically.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good, because teachers have high expectations.
- A small minority of pupils lack concentration in lessons, become restless and have poor attitudes to learning.
- Good relationships result in positive attitudes and effective learning.
- Attendance is poor, in spite of the school's efforts to improve overall figures.
- The school's good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development reflects clear improvements since the last inspection.

### **Commentary**

17. Most pupils are eager to do well at school. They concentrate and work hard throughout lessons, responding well when teaching is lively and interesting. Their positive attitudes and strong motivation mean that they achieve well. In the primary phase, pupils are beginning to take an interest in their work and to develop longer spans of concentration.
18. Pupils are proud of their school because they think that it offers them a good education, and they are keen to extend their learning by taking part in activities outside lessons. For example, large numbers of secondary pupils rise to the challenge of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, pupil librarians are proud of the service they provide and pupils in both phases appreciate the opportunities provided by membership of the school and class councils to have their say in matters that affect them directly.
19. Very clear behaviour policies, consistently implemented by staff, ensure that pupils are well aware of acceptable standards of conduct. Consequently, most pupils behave well. At best, behaviour in lessons and around the school in the secondary phase is sometimes excellent –

as in the dining room at lunchtime. A small number of pupils find it hard to conform to the school's high expectations. Their restlessness and lack of concentration, noisy calling out and immature, silly behaviour disrupt their own learning and that of their fellow pupils. Some primary pupils find it especially difficult to do as they are told, but their most challenging behaviour is extremely well contained by their teachers, who are helping them to develop self-control and to understand the rules that must be obeyed. When there are serious breaches of discipline, the ultimate sanction of exclusion has to be imposed, but this now happens less often, due to the success of the school's approach to encouraging good behaviour. The rate of exclusions is, however, still above average.

## Exclusions

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	997	127	3
White – Irish	5	0	0
White – any other White background	9	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	46	21	2
Mixed – White and Black African	3	6	0
Mixed – White and Asian	5	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	10	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	89	5	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	7	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	19	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	30	0	1
Black or Black British – African	49	1	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	17	0	0
Chinese	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	31	1	0
No ethnic group recorded	13	0	0

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

20. Relationships between pupils and adults are good, as a result of a constant emphasis on the importance of showing respect and consideration for others. Teachers provide good role models and pupils are given many opportunities to think about and meet the needs of others, for example, in welcoming new pupils into school, in easing the transition between the primary and secondary phases and in extensive fund raising for charities. Older pupils particularly value their very strong relationships with teachers and other adults in school, which give them confidence and help them develop in maturity. The strength of relationships across the school contributes to effective learning, since pupils in both phases are anxious to please their teachers by living up to their high expectations.



**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence	
School data	8.05
National data	6.6

Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.25
National data	0.85

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

21. Attendance continues to be well below that seen in most schools, while unauthorised absence is well above. This is undoubtedly having a detrimental effect on pupils' achievement. Figures are badly affected by high pupil mobility, and by the very poor attendance records of some individuals. The school has a comprehensive monitoring system, a scheme of incentives and rewards, and sensitive support strategies for individuals and their families. These have resulted in a slight improvement in overall figures in the past year, but many pupils and parents do not yet understand how regular attendance is linked to successful learning. Punctuality is also not as good as it should be. A small number of pupils regularly arrive late at school and too many pupils arrive late to lessons during the course of the day, because there is insufficient urgency in their movement about the school site.
22. Overall the provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good, with strengths in the provision for moral, social and cultural development. The school has successfully improved the spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision and makes it an integral part of the aims and ethos of the school. It has good mechanisms to ensure that it is monitored and evaluated over both the primary and the secondary phases.
23. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Although the school does not comply with the statutory requirements to provide collective worship each day for all its pupils it does provide some opportunities for reflection in assemblies by means of appropriate themes. Spiritual aspects or worship are not normally found in the form tutor periods although form tutors do cover the social and moral aspects well. In the primary phase there is more involvement of pupils in assemblies than in the secondary phase although a Year 7 assembly provided a very good example of how older pupils, Ambassadors, can help the younger ones. Religious education and other subjects play a satisfactory role in providing opportunities for reflection and spiritual insights.
24. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school has a clear code of conduct and a behaviour policy that is regularly reviewed, and the majority of pupils abide by it. Although there are some instances of poor behaviour the school has good mechanisms to cope with them, including the way in which a Circle of Friends can help vulnerable pupils. Opportunities to raise moral issues and moral choices occur throughout the curriculum. Moral and social concerns are evident in the large number of charitable causes supported by the school.
25. Provision for the social development of pupils is good. There is much evidence of co-operative learning in lessons, in clubs and in extra-curricular or sporting activities. Pupils tend to work better independently in lessons than collaboratively, however. A large number of visits are made, some of them residential, some of them abroad and some of them combining Year 6 pupils in the primary phase with Year 7 pupils in the secondary phase. These not only help in the socialisation of pupils but also help to ease the transition of pupils into the secondary phase. There are good opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities and in several subjects to learn about society, social and moral issues, and citizenship. There is a very good guidance programme, including that concerned with careers advice and work placements. The school has a good deal of sporting success including cross-country running.
26. The provision for the cultural development of pupils is good and has improved in recent years. The Creative Arts Day in the primary phase is particularly successful. It combines various art forms, and includes all the children in such activities as drama, photography, and African

drumming. It also acts as a vehicle for the promotion of healthy attitudes towards racism. The Cultural Diversity Week covers much the same ground in the secondary school. There are several successful cross-phase activities, such as a 3-16 concert involving a Gospel Choir. The school provides an excellent example of a multi-cultural society in miniature and ensures good opportunities to study other cultures, religions and races and to promote appropriate attitudes. There are valuable extra-curricular visits to galleries and museums. Pupils have good opportunities to learn about twenty-first century culture in design and technology, on work-related activities and by means of links with industry or the universities, but there are fewer opportunities to learn about the wider modern culture of ICT.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

### Primary phase

**The quality of education is good.** Teaching, learning and assessment are good. The curriculum is of good quality. Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage classes. Throughout the school learning opportunities are matched to pupils' differing abilities in reading, writing and mathematics and enriched through good use of resources and a range of activities, visits and visitors. Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good. The school tries hard to involve parents in their children's learning but is not wholly successful in its efforts.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **good** at all stages; because of this pupils learn and achieve well. Assessment of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding is carried out rigorously in English, mathematics and science, and the information is used well to plan the next steps in their learning.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in the Foundation Stage classes and Years 1 to 6 enables pupils to achieve well.
- All teachers apply the school's behaviour policy consistently and this leads to good behaviour, good concentration and good learning.
- Teachers respect pupils and, as a consequence, there are very good relationships between them.
- Teachers use a good range of teaching methods to involve all pupils in learning.
- Teachers make effective use of what they know about pupils' previous achievements to plan work that meets their learning needs.
- Classroom assistants provide very effective support for pupils during lessons.
- There is inconsistency in teachers' personal skills and knowledge in the use of ICT that has led to unsatisfactory achievement in the subject.
- The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent.

### Commentary

27. Teaching and learning are good overall. Almost three-quarters of the teaching seen was good or better. This positive picture was further substantiated in the good range of work in pupils' workbooks and in the very positive attitudes towards learning that pupils showed in discussions. The good teaching throughout the phase has enabled pupils to achieve well and make good progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding.

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in the 47 primary phase lessons that were graded**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	13 (28%)	29 (43%)	13 (28%)	0	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.*

28. The good teaching across all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage involves careful planning and discussion between the teachers and nursery nurses. This has enabled children to achieve well and make good progress towards all of the early learning goals. Lesson plans take account of assessments of what the children can and cannot do so that the teaching and support they receive enable them to move forward in their learning at an optimum pace. Teaching continually reinforces appropriate vocabulary in communication, language and literacy as well as in mathematical development so that children quickly become used to new words.
29. The quality of teaching in the rest of the primary phase is also good. In lessons with infant and junior pupils activities are well matched to the needs of pupils with different levels of attainment. This enables all pupils in the class to progress successfully at a rate appropriate to their capabilities. Lesson planning and assessment of what pupils can and cannot do are rigorous, particularly in lessons where literacy and numeracy are involved, and this has helped their progress in these curriculum areas. The quality of marking is usually good but some teachers do not provide written comments about how pupils can improve their work or explanations about something pupils have misunderstood.
30. Teachers apply the school's behaviour policy consistently, which results in orderly classrooms and pupils who concentrate well on their work. This makes it easier for pupils to achieve well and to make progress in their learning. There is a mutual respect between teachers, classroom assistants and pupils, leading to good relationships and a trusting atmosphere in classes. Pupils learn more effectively because there is a sense of security in school. The teaching involves effective use of a good range of teaching methods that recognises that pupils may learn in a variety of ways. For example, teachers explain things directly to the pupils and a range of practical activities designed to consolidate pupils' understanding follows these explanations or pupils are taken out of the classroom to see principles operating in nature.
31. Good links are made between different subjects of the curriculum such as writing poems about walking on the moon as a link with science or constructing Aztec shapes and designs that tessellate or have reflection symmetry to link art, history and mathematics. All such opportunities to learn in different ways give pupils a range of opportunities in which they can gain knowledge and understanding effectively.
32. Literacy and numeracy are taught well. Teaching of ICT is satisfactory but there is insufficient emphasis on teaching the necessary skills that pupils need to acquire. This is not helped by long-standing difficulties with technical support and unreliable equipment, and an inconsistency in the level of personal skills and knowledge in ICT amongst the teaching staff.
33. Classroom assistants and nursery nurses are well trained and work effectively in the classrooms. They support groups of pupils successfully, including higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, and make written assessments of how they got on so that the information can be used for planning the next series of lessons. Classroom assistants and class teachers liaise closely when planning future lessons and this has a very good impact on pupils' progress.

## **Secondary phase**

The secondary phase provides a good quality of education. Key strengths of the good teaching and learning are the teachers' insistence on high standards of behaviour and the promotion of equal opportunities. The good curriculum is enhanced by very good preparation for work in Years 10 and 11 and very strong links with the community. The school provides very good care and guidance for all its pupils.

## Teaching and learning

Overall, the quality of teaching and of learning and the assessment of pupils' work are **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Good teaching is consistent across the vast majority of subjects and all year groups.
- Teachers insist on, and mostly achieve, high standards of behaviour in lessons.
- Pupils respond well to the large amount of lively and interesting teaching.
- All staff are very good at promoting equality of opportunity.
- Teachers know their pupils very well, set challenging targets for all and assess work thoroughly and constructively.

### Commentary

34. Twenty-four per cent of the lessons observed were very good or excellent and 67 per cent at least good. Four per cent were less than satisfactory. These figures illustrate a significant improvement in teaching since the last inspection. The teachers are well qualified and have a good command of their subjects. Lesson planning is good and teachers and support staff ensure that all pupils' needs are met. There is no variation in the quality of teaching across year groups and very little variation across subjects. Teaching is good overall. That in design and technology is very good with pupils aged 11 – 14 and satisfactory in religious education with those pupils. Teaching in modern foreign languages is satisfactory overall. In all other subjects it is good. Some excellent teaching was seen in English and science and there was much very good teaching in English, design and technology, history and science. Lively and interesting lessons typify much of the work in English and history.
35. Teachers manage classes well in all subjects and establish a very good working atmosphere in most lessons, enabling good learning. Teachers decide where pupils are to sit and pupils co-operate very well. There are no confrontations – teachers are patient and very caring. All staff contribute very well to the promotion of equality of opportunity. Questioning is clearly focused on individuals to check their understanding and reinforce learning. Pupils and teachers get on very well together.
36. Teachers plan effectively for pupils with special educational needs. Work is differentiated on the basis of teachers' good knowledge of pupils' prior attainment and learning needs. Pupils with special educational needs receive sensitive support whether in withdrawal lessons or in mainstream classes. The pupils' individual education plans have a sensible number of clear targets. The gifted and talented pupils are taught well and challenged appropriately, except in modern foreign languages where there is too little challenge. All other minority groups also receive consistently good teaching.
37. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was linked to inadequate control of the minority of silly pupils who disrupted others' learning. Pupils find this annoying and they and their parents commented to this effect before and during the inspection. Teachers have a very good grasp of how their pupils are getting on, and the excellent use of target grades promotes good progress. Expectations are appropriately high and equality of opportunity is promoted very well. Pupils try hard in lessons and often produce good amounts of work. They show pride in much of their work and very few exercise books have any graffiti on their covers. Indeed, apart from the name, form and subject, the only other writing on the cover is usually the pupils' target grade.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 143 secondary phase lessons that were graded

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5 (3%)	30 (21%)	61 (43%)	41 (29%)	5 (3%)	1 (1%)	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.*

### Assessment

38. The quality of assessment is good in both the primary and secondary phases of the school. Marking is thorough and gives pupils good information about how the standard of their work can be improved. Teachers in the secondary phase use the school marking policy consistently and pupils are clear about how well they are doing in relation to the targets set for them. In the primary phase marking is also thorough and helpful to the pupils and their teacher in assessing progress and achievement. However, marking in the primary phase is not consistently good and does not sufficiently help pupils in meeting their targets or inform teachers' planning.
39. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is very thorough. The detailed records show good progress is made. Pupils are accurately identified in line with the requirements of the Code of Practice. All staff are clear about how they need to adjust their teaching to meet the needs of these pupils as a result of intensive professional development.
40. The school has placed a high priority on the collation and analysis of assessment data. In both phases of the school this information is very well used to set targets for the school, for subjects and for individual pupils. These targets have provided a clear focus for improvement overall and for particular groups of pupils within the school. The pupils have a good understanding of their targets because marking and assessment of work is directly linked to the standards they are achieving. However, the quality of information given when reporting achievement to parents lacks consistency between subjects and between teachers. Greater emphasis needs to be placed on subject-specific learning and targets for improvement.

