

## INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL**

Hereford

LEA area: Herefordshire

Unique reference number: 116992

Headteacher: Mr C Lambert

Lead inspector: Mrs G Salter-Smith

Dates of inspection: 24 – 27 November 2003

Inspection number: 258776

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	11 – 16 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	681
School address:	Lugwardine Hereford
Postcode:	HR1 4DR
Telephone number:	01432 850 416
Fax number:	01432 851 728
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Burbidge
Date of previous inspection:	12 January 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Saint Mary's Roman Catholic High School is a smaller than average but increasingly popular voluntary aided comprehensive school in a village just outside the city of Hereford. The school has recently received specialist science college status. The school caters for girls and boys aged 11 to 16 years and there are more girls than boys in the school, especially in Years 7, 8 and 9. There are more boys than girls in Years 10 and 11. The school takes pupils from a wide geographical area and pupils come from the full range of social and economic circumstances. However, overall, there are more pupils from advantaged backgrounds than is usually the case. Most pupils stay in the school for the full five years. The vast majority of the pupils are of white UK heritage with a very small number of pupils of different ethnicity. There are very few pupils whose mother tongue is not English. The school has designated places for 25 pupils with special educational needs, mainly for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. The number of pupils with special educational needs is lower than average and they include pupils with specific learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, hearing difficulties and speech and communication difficulties. Based on the results in national tests, the attainment of pupils when they enter the school is above average overall, though for pupils in Year 11, they were closer to average when they started in Year 7. The school has an Investors in People Award and a Careers Kite-mark Award, and received the School's Achievement Award in 1999, 2000 and 2001.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
8329	G Salter-Smith	Lead inspector	
14214	G Smith	Lay inspector	
32113	J Byrom	Team inspector	Mathematics
11508	C Griffin	Team inspector	English Drama English as an additional language
22985	J Sparkes	Team inspector	Science
27803	J Clark	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Physical education Special educational needs
32672	S Hammond-Evans	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology
32147	A Wallis	Team inspector	Geography
32122	J Straw	Team inspector	History
3793	J Ratcliffe	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
1975	T McIntosh-Clark	Team inspector	Music
32229	M Comer	Team inspector	Citizenship Vocational education
2882	B Jones	Team inspector	Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services  
 Anglia House  
 Clarendon Court  
 Carrs Road  
 Cheadle  
 Stockport  
 SK8 2LA

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is an effective school with many strengths.** Teaching is good and pupils achieve well overall. GCSE examination results are consistently high and improving. Pupils are keen to do well and are mature and responsible. The school is well led and governed and management is satisfactory but there are some breaches of statutory requirements in relation to the National Curriculum. **The school provides good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- A strong Catholic ethos creating a real sense of a Christian community pervades all the work of the school and consequently pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are very good.
- Results in national tests taken at age 14 and in GCSE are consistently well above average.
- The head teacher provides very good leadership, setting high expectations across the school, and is supported by a very able deputy headteacher and leadership group.
- Although standards are above average or well above average in most subjects, they are not high enough in resistant materials and citizenship and in ICT for Year 10 and 11 pupils not following an accredited course.
- Achievement is satisfactory in mathematics in Years 10 and 11 but not as good as in English and science; though satisfactory, boys' achievement in physical education is not as high as the achievement of girls.
- The senior leadership team are not rigorous enough in ensuring improvements are carried out in some subjects.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported.

The school has improved significantly since the previous inspection. GCSE results have improved a great deal and at a faster rate than the national trend. There are more good and very good lessons. The school has achieved specialist science college status. Improvements have been made in most of the key issues identified at the last inspection. Although the provision for ICT has improved, it is not yet meeting statutory requirements.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Performance in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
	A	A	A	A*

*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' achievement is good and standards are above average.** Standards of pupils' work are above average overall in Year 9 and well above average in Year 11. Pupils' very good literacy skills help them to achieve well. Pupils' achievement is very good in English, drama, science, art and design, German and history. Pupils do not achieve high enough standards in citizenship and resistant materials. Pupils not taking an examination course in ICT in Years 10 and 11 do not achieve well enough in ICT. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress, some achieving higher grades at GCSE.

**Pupils are mature and responsible and adopt a conscientious approach to learning.**

Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour help them to achieve well. Attendance is very good and punctuality is good, except when buses are late arriving at the school.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a good quality of education.** Teaching is good overall and very good in English, drama, science, art and design, German and history. Teaching is good in geography, French, music and ICT where it is taught as a separate subject and in mathematics in Years 7 to 9. Teaching is unsatisfactory in resistant materials in Years 10 and 11 and in citizenship. There is a high proportion of good and very good lessons. Pupils are enthusiastic and effective learners and consequently they achieve well. Teachers have high expectations of achievement and behaviour and pupils live up to these expectations and try their best. Pupils respond very well to praise and encouragement. Boys and girls of all backgrounds and abilities are equally keen to succeed. Homework is set and marked regularly and helps pupils to do well. Despite improvements in the number of computers, limited access to them in many subjects means that ICT is not used often enough to support pupils' learning.

The curriculum is broad and provides for pupils of all abilities with courses that help them to succeed. However, it is unsatisfactory that statutory requirements for ICT and citizenship are not met. There is a good range of accredited courses in Years 10 and 11 including an expanding range of vocational courses. There are good extra curricular opportunities. Pupils across the school are not taught the full National Curriculum programme of study for citizenship. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 not following an accredited course in ICT, are not taught the full National Curriculum programme of study for ICT. The library is not used extensively enough as a support for learning.