### The curriculum

#### Primary phase

The primary curriculum is **good**. It provides a broad range of worthwhile learning opportunities that cater for the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of all pupils, and ensures progression in pupils' learning. The school has a wide range of sporting, cultural and other activities that provide good enrichment to the learning opportunities offered within the classrooms. The school's accommodation is satisfactory and the resources available to assist pupils in their learning are good.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is relevant and meaningful to the pupils in the school, giving them a desire to learn.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The school provides a good range of after-school activities that enrich the curriculum and help pupils to achieve well.
- Provision for developing knowledge and skills in ICT is unsatisfactory as is the provision for using these skills in other subjects.

## Commentary

41. The curriculum is developed through a range of innovative practices specifically aimed at making learning both relevant and enjoyable for pupils. For example, theme days are organised where pupils work in mixed age groups, helping each other to learn successfully by each using their skills together in the completion of a number of interesting learning tasks. During one of these days, pupils successfully developed a good awareness of a range of different cultures and religions by means of an intensive focus on creative arts from other cultures. In response to this interesting programme, pupils worked enthusiastically, with many also learning that they could succeed in completing tasks well.
42. The provision made for pupils to learn successfully in English, mathematics and science is good. The learning opportunities provided in most other subjects with the exception of ICT are at least satisfactory and sometimes good and occasionally very good. Pupils receive a wide range of opportunities to improve their skills in art and design and in design and technology, particularly during the Creative Arts Day that took place during the inspection week. In ICT pupils are not being given sufficient opportunities to develop their skills and understanding. The use of ICT to help pupils learn is not yet featuring in teachers' planning across all areas of the curriculum, and in those areas where it does feature, for example in mathematics, computers are not used to full advantage to promote learning.
43. The school provides very well for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers plan carefully in order to meet pupils' learning needs by giving them learning tasks that are challenging but within their capabilities. As a result pupils are able to participate fully in lessons and they achieve well. Some pupils are given additional support in the Learning Support Unit. Here they receive good and sometimes very good quality teaching from teachers who are firm, yet understanding, and who motivate pupils by presenting work in an interesting and relevant way. Pupils who work in the Unit achieve well, both whilst working there and when working back in the classroom.
44. In planning learning opportunities, teachers focus well on the needs of all pupils. Higher attaining pupils are challenged well, particularly in English and mathematics. Higher attaining pupils have opportunities to extend their interests and capabilities through such clubs as the 'Gifted and talented Art Club' and the 'Gifted and talented Writing Club'.
45. The school provides a rich and varied programme of activities outside normal school time. Most of these are available to pupils from Year 3 upwards but the younger pupils are able to participate in a dance and drama club. The learning of older pupils is well supported by the provision of a good list of additional activities, including a variety of sports activities and opportunities to play competitive games against other schools, for example in football and cross-country running. Pupils enthusiastically support these activities.
46. In the primary phase, there are too few library books to cater for pupils' needs. The existing stock needs up-grading. At the Foundation Stage, there is insufficient outdoor fixed play equipment. The accommodation for pupils aged 5-11 is satisfactory. The teaching areas for Years 1 and 2 pupils and Foundation Stage children are good. The accommodation in Years 3 to 6 is adequate to deliver the National Curriculum. Progress in physical education is, however, affected negatively because pupils' concentration is often lost as the hall, used for physical education, is a general thoroughfare. Teachers, classroom assistants and nursery nurses have good expertise in teaching and supporting pupils' learning. Resources to assist pupils in acquiring new skills and aiding their understanding are good and used well.

## Secondary phase

The good curriculum has strong aspects. All National Curriculum requirements are met and the curriculum of pupils in Years 10 and 11 has especially good features such as work-place learning. There is too little time for ICT and cross-curricular ICT provision is unsatisfactory.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Years 10 and 11 curriculum is innovative and well integrated with the school's support and guidance provision.
- There is a strong focus on offering pupils the best for their aptitudes, interests and abilities.
- Statutory requirements for collective worship are not met.
- There is an unsatisfactory balance in the curriculum at Years 7 to 9.
- Unsatisfactory accommodation and inadequate ICT resources hinder pupils' progress in several subjects.

## Commentary

47. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and they are good in Years 10 and 11. There is a strong commitment to meeting the particular and individual needs of pupils and this works effectively to give all pupils the equality of access that they deserve, whether they are gifted and talented, refugees or asylum seekers and/or pupils whose first language is not English. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught in Years 7 to 9, along with guidance, which incorporates personal, social, health and citizenship education. The personal and social education and citizenship curriculum is of good quality. While there is satisfactory breadth to the curriculum, it is not well balanced because the strong emphasis on guidance limits the time to cover the programmes of study for ICT and music. Nevertheless, the guidance programme is well structured and well taught.
48. Much innovative thinking and planning has been done to produce a good curriculum in Years 10 and 11 for all pupils. There is a range of academic and vocational options for pupils to choose, along with very good careers guidance and support, which prepares them well for the next stage of education and training. Some notable partnerships with further education have enabled the school to offer vocational GCSE courses in engineering, and other innovations are planned. Although the school offers sufficient time to cover religious education, it does not comply with the requirement to offer a daily act of collective worship
49. There is good curriculum enrichment through a range of after-school activities and visits, and participation is good. The additional funding from the Education Action Zone and Excellence in Cities has enabled the school to offer pupils access to visiting artists and designers and visits to galleries, locally and nationally, thereby enriching their experience. There are a number of clubs and residential visits, and the Duke of Edinburgh Award, that support raising achievement and developing self-esteem.
50. The school is successful in its hard work in providing a curriculum suitable for the needs of its diverse population. There is good provision for pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties through the combination of classroom support and learning mentors, a Learning Support Unit and schemes of work matched to pupils' needs and abilities. These successful initiatives also arise from Excellence in Cities funding. There is additional, effective provision for those pupils who are in the early stages of acquiring English; the quality of support is good but the quantity is inadequate. The weekly workshop provided for black African-Caribbean and dual-heritage boys run by learning mentors and supported by black businessmen is helping to motivate black boys.
51. The school is rightly proud of its Careers Quality Mark, which has endorsed the very good provision that it makes for pupils. Teachers and the Connexions Service are strenuous in their efforts to broaden pupils' experiences of the options open to them after the age of 16.
52. The school is tireless in its efforts in reviewing and evaluating the curriculum and its organisation, and is not afraid to pilot innovations. To that extent, it has provided single-sex courses for boys and for girls in English and art and design. These strategies have helped to motivate pupils and improve their attainment.

53. The provision of resources for learning is, in the main, adequate in most departments. The popular and well-managed library, however, has only half the recommended number of books for each pupil. Stock is regularly supplemented by borrowing from the local education authority library service. The most significant shortfall in resources is in the number of computers. The use of ICT throughout the curriculum is consequently considerably restricted. The ratio of computers to pupils is only just over half of that found nationally.
54. The accommodation for pupils aged 11-16 is unsatisfactory overall. Classrooms in English and design and technology are often too small for the groups using them. In English this is restricting the variety of teaching methods. Some of the classrooms used for geography and history have no blackout and only one electric socket, thus limiting the effective use of videos. There are no music practice rooms. During the inspection both the gymnasiums were out of use due to building work. Pupils were using the local sports centre, which led to a loss of actual teaching time. There are no outside games facilities. The entrance area and reception are pleasant, but most of the school is shabby, and, despite the efforts of teachers to improve it with displays, lacks stimulation. There are sufficient appropriately qualified teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum in all subjects except mathematics. The match between qualifications and subjects taught is good. The support staff are of high quality but there are not enough of them. Consequently pupils' needs, particularly of those who speak English as an additional language, and a few others of pupils with particular special educational needs are not always met.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Primary phase**

The care, welfare and health and safety of pupils are good, supported by effective procedures. The staff of the school provide good support and guidance for pupils' academic and personal development based on their current achievements and personal attributes. The school effectively involves pupils in decision making relating to its work through a system of class councils and an overall school council that consists of elected pupils.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has very good policies that successfully ensure that all pupils are included and that none are discriminated against.
- Procedures within school are rigorously monitored and evaluated for consistency of implementation and effectiveness.
- The interests of all pupils, whatever their circumstances, are promoted and safeguarded.
- Procedures for the induction and welcome of new pupils into school are not well developed.

### **Commentary**

55. The school inclusion team, made up of teaching and non-teaching staff, has a rigorous approach to ensuring that all pupils have equal access to learning. Every opportunity is taken to teach children about the effects of discrimination and this has had a positive effect on relationships within classrooms and school. Senior members of staff quickly identify individual needs as they arise, and plans are efficiently put in place to ensure that children are not disadvantaged by their circumstances, gender or ethnic background. Depending on the situation, intervention may be anything from a few days to much longer planned support, and the impact of this help to the pupil is very well monitored and evaluated. In addition, pupils are given regular opportunities to raise issues about the work of the school with the pupil officers of their class council. In turn, these are discussed with the whole school council who make collective recommendations to a senior member of the teaching staff who is present at the meeting. The school acts upon most recommendations and as a consequence pupils have a feeling of having the power to influence the direction of the school.



56. There are very good and effective procedures for the protection of pupils in line with the locally agreed child protection arrangements and these are supported by clear policies. Health and safety procedures are well monitored and logbooks are scrutinised to ensure that no child is being discriminated against. Risk assessment has been carried out well and there is an ongoing timetable for ensuring that all areas remain safe.
57. There is good provision for vulnerable pupils. Each pupil has at least one member of staff with whom they can form a good and trusting relationship, and the learning mentors have a leading role in this with some of the more disaffected pupils. Members of staff communicate well with each other and use their awareness of the circumstances of individual pupils to provide support and guidance to those in need. Improvements in pupils' behaviour and attitude towards learning have been brought about by a relentless approach to ensuring that children are motivated and stimulated during lessons. Effective targeting and tracking of children's progress ensure that they learn well in lessons. There is good provision for children in the Learning Support Unit. Learning mentors work with both teaching and non-teaching staff and parents, and work is well matched to pupils' need.
58. Children who enter school at the Foundation Stage have access to a variety of opportunities to visit before they officially start, although there is no planned programme of home visits, and there is an absence of procedure to ensure that teachers are aware of any adverse issues that may prevent pupils from settling quickly. The relatively high numbers of children who enter school during the year has an adverse effect on learning. Although there are some informal measures taken by individual teachers to enable pupils to settle in quickly, these have not yet been developed into whole-school policy or procedure.

## **Secondary phase**

Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety, support and guidance are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is very successful in supporting all pupils and its policies for inclusiveness are implemented well.
- Pupils' progress is closely monitored enabling very good guidance and advice to be offered.
- Learning mentors and progress tutors are very successful in their wide range of activities that ensure pupils achieve well.

### **Commentary**

59. The school's provision for the support, guidance and care for its pupils is very good. This is at the heart of the school's aims, ethos and priorities. It consists of a very strong combination of the complementary roles of the senior management, heads of year, form tutors, progress tutors, learning mentors, careers advisers and other members of staff. This ensures that all pupils have a very good level of personal and educational support and guidance, based upon effective arrangements for the assessment of their attainment and progress.
60. The school complies with the regulations for monitoring safety very well. There are clear rules for the safety of pupils in and around school and on visits. Risk assessments are carried out well overall although not satisfactorily in design and technology. There has been some training in recent years to raise the awareness of all members of staff to update their knowledge and understanding of the procedures. The child protection procedures are effective; the school adheres to the statutory procedures and a named member of staff has responsibility for them. Liaison with education welfare services and other agencies is very effective.
61. The school successfully promotes health and hygiene and sex education as part of the curriculum through a very good personal, social and health education programme. A good

element in the guidance programme is the well-planned and delivered careers education, work experience and personal guidance involving many members of staff.

62. The Learning Support Unit is effective; support for pupils with special educational needs is good and older pupils (Ambassadors) play an active role in helping younger pupils, especially in the transition to the secondary phase. Form tutors focus well upon pupils at risk of exclusion for behavioural difficulties. There is a good support programme for ethnic minority pupils. These and other initiatives, such as the counselling service provided by the school nurse and the anti-bullying counsellors, enable even the most vulnerable to make progress.
63. The very successful pastoral system and the academic tutoring are closely linked and give comprehensive support to pupils to make progress and appropriate choices. Each pupil has access to individual monitoring and mentoring. The system, which is subject to quality assurance procedures, succeeds because of the close and harmonious working relationships of the heads of year, the form tutors and the progress tutors as well as other staff such as the learning mentors.
64. The learning mentors play many valuable roles, including smoothing the transition from the primary to the secondary phase. They also sometimes have a one-to-one mentoring role with pupils once per week, setting realistic targets and establishing a good personal relationship based on trust. Learning mentors also have a mediation role when pupils have grievances with each other. They run successful workshops on whole-school issues such as anti-bullying behaviour and sex/health issues. Pupils speak well of these. The Ambassadors are also linked with these workshops so that the older/young pupil relationship is improved. The younger pupils reported that these measures are effective. Pupils on the school council are given responsibility and their opinions are valued. Some changes have been made on their recommendation.
65. Progress tutors ensure there is good information about individual pupils, groups of pupils and subject areas. Form tutors are central to the strong support and guidance work, following the class through from Year 7 to Year 11, teaching the guidance curriculum well, and liaising with the learning mentors and other staff so there is no academic/pastoral divide. Apart from some inconsistencies of implementation, which are known, the school has very good guidance and support procedures and very good mechanisms to judge whether they are working.

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

The links with parents are satisfactory overall and those with the community are very good. The quality and range of information for parents are good, and strenuous efforts are made to encourage parents to take an active interest in pupils' learning. In the primary phase, extensive work with parents is particularly effective. There are very strong links with the local community that contribute effectively to pupils' achievement and personal development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Communication with parents and information provided for them, especially about pupils' progress, are good.
- Very impressive work with parents in the primary phase results in improved relationships and better support for pupils' learning.
- Very strong, fruitful links with local employers and professional organisations make a positive contribution to pupils' attitudes to learning and personal development.
- Effective community involvement makes pupils more aware of their rights and responsibilities.
- Educational links with other schools and colleges, both curricular and pastoral, are very good.

## Commentary

66. The school keeps parents well informed about what their children are learning and about their progress. Personal contact with parents about individual pupils ensures their involvement in pastoral and academic matters. School reports, for most subjects, are detailed and useful, with clear targets for improvement. The half-termly newsletters and helpful leaflets on such topics as attendance, homework and bullying, written in a friendly, accessible style, make sure that parents are up to date with school developments. The learning mentors work extensively with parents, especially in the primary phase, to help them become involved in their children's learning and give them confidence to provide the support that their children need to be successful in school. Large numbers of parents and carers take advantage of the wide range of activities available to them and are developing stronger, trusting relationships with the school as a result.
67. There are links with the local community that are mutually beneficial. Pupils have undertaken projects that have helped them to put into practice what they have learned through their citizenship lessons about the rights and responsibilities of living in a community. Through the school council, they have succeeded in improving pathways around the perimeter of the school and they have worked with a local bus company to ensure good behaviour and safety on school buses, while entertainment and gifts for elderly people at Christmas have been much appreciated by the recipients. The pupils' efforts have contributed to raising the school's profile as a focal point in the local community.
68. The school enjoys an extremely wide range of contacts with external organisations of all kinds, who all contribute to the enrichment of pupils' experiences, and to the raising of their aspirations and promotion of their self-esteem, particularly for those in the last three years of the secondary phase. Many local employers support the careers education programme by providing work experience and mock interviews, while others take part in a mentoring project to help pupils work towards higher achievement. Arts projects, which involve pupils in links with local artists and craftsmen, with Opera North and with a professional dance company, enable pupils to take part in activities outside their normal lessons, helping to widen their horizons.
69. The positive outcomes of liaison with other schools and colleges are also a strength. As part of the Leadership Incentive Grant scheme, the school works productively on collaborative ventures with others in the city. Links with Sheffield University raise pupils' awareness of the range of opportunities available to them after school, and some are able to take part in practical activities to enhance their study and social skills. Liaison with feeder primary schools covers both pastoral and curricular issues, and ensures that the transition between phases is smooth and stress free.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. The principal provides excellent whole-school leadership and other key staff ensure very good leadership. Management is very effective but governance is unsatisfactory because of the failure to comply with the statutory responsibility of providing daily collective worship for all pupils. This is the only criticism of the otherwise very good governance. The leadership of the primary phase leader is very good and the management is good. The school makes very good use of available finance to support identified educational priorities. The principles of best value are clearly understood and meticulously applied.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The principal's clarity of vision, commitment and enthusiasm are central to the whole school's effectiveness and improvement.
- The strong team spirit of the highly competent and hard-working senior staff ensures very good management in the secondary phase.

- The very good leadership and good management of the primary phase leader and two primary assistant heads have created a strong sense of purpose and a clear vision for the way in which standards can be improved in the primary phase.
- The governors' strong grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses underpins very good governance.
- The school's commitment to inclusion, promotion of equal opportunities and concern for the needs of all individuals are excellent.
- The school's quality-assurance procedures and self-evaluation systems are excellent.
- Procedures for familiarising teachers with judging the correct attainment levels of primary pupils' work are not good enough.
- Proposed outcomes in the primary phase school improvement plan are not linked sufficiently with improvements in pupils' attainments as a way of judging success.
- There are very clear links between allocation of resources and defined educational priorities. Financial control and administrative procedures are very effective.
- Very good use is made of specific grants, such as Excellence in Cities funds, to achieve identified objectives. The principles of best value are clearly understood and meticulously applied.

## **Primary phase**

### **Commentary**

70. The primary phase leader and two assistant head teachers provide very good leadership and have inspired an evident sense of pride in the school which has resulted in a high morale amongst the teachers, support staff and pupils. The phase now has a clear direction for raising standards through a process of assessment of their attainment and the introduction of a range of target setting procedures in English, mathematics and science. Much work has been accomplished since the beginning of the last school year when Hinde House School became an all-age school.
71. The primary phase leader and senior management team manage the phase effectively through a number of carefully thought out processes that have raised pupils' standards in all years. Data on pupils' performance is gathered and used well as part of a focus for improving the attainments of pupils in different year groups. General areas for improvement in a whole year group are also pinpointed so that a focus can be placed on these in each of the year's classes. In addition, at the beginning of each school year, teachers decide on challenging targets for each individual pupil as well as class targets and whole-year group targets. Pupils' achievements and progress are good but yet more rigorous steps need to be made to improve these even further, such as an improvement in the quality of teachers' marking to provide advice on how pupils can improve and a greater emphasis on teachers' familiarity with criteria that indicate the levels of pupils' work.
72. There is a sensibly devised primary phase development plan that has a sufficient and manageable number of initiatives for the year. However, the staff and governors have no way of knowing whether pupils' standards have risen as a result of these initiatives because the expected outcomes are not linked sufficiently with improvements in pupils' attainments. Too little is done to enable pupils new to the school to settle in quickly and acclimatise themselves with its organisation so they are quickly enabled to take advantage of what the school has to offer.
73. The governing body is very involved with the work of the primary phase. Governors are kept well informed of the progress of the initiatives in the school development plan and are aware of the progress in raising pupils' standards. Governors visit the school frequently and often consult pupils about their opinions. For example, the chairman of governors recently attended a meeting of the pupils' school council and asked the members to express their views on possible improvements to the school.

74. The school's staff development system is extensive and covers a rigorous programme of monitoring lessons, together with the setting of objectives for each teacher during the year. Senior members of staff observe lessons and provide very useful feedbacks for the teachers concerned. The identified areas for development form the focus of the next monitoring to check that teaching quality has been improved. Such practices have enabled the quality of teaching to improve to its present good level. In addition, subject co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning but there is insufficient emphasis on examining the quality of teachers' marking to ensure that this is used to help pupils improve their work. Staff development does not apply solely to the teachers; it also involves other members of staff. For example, the lunchtime supervisors receive training in their role as play supervisors as a way of promoting their image amongst the pupils, as members of staff rather than as behaviour wardens. The phase's finances are very carefully controlled, as described below in the commentary for the secondary phase.

## **Secondary phase**

75. The principal's excellent leadership successfully steered the school out of special measures in 2000 and has been the key factor in its continued improvements and rising standards. Several senior staff have served the school for many years and their wide-ranging talents and complementary skills, coupled with those of more recently appointed senior staff, have been utilised well to create a very strong and purposeful senior team of teachers and non-teachers. All senior staff share the principal's and governors' vision for the 3-16 school and their highly competent efforts and hard work have ensured a very successful first year.
76. The senior team provide very good management and excellent quality assurance procedures. Senior and middle managers have a very clear grasp of what the school is good at and what needs to improve. The current priorities are being addressed with vigour and success. The ongoing focus on literacy and tackling boys' underachievement as well as addressing the needs of the most able are proving successful. The school has ensured that a very positive ethos is evident in most of its work and that a good climate for learning exists. It is a caring community where inclusion is visibly successful as pupils interact together very well and get on with adults in a mature way. Equality of opportunity is very strong. Support, for teachers who find their work difficult and a small minority of departments that could do better, is well structured and beneficial. Improvement plans are also successfully focusing on enhancing the curriculum and making it relevant to the needs of more of the older pupils. Leaders provide very good role models for other staff and pupils.
77. A strong, committed and well-led governing body provides very good support for the school and makes a major contribution to its leadership. The chairman of governors visits the school several times a week. Governors have a clear sense of purpose and took on the wider role of becoming governors of an all-age school with enthusiasm. They have a realistic grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and work well with the principal and senior team. They have a full involvement in planning and contribute well to the creation and implementation of the improvement plan. They are fully aware that not all secondary-aged pupils attend a daily act of collective worship and that the school is consequently in breach of statutory requirements.
78. The school gathers relevant performance data which it analyses well – the school knows how all minority groups of pupils are getting on, for example. The performance management of staff is undertaken thoroughly, with the principal having a key role. Staff induction is of good quality and staff recruitment, retention and deployment are now good. Financial management is very strong, amply illustrated by a glowing recent audit report.
79. There is a comprehensive programme of induction for newly qualified teachers and they are supported well. New teachers and those coming into the school for short periods also benefit from parts of this programme. There is much professional development addressing whole-school, departmental and individual needs. Problems experienced in the past in recruitment have been largely overcome. There are still some difficulties in mathematics.

80. All funding, both basic budget allocation and additional grants received for specific purposes, is very carefully allocated to help the school achieve the educational priorities defined in the school improvement plan. The principles of best value are clearly understood and meticulously applied and all spending is very effectively monitored and controlled. The school provides good value for money.

***Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003 [relating only to the secondary phase]***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	3,512,095
Total expenditure	3,499,960
Expenditure per pupil	3684

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	166,445
Balance carried forward to the next	178,580

**OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES**

**Work-related learning**

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

The school's range of vocational courses is coherent and effectively meets the needs of a number of pupils in Years 10 and 11. Pupils' experiences of a range of work-related skills are broad and relevant. These are complemented by good classroom-based provision that develops pupils' skills in numeracy and literacy. The school's provision contributes very well to pupils' progression to further education, training and employment.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

The teaching and curriculum for children in the two Foundation Stage classes are good. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator provides effective leadership and management and this ensures that the children make good progress according to their capabilities. There are good resources and facilities, both indoors and outdoors, that are used effectively to support the wide range of activities offered to children in the Foundation Stage. However, as yet, there is no fixed climbing apparatus provided in the outside areas attached to the Foundation Stage classes and children's physical development is restricted. Across all of the areas of learning there is consistently good teaching and sometimes very good. Good teamwork by teachers and well-briefed classroom assistants mean that children benefit from individual attention in small groups. The part-time nursery children progress more slowly than those in the reception year as they have less time in school and because the class is larger for the part-time children. Children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and are supported particularly well by the adults. Regular observations and checks on children's understanding and skills mean that teachers know what children need to work on next. Careful planning means that children's achievements are good.

Although children's attainments are very low in some areas of learning resulting from the limited speech and language skills of many new children, they are achieving well. Most children in the Foundation Stage classes also have little experience of numbers, days of the week and colour recognition but they make good progress from their very low starting point across all the areas of learning. However, they are still a long way from attaining some of the important early learning goals.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is **good**. Children's behaviour and attitudes to their learning, and standards in the social and emotional aspects of this area of learning, are well below average.

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

- Children concentrate well on the carefully planned activities because they enjoy them.
- Good teaching helps children achieve well. Teachers make sure that children understand classroom routines so that they become confident and secure in the classroom.
- Children sometimes lack sufficient self-motivation and independence to persevere with activities and rely on the support of adults.
- Adults and children enjoy very good relationships and the example set by teachers and classroom assistants results in children working happily together and sharing resources.

#### **Commentary**

81. Children are well taught and soon become used to the routines within the classrooms. They make good progress towards the early learning goals. Children are learning to be part of the classroom community and show increasing independence. Good progress is made in eliminating aggression and unsuitable language as children learn to abide by the social rules of the school community. Teachers are firm yet sensitive about making sure that children follow the various procedures such as putting things away when they have finished using them, where to sit when the whole class get together for instructions, asking if they can eat an item of food or putting their hands up when they want to say something. In this way all children are ensured of an equal opportunity to participate in the activities planned for them. Very good relationships between teachers and other adults in the classroom ensure that children feel

secure and work happily together. They show an obvious enjoyment in all the classroom activities and enjoy pleasing their teacher.

82. Good teaching, involving the appropriate use of praise when children behave well and good encouragement from adults when children are polite, has a positive effect on this area of learning. It results in most children developing well to reach the goals for learning by the time they leave the Foundation Stage classes. Adults work very effectively together in planning, working with children and checking what they can and cannot do. Because they provide exciting activities such as making pizzas or manufacturing American Indian head dresses there is an ethos of enjoyment in the classes. Sometimes, children lose interest and show too little independence and persistence in organising their own activities when the adults move to other groups of children.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**. Children achieve well but their attainments are very low compared with the standards expected for their age. Most children's skills in speaking are very limited and their vocabulary is impoverished.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good attention to letter formation and letter sounds means that children who are capable achieve well in reading and writing.
- Children listen carefully to teachers and adults in the classroom because they make what they have to say interesting.
- Teachers sometimes do not provide sufficient challenge for children to extend their speaking beyond single-word answers.
- More able children move forward quickly in reading and writing because good use is made of information about what children can already do when planning their activities.

### Commentary

83. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals, listen carefully to stories and speak with improving confidence. The good teaching of reading and writing is successful in enabling good progress amongst the more able children but the nursery children are far less confident at speaking than those in the reception class. The latter children are encouraged to write initial letters of words on the classroom whiteboard and to write their own name independently. There is a good emphasis on basic skills in activities such as reading a large class-size book together with the teacher tracing the printed words as the simple story progresses. This strengthens children's awareness of left to right direction involved in reading, and the good use of 'story maps', made by the class teacher, emphasises the order of events and enhances their interest in reading. Children who learn more slowly benefit from regular sessions with adults who show them how to shape letters correctly and encourage them to remember the sounds they make. Teachers choose books like *We're all going on a Bear Hunt* that generate a lively enthusiasm for books and reading. The school works hard to enlist the support of parents and carers successfully in regularly reading with children at home. Very good information found in wall notices and meetings results in a number of interested parents being well informed so that they can give support and extra practice at home.
84. Most children listen very carefully to their teacher because they find the work interesting. The adults in all classes provide good role models for children in their speaking but they do not provide a sufficient focus on persuading them to speak at greater length than single-word answers to questions. As a result children do not have enough practice at explaining their thoughts clearly and this hinders their progress in writing when they get older. Teachers could do more to challenge them to say a little more when their answers are too brief.



## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**. Good teaching means that children achieve well from a low starting point. Children's mathematical attainment is very low compared with those of a similar age.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children make good progress in developing their mathematical skills because teachers and classroom assistants have a very clear knowledge of each child's stage of development.
- The wide range of activities provided for children and designed to familiarise them with mathematical ideas helps them achieve well.
- More able children make good progress as a result of appropriate challenges that extend their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Children with special educational needs make good progress because they receive good individual attention in small group activities.

### **Commentary**

85. The Foundation Stage teachers and nursery nurses have a very effective approach to assessing and recording what children can and cannot do. This information enables them to plan and provide mathematical activities that challenge the children's thinking and allow them to achieve the next appropriate step in their learning. As a consequence they make good progress towards the early learning goals. The adults in the classroom know which mathematical vocabulary to reinforce with different children. More mathematically able children have activities that link the properties of three-dimensional shapes with simple scientific ideas and this effectively extends their understanding. Children with special educational needs are well supported by the nursery nurse who provides patient assistance and timely questions that gradually enable them to acquire a firm sense of understanding and a sound grasp of new knowledge.
86. A wide variety of activities are planned that provide good opportunities for children to familiarise themselves with new aspects of mathematics and this allows them to achieve well. The teacher's skilful questioning and good use of a range of plastic shapes mean they name and describe shapes like square, rectangle and triangle correctly, carefully explaining how many sides each one has.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**. Standards are well below the level expected in all aspects of this area.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A good range of first-hand experiences successfully extends children's knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Children often find it hard to fully explain what they know because of weak literacy skills.
- Teaching and learning, and the achievements children make, are good.
- Children make good progress towards the early learning goals.

### **Commentary**

87. Children are excited by their work in this area of learning because teachers plan a rich programme of opportunities for children to explore their world at first hand. Through good planning and teaching children have successfully developed an understanding of changes that have taken place over a period of time by comparing and recording what they looked like as a baby, a toddler and what they look like now. They use scissors with varying degrees of skill to

cut out bear face masks or make American Indian head dresses. They experience making individual pizzas, including cracking open eggs, mixing the dough and choosing assembling the toppings. All of these, and other similar first-hand experiences, enable children to develop a knowledge and understanding of the world. However, they sometimes find it hard to explain what they see and understand beyond a one-word answer.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**. Standards are below the level expected for this age group.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and learning help children achieve well in the classroom but their confidence and physical development are impaired because resources are insufficient in this area.
- Children's sense of pulse and rhythm is developed successfully by dance sessions in the classroom.

### Commentary

88. The outdoor play area is very popular with children because it has a very good range of toys including bicycles and other movable equipment that stimulate children's enthusiasm successfully. With good supervision they share rides and take turns as they manoeuvre large toys around the play area. Activities are carefully planned and purposeful but as there is no climbing apparatus provided for the children, aspects of their physical development do not develop as well as they might. Well-chosen music, such as 'Jungle Boogie', created a lively stimulus when children in a Foundation Stage class were encouraged to extemporise their dance movements to the music. Children are taught how to use scissors to cut accurately in different directions and how to hold a pencil so that they can control its movements carefully. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**. Children attain standards below those expected for their age.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children show good development when creating their own self-portraits.
- Good teaching and learning mean that children achieve well.
- Insufficient use of musical instruments and opportunities to create their own music in small groups mean that children do not make the progress of which they are capable.

### Commentary

89. Children in the Foundation Stage classes develop well in the maturity of their drawing and painting skills. Teachers encourage them to look carefully so that they are aware of the necessary features that need to be reflected in their drawings. This has resulted in good improvement over time with children including five fingers and facial features in their drawings. Children received good support individually or in small groups to improve the quality of their paintings when portraying members of their family. Children sing enthusiastically together and enjoy singing familiar songs as part of a group. However, opportunities are missed to provide experiences of playing simple percussion instruments to encourage them to participate in making music, to give them practice at controlling their playing and to help them to learn the names of the musical instruments. Despite this, children make good progress towards the early learning goals in art and design, dance and responding to a variety of other stimuli.

## SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 1 TO 4

### ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

#### English

##### Primary phase

Provision in English is **good**.

##### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective target setting and very good assessment procedures ensure good achievement.
- Standards remain well below average.
- Progress is good in all aspects of English.
- Leadership is very good and supports effective teaching and learning.

##### Commentary

90. The first cohort of pupils took National Curriculum tests in 2003 and results were well below recent national averages. Standards remain well below average for seven and 11 year olds. Standards in reading are marginally higher than those in writing for pupils of all ages. Boys are poorer than girls in reading and writing, at all stages, but markedly so in writing at age 11. A very small percentage of children are reaching the expected levels of attainment or better at seven or 11. Standards throughout school are held back by poor basic skills, but the school is now focusing well on these. The school has recognised the need to improve basic skills, which will support the rest of the curriculum, and has also begun to adapt planning to ensure that boys make better progress by retaining a high level of interest in their work.
91. Analysis of work and results of tests and assessments reveal that a significant number of children made above average progress last year. This is because teaching is good overall, and planning ensures that pupils are excited about their work and learn well at all stages, showing much interest. Infant pupils are making faster progress than those in the junior section of the school because they do not have as much learning to catch up on. By the time pupils have reached the age of seven over three-quarters are able to read competently but their writing is lagging behind because they do not have a sufficiently wide vocabulary when they are speaking. Teachers are not doing enough to encourage pupils to speak in sentences rather than be satisfied with one-word answers.
92. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by lessons that cater for individual needs and by well-trained teaching assistants; achievement for these children and those with higher ability is good. For example, children with special needs in a Year 6 ability set were stimulated by the witches' speech from *Macbeth*, and discussed how they could improve their own class performance of this. They were animated, and had good recall of previous lessons. Younger children were supported by good teaching to learn about the front page of a newspaper, and could name different parts, including caption and headline, from a lesson earlier in the week.
93. Leadership is very good, and the subject is very well managed. As a result, teachers are very well supported in their teaching and planning, and the impact of this is regularly monitored and evaluated. The co-ordinator has analysed and identified specific areas where improvement needs to be rapid, and there are very good plans for improvement in all areas, including weekly and half termly focus on different aspects of English. The subject co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and a vision for English that will enrich other subjects throughout the curriculum. Procedures for setting out work and learning and using key vocabulary throughout other lessons are standardised and well established, and the co-ordinator monitors classrooms and planning in order to ensure consistency from class to class.

94. Children are aware of their own targets for improvement, and regular assessment ensures that progress is made in lessons, across units of work and throughout the year. The good assessment procedures used by teachers enable higher attaining pupils to be challenged well and to make good progress. Teachers use assessment information well in their planning, and lessons are often adapted to target several levels of ability, even within ability sets. As a result, behaviour is often good, and children achieve well by the end of a lesson. Occasionally, marking does not give sufficient information on areas for improvement and this sometimes limits progress but assessment of work is very good overall.

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

95. Pupils are encouraged successfully to express their thoughts and ideas in writing in a range of different curriculum subjects, such as religious education, history and geography. However, there is too little support from teachers to encourage higher attaining pupils to write at length. There are frequent opportunities for older junior pupils to participate in group or class discussions. These give pupils valuable practice in expressing their views clearly and concisely and provide good preparation for them to transfer their opinions and thoughts to their writing.

### **Secondary phase**

Provision in English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Results in national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2002 were above the national average.
- Teaching is good, leading to positive attitudes and good behaviour of pupils.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- GCSE results in language and literature are well below average.

### **Commentary**

96. Results in national tests in 2002 for 14 year olds were above the national average. When compared with similar schools, results were well above average. Boys did better than girls compared with their respective national averages. Pupils performed better in English than in the other core subjects of mathematics and science. There has been a clear upward trend over the last three years. Bearing in mind low levels of literacy at age 11, pupils' achievement is good by the age of 14 and current standards are average.
97. Results for both English language and literature in the GCSE in 2002 were well below the national average. Girls did better than boys. Poor attendance adversely affects standards, especially through the failure of some pupils to keep up with coursework assignments. Work seen in the present Years 10 and 11 is of an improving standard but not yet matching national expectation however most pupils achieve satisfactorily.
98. The general standard of speaking and listening at the age of 14 is in line with that found nationally. Most pupils listen attentively and work well together in pairs and small groups. The majority answer questions willingly and confidently but a few are less fluent and audible. In Years 10 and 11 pupils make increasingly lengthy and perceptive comments, especially in their study of literature. A class of high attaining boys in Year 10, for example, motivated by excellent teaching, discussed with maturity and sensitivity key sequences in a film version of *Romeo and Juliet*.
99. The standard of reading comprehension of a significant majority of pupils at all stages is in line with national expectation. A higher than average proportion of pupils join the school with a reading age well below their real age. Some have special educational needs and, for some, English is an additional and new language. Both these groups receive intensive, specialist support and make rapid progress. Extra sessions for small groups are provided to enrich and

extend their reading. Most pupils, by the end of Year 9, have understood and enjoyed a range of literary and non-literary texts. Good use is made of the attractive and well-managed library to encourage wider reading for pleasure and research. One class in Year 8, for example, enthusiastically browsed and searched for specific texts. Their reading journals were used well and indicated wide reading. In Years 10 and 11, pupils study a range of literature as part of their examination course. They use the technical language of literary appreciation accurately. Lower attaining pupils in Year 11, for example, encouraged by patient and enthusiastic teaching, gained confidence in comparing the structure and language of several poems from different cultural backgrounds.

100. The overall standard of pupils' written work by the age of 14 is in line with that found nationally. Exercises are, in the main, carefully presented with legible handwriting. Pupils write successfully for a range of purposes and audiences and draft work thoroughly. Higher attaining pupils write at length and their assignments are well planned and accurately expressed. The best writing of pupils in Years 10 and 11 is carefully structured, skilfully crafted and accurate in detail. Less successful assignments are brief and contain errors in sentence structure, choice of vocabulary, grammar and spelling. At the age of 16 the general standard of writing is below the national expectation.
101. The quality of teaching is good throughout. In Years 7, 8 and 9 it was never less than satisfactory and was good or better in two-thirds of lessons. In Years 10 and 11 teaching was good or very good in almost all lessons, with some excellent practice. Teachers' knowledge of their subject is good. Pupils are always clear about tasks and objectives. Relationships are generally positive and purposeful. Most lessons are conducted at a brisk pace with rigorous questioning and insistence upon precise answers. Preparation for national tests and examinations is thorough. Tasks are skilfully matched to pupils' level of attainment with a range of work set to suit individual needs. Those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs are thoroughly included in activities and are managed with great sensitivity. Classroom management is very good and, where necessary, control techniques are skilfully used. When teaching is outstanding, good behaviour is assumed and total concentration is given to learning. A class of high attaining girls in Year 10, for example, through excellent teaching, showed mature and sensitive understanding of Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* and created special moments of shared learning and insight which fixed the knowledge of the text in their memories. Pupils' work is marked conscientiously with consistent comments. Sometimes, however, marking does not define errors precisely enough or give clear guidance as to how work can be improved.
102. All members of the department share the same hopes for pupils' success and they provide very positive role models. The detailed recording and tracking of pupils' progress are a particular strength of the department. Staff are very supportive of each other and are always willing to share good practice. Leadership and management are very strong and effective.
103. Through its teaching, the department makes a major contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of pupils. Teachers skilfully involve all pupils of different ethnic origins and all levels of attainment. Limitation of provision and access to computers has meant that their use is not yet fully integrated into everyday classroom practice. Standards in National Curriculum tests at the age of 14 have risen noticeably since the last inspection. The proportion of good and very good teaching has also increased.

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

104. In other subjects across the curriculum most pupils listen attentively. The quality of spoken responses is less good, and only in science and drama are pupils encouraged to answer in full sentences. Group work is rare in most subjects and talk is not planned into lessons as an essential way of learning. Pupils are seldom expected to present ideas to the whole class. Extended oral contributions are rare. Overall, the standard of speaking and listening throughout the curriculum is unsatisfactory.

105. In the majority of subjects, pupils read well enough to understand reading materials presented to them. In design and technology, however, textbooks are at a reading age too high for many pupils to comprehend. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language find difficulty in reading in subjects such as modern foreign languages. Key words are well displayed in most classrooms and are referred to regularly in lessons. Few subjects make use of the library to widen pupils' learning through research.
106. Pupils present written work carefully in all subjects. Girls tend to be tidier than boys. Only in science are pupils helped to use a range of non-fiction writing such as recounting and reporting. In several subjects, however, pupils are assisted with the planning and structuring of written work. The skill of taking notes is underdeveloped and is little used in any area of the curriculum. Pupils' work is thoroughly and consistently marked in all subjects, with targets set for improvement. This aspect is an important strength in developing writing.

## **Modern foreign languages**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers are specialists and have good subject knowledge.
- Lessons contain activities to raise pupils' motivation.
- Teachers are keen to raise standards and willing to adapt to new methods to do so.
- The classes have wide extremes of ability; this hinders pupils' progress overall.
- There is insufficient use of learning support assistants.
- Higher attaining pupils do not have opportunities to work at a sufficiently high level.
- Some pupils lack motivation and rely too much on their teachers' efforts.

### **Commentary**

107. Standards are well below the national average by the age of 16, and below average at 14. Standards in French and Spanish remain well below those found in other subjects in the school. Standards in Urdu are higher than in other subjects although the small numbers of pupils taking this language mean that statistical comparisons are not valid. The very small numbers of pupils taking Arabic reach very high standards although, again, statistical comparisons are not valid.
108. Given the prior attainment of pupils, achievement is satisfactory overall. It is satisfactory in French and Spanish in both key stages. In Urdu it is good at Years 7 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11. The lack of learning support assistants in classes has an adverse effect on the achievement of pupils with special educational needs. Most pupils with English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily. Some rely heavily on other pupils in the class in the absence of other support.
109. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. All teaching was satisfactory or better. The extremes of ability and the wide variety of needs in classes make it almost impossible for teachers to provide appropriate activities for all pupils. Although teachers make provision for different groups within classes and provide a range of purposeful activities, higher attaining pupils do not have opportunities to work at a sufficiently high level. Some pupils with special educational needs and some whose first language is not English are not supported in lessons in a way that enables them to work to their capability. The exception is in the Urdu classes where very small numbers enable the teacher to provide much individual attention so that all pupils learn well.

110. Most lessons contain good and unsatisfactory features.

The good features include:

- Teachers are specialists and have a good command of the languages they teach.
- They plan lessons well, paying attention to detail such as where pupils sit to encourage good behaviour.
- They plan a variety of activities, including hands-on activities, games, competitions and pair-work, to increase pupils' motivation.
- They make good use of visual aids and use tape recorders and video to bring authentic language into the classroom.

Unsatisfactory features include:

- English is over-used so that opportunities for pupils to use foreign languages for themselves or to hear them in everyday contexts are missed.
- There is much talking *about* language but there are few opportunities for pupils to *use* languages for themselves; during the inspection no instances of extended reading were seen and most listening exercises involved only very short passages.
- Some pupils lack motivation and take a passive approach, leaving all the work to the teacher; opportunities to involve them actively need to be increased.

111. In general, pupils' work is marked effectively and helpful comments are given so that pupils know what they have to do to improve. However, learning notes are often muddled with rough work and other exercises so that many pupils do not have effective notes from which to revise. No instances of pupils using ICT to promote their learning were observed during the inspection.

112. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The subject leader knows the department's strengths and weakness well, and although GCSE results have not yet shown an upturn, pupils' performance is monitored carefully and teachers are keen to raise standards. The subject leader monitors the performance of teachers; staff training – for example, on raising the motivation of boys – has led to improvements in teaching and learning. Schemes of work are clear but there is too little use of ICT to support learning. The library has very few foreign language resources for reading and listening, which means there are too few opportunities for independent work by pupils.

113. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. All teaching is now satisfactory or better – a major improvement since the last inspection. Small numbers of pupils 'switch off' in some lessons but they do not disrupt the learning of the majority as previously. Boys engage in learning to the same degree as girls. This contrasts well with the previous situation, and with the national picture, in which boys are often less well motivated than girls. The subject leader and teachers know the areas for development and, in conjunction with senior managers in the school, are well placed to bring about further improvements.

## **MATHEMATICS**

### **Primary phase**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and standards are improving.
- Standards by the age of 11 are too low.
- Teaching is good but too little use is made of ICT.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

- Leadership and management are very good.

## **Commentary**

114. Pupils start Year 1 with low attainment. They make good progress in Years 1 and 2, and although by the time they are seven they attain well below average standards in national tests in all aspects of mathematics, their achievement is good. Pupils continue to progress in learning and achieve well as they move through the junior classes. By the age of 11, pupils currently attain standards that are well below the national average because there are gaps in their basic understanding that have not been filled in previous years. The school is aware of the problems as it has carried out an extensive analysis of what pupils understand and what they do not. For example, teachers are aware that pupils' understanding of place value is not secure and have taken urgent steps to overcome this. However, over the one year for which the present school has been open, these pupils have made good progress as a result of good teaching, and have achieved well.
115. Standards in the national tests in 2003 at both the ages of seven and 11 were considerably higher than those recorded by pupils in the former school in 2002. Although the improvement made in standards since the new school opened is good they are not high enough to prepare 11 year old pupils adequately for their continuing mathematical studies in the secondary phase.
116. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Teachers are confident, having good subject knowledge and a good understanding of the requirements of the national guidance for developing mathematics. They apply this guidance effectively and give clear explanations and use a good range of visual resources well in order to help pupils understand mathematical ideas. Teachers motivate all pupils very well and plan work that is appropriate to the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs.
117. Pupils' attitudes are good; they are enthusiastic workers in the classroom. This contributes significantly to the good progress they make. These pupils are very well supported and make good progress towards their targets. They are sometimes taught very effectively in small groups and benefit from close attention. This arrangement and the good use of assessment information that teachers have recorded have enabled higher attaining pupils to be challenged well in their learning of mathematics. This close attention and the practical approach to the tasks they do make a significant contribution to their good learning. In planning lessons, teachers sometimes arrange to use computers to help pupils learn. However, teachers are not yet exploiting the usefulness of computers sufficiently in order to help pupils learn and to reinforce their understanding of mathematics.
118. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Very good leadership and very effective management result in good provision for mathematics. The school analyses test results effectively to find what pupils need to learn to improve. Pupils are set realistic and challenging targets and these are regularly reviewed. This procedure makes a significant contribution to the good progress they make.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

There is effective use of mathematics in other subjects. There is a strong emphasis on linking mathematics to work in other subjects. For example, infant pupils were encouraged to name geometric shapes when using them in Islamic patterns in art and design lessons, and they chose shapes that they predicted would tessellate when designing Aztec patterns. Junior pupils learn to make accurate measurements in science, such as measuring volumes accurately, in order to make their experiments fair and valid. They use their measuring skills in design and technology, both when making things and when designing.



## Secondary phase

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average at the age of 14 and well below at 16 but are improving.
- Achievement by pupils between the ages of 11 and 16 is good overall.
- The teaching is good but there is too little emphasis on oral work.
- Leadership and management are good.

### Commentary

119. Standards are improving and are now in line with the national average at 14 but below it at 16. Although results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests and GCSE examinations were well below average, the difference between the school's results and the national picture is reducing. In 2002 the results for 14 year olds were in line with those in similar schools. Given that pupils enter the secondary phase with well below average standards in Year 7, the work seen illustrates how well they achieve. Results at GCSE are improving too. In 2003, 34 per cent achieved a grade in the range A\*-C, compared to 24 per cent in 2002 [nationally the figure is about 50 per cent].
120. Pupils achieve well in Years 7 to 9 and satisfactorily in Years 10 and 11. This is partly due to the good attitudes they show to their learning that is linked to teachers' very successful insistence on high standards of behaviour. There is no difference between the achievements of pupils with special educational needs and other pupils. Those who speak English as an additional language make good progress when they receive additional support but there is too little support for all who need it. Occasionally, pupils' achievement is affected by others' late arrival to lessons, and the distraction caused.
121. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers create a classroom climate that enables good learning and is inclusive of all pupils. Pupils respond well and little time is wasted; most start work promptly and work right to the end of the lesson. The more able pupils work especially hard. Relationships are good. Teachers praise pupils' positive attitudes and work. Underachievement is challenged, and is picked up well through teachers' marking. Routines are helpful, with effective use of seating plans. Homework is set regularly and is usually appropriately challenging. Resources for pupils with special educational needs are not always effectively deployed, however.
122. While appropriate attention is given to the development of pupils' literacy skills, not enough emphasis is given to the development of their skills in speaking or in working collaboratively. Teachers do too much for pupils, which prevents them becoming independent learners.
123. Assessment information, including the setting of individual targets for pupils, is used well to meet the learning needs of pupils of differing abilities. This includes pupils with special educational needs. The poor attendance of some pupils of all abilities is adversely affecting their performance. This is compounded for those who are withdrawn from some lessons for additional literacy or reading support.
124. Because of the effective management and good leadership the many strategies introduced are having a positive impact on pupils' achievements. Good lesson planning and organisation enable pupils' skills to develop well in lessons. Teaching is not yet consistent enough to raise standards further; for example, starter and plenary sessions are not used in all mathematics lessons. Effective use is made of assessment information to support pupils. Overall provision has improved since the last inspection, although the use of ICT is unsatisfactory. The department is striving hard to raise standards further. Attention now needs to be given to

achieving the highest grades at the GCSE and to ensuring that every pupil achieves some certification in mathematics before they leave school.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

125. The progress made by pupils in using mathematics across the curriculum is good, particularly between the ages of 11 to 14. Standards of numeracy are improving but are below national expectations. The head of mathematics provides good leadership; there is no numeracy co-ordinator. There are good examples of the use of mathematics in geography and history. Pupils in Year 7 calculate how far the Roman Army walked in an hour and a day, and the weight of equipment they could carry. In their *geography out of the window* module pupils arrange information into graphs, from which they draw conclusions.

## **SCIENCE**

### **Primary phase**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of science teaching is good.
- Science is led and managed effectively.
- A clear focus on investigating and experimentation during lessons enables good understanding of scientific ideas.
- Higher attaining pupils and those pupils with special educational needs are challenged and supported well in their learning.

### **Commentary**

126. Although standards of attainment for both seven and 11 year olds are well below average they achieve well considering their earlier attainments. The good achievement results from good quality teaching. Attainment levels have improved considerably over the last year, and compared with the pupils' levels when they were first admitted to the school most pupils have made good progress in their learning.

127. The quality of science teaching is good. Teachers question pupils skilfully so that their understanding of new ideas is drawn from existing knowledge. Lessons are interesting and relationships between teachers, classroom assistants and pupils are good. Pupils have a sense of security in the classroom and feel able to ask teachers for support whenever they need it. There is a good emphasis on carrying out investigations and experiments so that pupils can experience new scientific concepts at first hand. The teaching concentrates very clearly on enabling pupils to understand scientific ideas. Throughout the school pupils are given opportunities to discuss how to ensure that the investigations or tests they are carrying out are fair and valid. Although their level of understanding is at a more rudimentary level, even the seven year old pupils are frequently asked about what they think will happen during scientific investigations. This provides a good foundation for familiarising pupils with a good scientific approach to experiments and gives a good basis for them to construct the methods of their own scientific investigations.

128. Teaching and learning are organised and managed well. The co-ordinator ensures that there is a good level of support for teachers who are unfamiliar with organising experiments and investigations. Assessment of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding together with using the information to meet pupils' needs in lessons is good. Teachers make assessments of what pupils already know before starting a new science theme so they know in which areas pupils need the greatest support. Lessons are monitored regularly by the co-ordinator and targets for

improvement are set so that the teacher can focus on these aspects before the next monitoring is arranged.

129. Teachers plan work well that caters for groups of pupils of differing levels of attainment. For example, in a good Year 2 science lesson an effective classroom assistant asked higher attaining pupils searching questions to find out the level of their understanding and supported them very well. These pupils had to predict and record the outcomes of their experiment whilst lower attaining pupils had to cover less challenging work and were supported very well by the class teacher who led them step by step towards satisfactory knowledge and understanding.

## Secondary phase

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising and examination results have improved significantly in the past two years.
- Pupils achieve well and make good progress at all stages.
- Teaching is good overall but there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop ICT skills.
- Poor attendance of a significant number of pupils adversely affects standards.
- There is not enough support for pupils who are learning English as an additional language.
- The department is very well led and managed.

### Commentary

130. The results in the National Curriculum tests for 14 year olds in 2002 were well below the national average but were in line with those of similar schools. Boys have done better than girls in recent years. The GCSE results in 2002 were well below the national average and below those of similar schools. In 2003 the results in both the National Curriculum tests and GCSE were very much better, illustrating an upward overall trend.
131. Pupils enter the school with attainment levels in science that are well below average. By the end of Year 9 standards now are average but remain below average by the end of Year 11. Most pupils achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school. However, for a significant number of pupils, absences and joining school during term time hinder progress. This pupil mobility is more noticeable among older pupils. In one Year 11 group, for example, almost one-half of the pupils have joined the school since the course started last year. Pupils' numeracy skills enable them to process their experimental results satisfactorily and present them in various graphical forms appropriately.
132. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. All the teaching was satisfactory or better. It was good or better in three-quarters of lessons and very good or excellent in almost one-half of them. A particular strength is the quality of relationships between pupils and teachers. This is a major factor in helping pupils learn well. Pupils in Year 7 quickly learned how to work safely and productively in a laboratory. Their manipulative, planning and predictive skills were at levels expected of pupils by the end of Year 11 but analysis and evaluative skills were less good. Lessons are very well planned and cater for the differing needs of all individual pupils. Teachers know their subject well and make it comprehensible, often by using examples to which pupils readily relate. Pupils are managed extremely well and they readily accept the seating arrangements organised by teachers to enhance learning.
133. The best lessons have three parts to them. A starter activity is effectively used to focus individuals. Objectives are shared with pupils for the main part of the lesson. This often includes demonstrations involving pupils' lively exposition and sometimes group activities. By skilful targeting of questions, teachers check understanding in the final part of the lesson. Support assistants work very effectively and they are made aware of the lesson content in advance. In a few lessons there is not enough support for pupils having difficulties with English

language. Assessment and marking are particular strengths. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored and detailed comments on their work help them move forward. Teachers do much to develop pupils' literacy skills. Key words are frequently emphasised and the meanings of new ones are carefully explained. Pupils are often required to read aloud.

134. The department is very well led and managed. The head of science has established a stable, effective team that has a common commitment to raising standards. His classroom practice is a role model for others. Teachers are deployed well, making good use of specialisms and expertise with particular groups. Technical support is of high quality and much appreciated. The newly qualified teacher and the less experienced ones are supported well. Teachers' performance is carefully monitored and classroom observations occur regularly.
135. An applied science GCSE course considered to be more suitable for some pupils has been introduced in Year 10. Early indications are that it is motivating pupils well and developing their independent learning skills. There is a shortage of some resources and as a result pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop ICT skills. Since the last inspection examination and test results have improved significantly. Teaching is now better. Assessment and monitoring procedures and target setting for individuals are much more developed. The support for pupils with special educational needs is also better.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

### **Primary phase**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well below average and achievement is unsatisfactory.
- The ICT suite and interactive whiteboard are good resources.
- There is no planned progression in the development and use of pupils' ICT skills.
- ICT is used insufficiently throughout the rest of the curriculum to support learning.
- Teaching assistants are used very well and enable pupils to work independently.

### **Commentary**

136. For a variety of reasons, pupils attain standards that are well below average by the age of seven and 11; their achievements are unsatisfactory. There has been a history of long-term absence of an ICT technician, and items of equipment are not always working. This was still not resolved at the time of the inspection, and teachers often have little confidence that certain items of hardware will work. This has reduced the innovation and creativity in planning, and is also the major reason why ICT is not used more widely across other subjects, or developed further in discrete lessons. The co-ordinator and senior management of the school have worked tirelessly to resolve these problems to ensure rapid improvement in the provision for ICT.
137. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but there are some significant areas that are not yet good enough. Teachers follow national guidelines satisfactorily but there is a lack of excitement in the teaching of younger children as a result of teachers being unsure of ways to develop skills. Teaching assistants provide very good support and all staff encourage pupils well but occasionally lower attaining pupils receive too little support. For example, teachers do not always plan work that will support or challenge the individual pupil. The range of ICT activities is also too narrow although members of staff are becoming more conversant with national planning. Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour, and learning is satisfactory overall with pupils showing a good ability to work independently or collaboratively as appropriate.

138. Teaching of ICT has been mainly approached through the teaching of other subjects using specific ICT programs. This has led to a lack of emphasis on the teaching of basic computer skills, and so achievement suffers. Due to the technical problems, teachers have not been able to plan for pupils to consolidate the skills they have previously learned and these have often had to be re-taught before children move on to higher levels of attainment. Leadership of the subject has been hampered because of the technical problems, but there are good action plans linked to the school improvement plan and the co-ordinator has clear plans for the future. The co-ordinator has managed a difficult situation satisfactorily but, for the reasons explained, leadership and management are unsatisfactory.
139. Lack of basic computer skills is a barrier to the use of ICT in other areas of the curriculum. Computers in individual classrooms are not always switched on, and there is little evidence in classrooms, planning and around the school that they are used outside of the main ICT suite. Children therefore have little understanding of how ICT can be an aid to studying other subjects, and how it can be effectively used in everyday life. The ICT suite is a good resource, and teachers use this room on a regular timetabled basis.

## **Secondary phase**

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have a good, well-developed understanding of how to present information.
- Teachers' good specialist subject knowledge is used well to motivate and promote pupils' learning.
- Pupils' have positive attitudes to the subject.
- The attainment of pupils in Years 9 and 11 is not high enough and is below average.
- The use ICT across the curriculum is inconsistent and unsatisfactory.
- Pupils' understanding of the use of ICT beyond the school is unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

140. Pupils have not been entered recently for GCSE examinations. In the 2003 key skills examination half of the pupils aged 15 entered achieved a Level 1 pass. A proportion of pupils continued to study at Level 2 where results were better, with over half achieving a pass. The recent teacher assessments of pupils indicate standards for 14 year olds in summer 2003 were similar to the recent national averages.
141. In lessons observed and work seen, standards in Years 9 and 11 are below the level expected. Achievement over time is not as high as it should be and is unsatisfactory. The below average standards and unsatisfactory achievements are due mainly to staffing difficulties in recent years and the lack of a subject co-ordinator. These difficulties have now been resolved and achievement seen in lessons is improving with no differences across the different groups of pupils. Achievement suffers, however, from poor punctuality to lessons and the time allocated for the subject being a very inadequate 50 minutes per week.
142. Pupils have good knowledge of how to present information using a variety of applications. They are confident users of the word-processing application and use desktop publishing techniques to add art images to improve their documents. They also have a good understanding of multi-media presentation, presenting a slide show about 'Myself'. Pupils have a basic understanding of a spreadsheet but this is generally at a low level. Pupils' knowledge of data handling is not as good as it should be. Pupils' understanding of the use of ICT in its wider sense beyond the school is too narrow, few being able to give examples of where it might be used.

143. Teaching overall is good. Lessons are clearly planned following the guidance of the national ICT strategy. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and use their good subject knowledge effectively to quickly engage interest and attention. Teachers have good discipline, dealing promptly and sensitively with potentially difficult pupils and allowing lessons to move with pace. Although lessons finish with sessions to ascertain learning, these are often too brief with inadequate opportunities for pupils to present and talk about their own work. On the occasion when teaching was unsatisfactory the lesson introduction was muddled and the task was not made clear. The outcome of this was that pupils became restless and learning was slowed.
144. The overall management and leadership of the subject are good. Although the head of department has only had responsibility for the subject since the beginning of the term he is already beginning to have an impact on standards. He has a clear vision about the future development of the subject and the need to maintain and raise standards. With this vision and his high level of specialist knowledge, the subject is well placed for future improvements and has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

145. At the time of the last inspection it was reported that the use of ICT across the curriculum had been strengthened. Although there has been some improvement, progress has been slow and there are still subjects that are not using ICT sufficiently to support pupils' learning. Although use is clearly embedded in some subjects, this approach is not consistent and the overall provision is not good enough. The ratio of computers to pupils is well below average. This is presenting a problem for some departments, as access to the well-used computer suites is restricted and not always available when needed. Good practice, however, was seen in design and technology, using a range of programs to support pupils' technology skills. These include word processing, the Internet for research, and computer-aided design and manufacturing programs. Effective use was also observed in music, using programs to develop composing skills. With the exception of art and science, use in all other subjects is unsatisfactory.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography**

#### **Primary and secondary phases**

Provision in geography is **good**.

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

- The differentiated planning and supportive teaching style is good and helps all pupils to make progress.
- There is good provision for supporting pupils' literacy development.
- Pupils make good progress.
- There is too little use of ICT and the range of resources for learning is too narrow, especially to stimulate gifted and talented pupils.

#### **Commentary**

146. By the age of seven, standards are in line with national expectations. At 11, 14 and 16 standards are below the national average. In many lessons pupils attain at about the national expectations. The 2003 GCSE results improved on those for 2002. By the end of Year 9, teachers judge pupils' attainment to be below the national average.
147. Pupils' achievement is good up to the age of seven and then satisfactory overall because pupils make the progress expected considering their prior attainment. Achievement is better

when pupils are engaged in tasks that encourage sound geographical learning and are suitably matched to suit their learning need. Pupils aged 14 to 16 are more easily distracted from their work, hampering progress and achievement.

148. Overall the quality of teaching and of learning are good. The main strengths are in the secondary phase; teaching and learning in the primary phase are satisfactory. Good teaching stimulates pupils' interest in geography and includes a range of styles, which engages and motivates pupils across a range of ability, including those for whom English is an additional language. Equality of opportunity and inclusiveness are promoted well. Much of the teaching promotes effective geographical learning because teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They point out the relevance of geography to local environmental and socio-economic issues in a sensitive and objective way and aim to promote some independent learning. Work is well matched to pupils' needs and there is good provision for supporting pupils' literacy development. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. A feature of good teaching is the provision of strategies to support pupils' planning for written answers and assignments.
149. Pupils' learning was good in the majority of lessons across all stages. They learn well because teaching methods engage them and hold their interest, especially when they have a chance to contribute to whole-class discussion. Unsatisfactory teaching and learning are rare and relate to some unsatisfactory behaviour, which teachers normally manage very well. There is insufficient use of ICT and the range of resources for learning, especially to stimulate gifted and talented pupils, is too narrow.
150. The subject is led and managed effectively and has made good improvements since the last inspection. In the primary phase the development of geography is not a priority this year. In the secondary phase the subject leader has a good knowledge of departmental strengths and areas for development. The department successfully supports management initiatives to raise standards and improve provision and responds particularly well to the need for differentiated learning materials and a focus on promoting literacy across the curriculum. The geography department has supported whole-school improvement well.

## History

### Primary phase

There was no opportunity to see history being taught during the inspection. A small sample of work from pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 was seen.

Standards overall are well below average for 11 year olds. Pupils understand some of the feelings of people in the past. They describe past events adequately and see changes over a period of time. They make simple deductions from sources such as photographs. Many pupils use books successfully to find out about the past. The standard of written work is below average overall and for a significant proportion of pupils is well below. A very small proportion produce written work that is average in quality. The highest attainers write well at length and reach above average standards.

### Secondary phase

Provision in history is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall, and often very good.
- Most pupils are well motivated and interested and work hard.
- Most pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Leadership and management are good.
- The department does not make sufficient use of ICT for teaching and for learning.

## Commentary

151. By the end of Year 9, standards overall are below those expected nationally. In 2002 teachers assessed pupils' work as average. The 2003 assessments were below those of 2002, but are a more accurate indication of pupils' capabilities. The standard of work seen during the inspection was below average; a small amount was average. The majority of pupils begin Year 7 well below average. They make good progress in Years 7 to 9, and most achieve well, especially in Year 7. This is largely due to good teaching and the pupils' own interest and hard work.
152. Most pupils in Years 7 to 9 have adequate knowledge and understanding of the past. They usually recall the work done in previous lessons so that teachers can move on to new work easily. Pupils understand some of the feelings of people who lived in the past, as, for instance, those of the soldiers in World War I. Most use historical sources adequately. High attainers make valid deductions and see why a source might not be reliable. Although low attainers read adequately they often do not fully understand the meaning of what they have read.
153. The attainment of pupils at the end of Year 11 has fluctuated in the past three years, although it has always remained well below average. In 2003 the results were a considerable improvement on the significantly below average ones of 2002. The proportion of pupils who gain a grade A\*-G is below average. The low standards attained by some pupils are the result of a failure to complete their coursework satisfactorily and are linked to poor attendance. Most pupils make good progress in Years 10 and 11, and achieve well. They began the course with low standards from Year 9, and although the standard of their work is below average, it represents good achievement.
154. The majority of pupils in Years 10 and 11 have a satisfactory knowledge of the topics they are studying but often have difficulty applying their knowledge. Higher attainers have good understanding, as seen for instance in their coursework on Vietnam. They use sources competently for evidence about the past. Lower attainers frequently include irrelevant information or copy indiscriminately from sources without understanding them.
155. Their usually very good behaviour and positive approach to work are important reasons why most pupils achieve well. A minority, who have poorer attitudes, do not achieve as well as they should, because they do not concentrate on work. Frequent absence hinders the achievement of some pupils.
156. The most significant factor in pupils' good achievement is the good, and often very good, teaching. Teachers are confident about their subject. They manage pupils very well and set high expectations of behaviour and hard work. Relationships are good and most pupils respond and learn well. The work set is appropriate for the pupils' capabilities. Very good teaching was characterised by teacher's enthusiasm that created interest among the pupils and a desire to know more. This was seen especially in the work on Roman soldiers with pupils in Year 7. Very occasionally, teachers do not provide enough structure to help pupils complete work successfully.
157. The leadership and management of the department are good. The relatively new head of department has already begun to make an impact and has a clear vision for future improvement. The department does not make sufficient use of ICT. There are no computers in the department and access to centrally-provided ICT is not always possible at times to suit the department's needs. Improvements since the last inspection have been satisfactory.



## Religious education

### Primary phase

Religious education lessons are taught as a block at different times in the term. As there were no lessons timetabled during the inspection week judgements have had to be based on an examination of infant and junior pupils' work. This shows clearly that the school is meeting the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and that provision is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a clear understanding of the practices and beliefs of different religions.
- Teaching focuses effectively on the differences and similarities between religions and on pupils' personal development.

### Commentary

158. Teachers encourage pupils to discuss issues of morality and to record their ideas in writing. Although many pupils experience difficulty in finding appropriate words to express their feelings the juniors nevertheless convey arguments related to, for example, whether it is right to kill an animal. This shows clearly that pupils are developing a clear sense of right and wrong and whether morality changes according to different sets of circumstances. The teaching shows clearly that pupils have been encouraged to focus on comparisons between religious beliefs and practices. This enables them to sympathise with a variety of belief systems and to have a good, yet simple, overview of a study of religions. For example, during a focus on Islam and Christianity, pupils realised that it was possible to identify similarities between the festivals of Id-ul-Fitr and Christmas. After a period of research pupils realised that homes are decorated for both festivals, that gifts are given to friends and family as part of the festivities and the time of year in which they are both celebrated is the same.
159. Infant pupils have a sound knowledge of Bible stories and make progress in their understanding, mainly by listening to adults and taking part in short discussions. Teachers approach much of pupils' personal development from whatever lessons can be learned from the context. For example, one teacher, using a world globe, successfully moved from a discussion about different countries to discussing how children should respect people from different parts of the world. Teaching also encompasses looking at dissimilar religions such as Hinduism and Judaism or considering what it was really like for Mary and Joseph to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem, and pupils' responses demonstrate that they have an understanding of Joseph's worries about Mary's discomfort during the journey.

### Secondary phase

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The specialist teaching is good and sometimes very good.
- The department has been much improved in recent years – in 2002 the results in the full GCSE course were the best in the school.
- The teachers promote fruitful discussions in which pupils of all abilities and backgrounds can play a full part.
- The provision for ICT is under-developed.
- The assessment procedures, though satisfactory, make too little use of the subject's levels of achievement.
- Some lessons, especially in Year 7, are not realistically matched to the ages and abilities of the younger pupils.

- There is a lack of suitable materials and guidance to enable a supply teacher or a new teacher to fit smoothly and effectively into the teaching programme.

## Commentary

160. Pupils' standards by the end of Year 9 are below national expectations but this represents satisfactory achievement and progress in the light of their attainment on entry into the school. Pupils' standards in Year 11 are below what is expected but this represents satisfactory achievement in the light of their prior attainment. It is a feature of the improving status of the subject that all pupils are now entered for the short GCSE course in the subject and some of them for the full GCSE course. In 2002 the grades achieved on the full GCSE course were equal to the national average and better than those in other subjects. This standard was not repeated in 2003 when results dipped.
161. Pupils with special educational needs and those designated as being gifted and talented achieve appropriately and make satisfactory progress with the help of suitably modified materials but without the help of in-class support. The emphasis on fruitful discussion in lessons helps pupils with special educational needs and others with varying backgrounds to be included in the class activities. All pupils benefit from a satisfactory policy of teaching them to acquire and use appropriate technical vocabulary, and all pupils have the necessary numeracy skills to understand the topics studied. The topics studied and the style of teaching also mean that religious education makes a satisfactory contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all the pupils. The planned provision for ICT is underdeveloped, and the assessment procedures, though satisfactory, make too little use of the levels appropriate to the various objectives of the subject.
162. Work in lessons and in notebooks, including last year's notebooks, shows a better picture than the standards in external examinations would indicate. Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 display a satisfactory knowledge of major aspects of Christianity and other world religions, of Christian denominations, and of world problems such as poverty as found in Brazil. Some of the topics, however, are pitched above the heads of the younger pupils and require more abstract or emotional responses than their knowledge base will support. Examples of this are to be found in the lessons on 'Religious Experience' in Year 7 and references to Liberation Theology in Year 9. Lessons in Year 8 are more realistically matched to the ages and abilities of the pupils, being more firmly based on facts. In Years 10 and 11 there are some stimulating discussions on the existence of God, moral decisions, family relationships and suffering and death. All pupils are included and this makes for an effective contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils.
163. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. All the specialist teaching was good or, on occasion, very good. The specialist teaching is characterised by good subject competence, clear and purposeful delivery, and clever questioning techniques that draw the best out of pupils. The good relationships mean that pupils are generally responsive and co-operative. The satisfactory non-specialist teaching was less effective because of the lack of course guidelines and materials to enable a newcomer to fit smoothly into the teaching programme, and because some of the topics in Year 7 were too abstract for the age of the pupils.
164. The leadership and management of the department, within the humanities faculty, are satisfactory. The status of the subject has much improved over the last few years. The entry of pupils for the short GCSE has been an important step in this process. The department now not only fulfils statutory requirements but also has shown that successful results can be obtained (as in 2002). The good teaching that underpins the satisfactory overall provision promises well for the future. There have been good improvements since the last inspection.

## TECHNOLOGY

### Design and technology

#### Primary phase

No lessons were observed nor was it possible to look at a large enough sample of pupils' completed work in order to make a judgement on pupils' progress in this subject. The inspection took place near the beginning of the autumn term and the school had not made arrangements to retain samples of pupils' work from the previous school year. An appropriate scheme of work is in place and pupils throughout the school engage in some form of design and making activity each term. An important part of the designing and making process is the encouragement teachers give pupils to evaluate the quality of their work and its suitability for a given purpose. The curriculum is enriched in a number of ways. For example, a visiting artist has worked with pupils in Year 1 and 2, designing and making Chinese lanterns, and with pupils in Years 3 to 6, making a dragon out of willow cane. Gifted and talented Year 6 pupils have visited the local Kelham Island Industrial Museum and the nearby Magna Centre to participate in technology workshops modifying, testing and evaluating model dragsters.

#### Secondary phase

Provision in design and technology is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of leadership and effectiveness of management is very good.
- Target setting, assessment and the marking of pupils' work are good.
- The changing and developing curriculum is of good quality.
- Teaching and learning are very good in Years 7 to 9.
- Subject development planning is good.
- There is too little use of ICT across all material areas.
- Standards at age 14 and 16 are not high enough.

#### Commentary

165. Teachers' assessments of 14 year olds and GCSE examination results at 16 indicate that standards are below the national average, but are improving. In lessons, most pupils are achieving well in relation to their ability and to the targets set for them. Good target setting, regular assessments and careful marking have been important factors in the systematic improvement in standards in the last three years. Across the school, standards in electronics and graphic products are consistently above average. In food, textiles and resistant materials standards are mostly average and occasionally below. This is in part due to significant changes in the ability of particular groups at GCSE level, but also in the quality of teaching and learning as pupils move through the school. Pupils from different ethnic minority groups and pupils with special educational needs achieve well. The provision for inclusion and equality of opportunity is very good.

166. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. There is a high proportion of very good teaching, especially in electronics and graphics, particularly with pupils aged 11-14. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and use this effectively to provide a well-thought-out curriculum. All pupils are aware of their targets because marking and assessment are geared to helping pupils see what needs to be done in order to raise their achievement levels. In weaker lessons teachers do not place sufficient emphasis on ensuring quality products, or ensure that the task itself is sufficiently challenging to extend the ability of more able pupils. This was particularly noticeable in work with resistant materials. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, and some lessons graded satisfactory, insecure class control or management of the

way in which the project was managed, led to pupils not being on task and to unsatisfactory behaviour.

167. In spite of limitations in the range and quantity of equipment and software, there has been a significant growth in the use of ICT, and in particular in the area of computer-aided design and manufacture (CAD/CAM). ICT is not used enough across all material areas in the subject in order to raise achievement further.
168. The quality of leadership and management is very good. Very good documentation supports a clear direction for the subject and sets high expectations for the teachers. Very good analysis of examination and other data provides information that is used to set targets, to modify the curriculum and to focus teachers' attention on the assessment of pupils' achievement. All teachers and pupils have a clear understanding of their targets. Teachers with management responsibilities within the department have a clearly defined role and carry out their tasks successfully. There is insufficient detail in the moderation of pupils' achievement by the end of Year 9 and measurable success criteria are not built into the department development plans. Annual reports to parents are not informative enough. Currently the department does not carry out the requirement to complete risk assessments. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

### **Art**

#### **Primary phase**

Provision in art and design is **good**.

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

- Pupils aged seven to 11 achieve well in response to the good teaching.
- Assessment of pupils' work takes very good account of their individual needs.
- The curriculum is good and the subject is well led and managed.

#### **Commentary**

169. Standards for art and design by the end of Years 2 and 6 are below average, in the main because of the low level of attainment on entry to the school, and pupils' lack of knowledge and experience of art forms. Nevertheless, the generally good teaching, backed by a good curriculum and innovative ways of providing arts experiences, enables pupils to achieve well.
170. Pupils have good opportunities to develop skills through exploring materials such as paint, clay, different drawing materials, fabrics and ICT. They are introduced to artists from a variety of cultures and are beginning to understand the way art has developed in different countries. A lesson on mud printing from Mali, in which pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 worked together, gave them a good understanding of the technique and types of designs that are used. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieved well. Younger pupils develop ideas from stories from other cultures. By the age of seven, their manipulative skills are underdeveloped, but they show some understanding of colour, shape and form, and describe their ideas satisfactorily through painting and sculpture. By age 11, pupils' understanding of art is satisfactory. They are able to explore the qualities of pattern, colour and shape and use research materials well, although they rely on teachers to provide them.
171. Pupils display good attitudes to learning, because the lessons are interesting, well organised and well researched. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers structure the work so that there is variety, and it is carefully matched to pupils' abilities and the needs of all. Much of this success is because teachers use a range of teaching strategies to help pupils'

understanding; support from teaching assistants is well directed and there is an emphasis on spoken language.

172. Art and design is well managed and is well led. The good curriculum is supported by a clear scheme of work. The subject provides well for pupils with special educational needs and is very successful in ensuring equality of opportunity.

## **Secondary phase**

Provision in art and design is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Leadership and management are very good.
- The range and breadth of the art and design curriculum are very good.
- Good quality teaching through high expectations ensures good learning.
- Pupils' general knowledge of artists and understanding of artistic developments are unsatisfactory.
- Pupils' skills in ceramics are not as good as their other artistic skills.

### **Commentary**

173. Standards of pupils aged 14 are below average. Nevertheless, progress is good because pupils enter the school with well below average levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in art and design. Achievement for the majority of pupils is sound. The good development of technical skills in a range of media seen in projects, for example, on landscape and pattern arising from the study of art and artist from European traditions and cultures around the world, show the most able pupils attaining high standards.

174. Results in the GCSE examination in 2002 were below average but improved in 2003. A high proportion of the pupils in Year 11 are entered for a GCSE examination in art and design and every pupil gained at least a G grade in 2003. Standards in painting and drawing, and textiles, are better than those in three-dimensional work, although a higher percentage of lower ability boys choose this latter aspect of art and design. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory, with some particularly good achievement in textiles by the pupils with English as an additional language, where their cultural heritage is reflected in the work. Pupils' knowledge of art and their skills in ceramics are not as good as other aspects of their work and are unsatisfactory.

175. The quality of teaching is consistently good because of teachers' high expectations, constantly reinforced, that pupils should do their best. Lessons build progressively on pupils' previous learning enabling pupils to become confident in technical skills and the exploration of ideas. Target grades and assessment are used well to support pupils in their quest for improvement and to ensure the good learning. Equality of opportunity is promoted well.

176. The very good leadership is robust and effective. The department has a very good clarity of vision and very strong sense of purpose and makes good use of ICT resources. This strong commitment to improving standards and broadening pupils' experiences is shared by all in the department, hence the improvements in standards and quality of teaching since the last inspection.

## **Music**

### **Primary phase**

It was not possible to gather sufficient evidence to comment on standards or achievements in music. The small amount of teaching observed was of a good overall standard.

## Secondary phase

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' good subject knowledge is used effectively to guide and ensure good learning.
- The good use of ICT supports pupils' learning well.
- Pupils' positive approach to the subject is contributing to their progress.
- Attainment is well below the level expected and achievement is unsatisfactory; there is too little time for the subject.
- Pupils' understanding of composing skills is not high enough.
- There are few opportunities to study music from other cultures.
- The profile of the subject has improved significantly recently.

### Commentary

177. No pupils have not been entered for any external examinations in recent years. The teachers' assessments indicate that standards of 14 year olds are well below average. In lessons and work seen the standards are well below the expected level for 14 and 16 year olds. Pupils join the school in Year 7 with little previous musical experience and by the time they reach Year 9 attainment is still well below the level normally seen; achievement over time is unsatisfactory. These low standards at 16 are partially due to the lack of specialist teaching in Years 7 to 9 and the inadequate time allocated for the subject in Year 9. However, since the appointment of a subject specialist, achievement at all stages, though unsatisfactory, is improving and progress in lessons is satisfactory.
178. Pupils have a good grasp of rhythm and use their skills well to sequence rhythms accurately using an ICT program. Pupils sing well, maintaining good pitch. This was evident in the gospel choir rehearsal where singing was rhythmic and tuneful. Pupils' understanding of composition techniques is below average, lacking the necessary knowledge and techniques to structure and develop their work. Although pupils have experienced and listened to a range of musical styles, few are able to discuss the music using the appropriate technical vocabulary to describe the music.
179. The overall quality of teaching is good but one lesson was unsatisfactory. The teachers' good subject knowledge is used effectively to interest and motivate pupils. This was very apparent in a Year 9 lessons using an ICT sequencing program. Here the teacher used his skills effectively to demonstrate how to sequence a range of rhythms as a basis of a composition. Pupils responded well to this, showing much interest and improving their rhythmic skills. Learning is good at all stages.
180. A particular strength is the planning of lessons with styles of music that have appeal and are suited to the needs of all pupils. However, there are few opportunities to study music from other cultures. Equality of opportunity is promoted soundly. The teachers' sharp awareness of pupils' needs and own enthusiasm during lessons keep pupils on task, contributing positively to pupils' progress. When objectives of lessons are explained clearly at the beginning of sessions pupils settle quickly to the task and make good progress. This approach, however, is not always consistent, resulting in pupils unsure of the task and slowing learning. Teachers manage pupils well, dealing sensitively and usually successfully with disruptive pupils. Progress on occasions is slowed due to the late arrival of pupils to lessons.
181. The management and the leadership of the subject are good. The head of department has a clear view about future developments of the subject and the need to raise standards. Since being appointed he has successfully raised the profile of music within the school to a point where pupils now regard the subject as worthwhile. The provision for pupils with special

educational needs is satisfactory. There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

### **Primary phase**

Provision for physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well, enjoy lessons and work hard.
- Teaching is good overall; that of swimming is very good.
- The subject is led and managed well.
- Seven to 11 year olds have good opportunities to participate in a range of sports out of school hours.
- The standards of seven and 11 year olds are below average.

### **Commentary**

182. Overall standards are below average for seven and 11 year olds, but bearing in mind the good progress made by most, pupils achieve well. Pupils work hard in lessons and with good support from teachers they practise hard to improve. Eleven year old pupils receive very good instruction when they visit the local sports hall for weekly swimming lessons and although only about 50 per cent can yet swim the required 25 metres unaided they work very hard and they make good progress in response to very good teaching. Five year olds start Year 1 with very poor physical skills; their quality of movement and their hand-eye co-ordination are poor. As a result, many pupils display weak games skills.

183. Pupils respond well to the good teaching and coaching, and learning is good at all stages. Pupils are encouraged, supported well, shown how to improve and given good opportunities to practise. As a result all pupils make good progress and achieve well although most are not yet meeting expected levels of attainment. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are very successful in promoting equality of opportunity, involving and including pupils of all abilities and backgrounds well.

184. Most pupils' attitude to work is at least good and sometimes very good. Pupils are enthusiastic and work hard. They persevere well to refine and develop skills, working effectively together in small groups.

185. A strength of the subject is the wide range of extra-curricular activities available for pupils. They play competitive games against pupils from other schools. Seven to 11 year olds can join a range of sports clubs after school in order to participate with others in a number of different activities such as football, cross-country running and dance. The younger pupils can join in dance activities during the lunch break. These activities enhance the curriculum well. The subject is led and managed well by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. She is a good teacher and role model and gives good support to colleagues.

### **Secondary phase**

Provision for physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and pupils achieve well, particularly in basketball.
- The quality of leadership and management is very good.
- Relationships with pupils are very good.

- Pupils studying the subject to GCSE do not have the additional core time given to the other pupils not following the exam course.
- Inadequate accommodation affects the quality and range of the curriculum.

## Commentary

186. Results in the GCSE examinations in 2002 were well below average. There was a massive improvement in 2003, linked to improved teaching. Teachers' assessments of pupils at the end of Year 9 in 2002 showed that standards were below average; their assessments were similar in 2003.
187. Pupils arrive in Year 7 with a low level of skill but mostly make good progress. By the end of Year 9, standards are in line with those expected in most areas taught. Standards are below average in girls' football, but they are average in badminton and hockey. Pupils demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the effect of exercise on the body and know that a warm-up is important before exercise. Pupils' achievement is good overall, especially in games. Basketball is particularly strong. School teams are successful and a number of pupils have achieved success at regional and county level in a range of sports.
188. By the end of Year 11 standards are average overall for pupils who are not following a GCSE course but are well below average in trampolining. Standards of GCSE practical and written work are also average with some pupils showing pride in presentation. Pupils' knowledge of fitness is good and they possess good understanding of bones of the body, particularly the skeleton. Pupils with a special educational need and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress. All pupils are well integrated into all lessons and achieve well.
189. Teaching is good; teachers have very good subject knowledge and manage classes well, facilitating good learning. Pupils respond to the very good relationships they have with their teachers and most work hard. Regular marking and conscientious, reliable assessments of pupils' work, particularly at GCSE, ensure that pupils progress well. Teachers give freely of their time to extra-curricular activities, as do volunteer coaches from outside school, for example, helping to raise basketball standards.
190. Leadership and management are very good. The GCSE results are analysed very carefully and there is regular monitoring of teaching by the head of department. All teachers in the department share her enthusiasm. There are good quality schemes of work and although lesson planning is good, it needs to take greater account of the National Curriculum programmes of study. Modules of work are taught in six-week units and this is not always sufficient for continuity and progression in some activities. Assessment is good but reports to parents do not indicate what they know, understand and can do. Pupils studying the GCSE course do not have access to the additional *core* time and this reduces their access to the National Curriculum, although the statutory requirements are met.
191. The accommodation is inadequate and has not improved since the last inspection. The problems caused by the present building and refurbishment programme have restricted some activities and are having a detrimental effect on the standards. Standards have, however, risen and teaching has improved since the last inspection.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

### Personal and social education

#### Secondary phase

The school's guidance programme, which is taught for two lessons a week and covered in morning registration time on four days a week, includes personal and social education and citizenship. The personal and social education teaching, largely undertaken by form tutors, is good overall and pupils



learn well. The curriculum is of good quality and includes a wide range of visiting speakers. The Wednesday afternoon double lesson is occasionally too long a period for pupils to maintain interest and concentration.

## **Citizenship**

The provision for citizenship is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and positive use is made of outside agencies.
- Planning and support for form tutors is good.
- A successful whole-school audit has enabled a very good curriculum to be provided.
- Lessons are too long for most pupils and some teachers.
- Teachers do not provide reports for parents on their child's progress.

## **Commentary**

192. The lessons observed and the scrutiny of work indicate that standards are average at the end of Years 9 and 11. There is good coverage of the three strands of citizenship and outside agencies are used well to support the teaching. Pupils achieve well and have a good knowledge of their rights and responsibilities. Year 10 pupils' knowledge and understanding of the law improved when a local magistrate attended a lesson to follow up an initial visit to the law court by pupils. Pupils showed their increased knowledge of the legal system and the law in general. In Year 8 pupils learned to appreciate what it is to be blind and sight impaired. They experienced the language of Braille and how to negotiate obstacles without sight using a white stick. Pupils in Year 10 prepared well for work experience as part of careers education and guidance. They considered a range of opportunities and understood the need to make informed choices for their work placements. Some of them were prepared to take responsibility for their own arrangements and placements.
193. Teaching and learning are good overall because of good and well-coordinated planning, organised by heads of year and a team of tutors. Good support is available to all tutors. Citizenship is taught as part of the school's well-organised guidance programme, which also includes personal, health and social education. The curriculum is of very good quality. The programme is taught during four 20-minute morning slots and a Wednesday afternoon double lesson. Although the time is mostly used well, 100 minutes is too long for many pupils, many having difficulty in maintaining concentration for the double lesson, especially when the range of teaching approaches is narrow. The learning mentors provide good support in helping pupils improve their standards of work.
194. The school has made good progress in planning for the introduction of citizenship. The subject is well led and managed. A comprehensive audit has taken place throughout the school to indicate the contribution all subjects make to the subject. Pupils carry out a review of the work they have covered but there have been no reports to parents to indicate their child's progress.

## 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>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	6
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	3
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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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