All staff share a high level of commitment to pupils' well being and academic progress. Parents are keen for their children to do well and they support them very well in their learning. Links with other schools and the community are used very successfully to broaden and enrich pupils' learning.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good overall.** The head teacher is dedicated to, and successful in, maintaining the positive ethos of the school, high standards and improving the quality of teaching and learning. The deputy headteacher and the leadership group share the vision for the school and lead by example. Governors have a very good understanding of the work of the school and hold the professionals to account. Management systems ensure that the school runs smoothly and contribute to improvements in teaching and learning in many subjects. However, in some subjects important matters for improvement are not followed up quickly enough, for example, the use of assessment.

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

The school is very well regarded by pupils and parents. Pupils particularly appreciate the help and support they receive from teachers.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise achievement in ICT, citizenship, resistant materials, boys' physical education and mathematics in Years 10 and 11.
- Develop the library as a centre for learning.
- Improve the rigour, frequency and consistency of checks on the quality of work in departments and take effective action.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that all pupils are taught the full National Curriculum programme of study in ICT in Years 10 and 11.
- Ensure that the full National Curriculum programme of study in citizenship is taught throughout the school, and that pupils' progress is assessed and reported to parents.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall, pupils' achievement is good and standards are above average. Results in National Curriculum tests and GCSE examinations are consistently high. Standards of pupils' work are above average in Years 7 to 9 and well above average in Years 10 and 11. Boys achieve as well as girls in most subjects.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall results in national tests taken at age 14 and in GCSE are consistently well above the national average.
- Compared with schools with pupils of similar prior attainment GCSE results in 2003 were very high.
- Pupils' very good literacy skills help them to achieve well.
- Pupils' achievement is very good in English, drama, science, art and design, German and history.
- Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory in citizenship and resistant materials throughout the school.
- Pupils not taking an examination course in ICT in Years 10 and 11 do not achieve well enough in ICT.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress, some achieving higher grades at GCSE.

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	35.5 (37.1)	33.4 (33.3)
mathematics	36.4 (36.9)	35.4 (34.7)
science	35.9 (37.0)	33.6 (33.3)

*There were 136 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

- 1 When pupils join the school at the beginning of Year 7 their standards are above average, based on national tests in English, mathematics and science. There is some variation in the proportion of higher attaining pupils in each year group, but the full range of ability is represented. From this beginning pupils make good progress because the teaching is at least good in most subjects. Pupils' very positive attitudes toward their work and the support they receive from their parents help them to achieve well. A strong ethos for learning, care and support is accepted by pupils across the school which means that pupils want to do well and be successful.
- 2 Taking account of the standards of pupils' work seen across all the subjects in Year 9, standards are above average and well above average in English, science, art and design and history. Overall, pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment on entry to the school in Year 7. However, in national tests pupils have consistently attained well above average results in all years since the previous inspection. When compared with schools with pupils of similar prior attainment results in 2002 were well above average and in 2003, based on unvalidated data, they continue to be well above average.



- 3 Boys are doing well in tests in all the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and, unlike the national picture, there is little difference in the results between girls and boys. Boys are further ahead of other boys nationally than the girls are ahead of other girls across the country. Taking into account all pupils' prior attainment these results reflect very good achievement in English and science and good achievement in mathematics.
- 4 The school exceeded its targets for national tests for pupils aged 14 in 2002. In 2003, targets were exceeded in science and for the higher levels in English. The target for Level 4 was not met for mathematics and was just missed in English. The overall trend of improvement is broadly in line with the national trend.
- 5 The relatively lesser, but still good achievement, in mathematics is partly explained by some recent disruption in staffing. The positive achievement of boys across the core subjects compared to other schools nationally is the result of the school's success in promoting a positive ethos for learning and promoting teaching approaches that interest and engage boys in learning. The results reflect good achievement for pupils of all different levels of prior attainment.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	82 (71)	52 (50)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	92 (93)	91 (91)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	98 (95)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	43.1 (34.7)	41.0 (34.7)

*There were 126 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

- 6 Overall results in GCSE, based on average points scored per pupil, have been consistently well above the national average since the previous inspection. In 2002 results compared with schools with pupils of similar prior attainment were above average and in 2003 they were very high. In 2003, the school exceeded its targets based on average points and the proportion of pupils gaining five or more A\* to C passes. The trend of improvement is broadly in line with that found nationally.
- 7 In 2003, there was a significant increase in the proportion of pupils gaining the higher grades A\* to C and the very highest grades A\* and A compared to the previous year, reflecting the good achievement of higher attaining pupils. The proportion of pupils leaving with no qualification is decreasing as a result of the school broadening the curriculum and offering courses that interest a wider range of pupils, including those of lower prior attainment. These results show that middle and lower attaining pupils are achieving well.
- 8 In 2002, results in most subjects taken at GCSE were well above the national average, except in art and design and mathematics where they were above average. In 2003, results in art and design and in mathematics improved and high results were maintained in most subjects. Results in resistant materials were closer to average. In no subjects were results below the national average.
- 9 Taking into account pupils' prior attainment at the end of Year 9 these results reflect good achievement for pupils of all different levels of ability. Variations in results between subjects reflect the varying quality of teaching in subjects.
- 10 Current standards of work in Years 10 and 11 are well above national expectations overall and in most subjects match the level of attainment in recent examinations. These standards show that pupils are achieving well in relation to their prior attainment.

- 11 Pupils' standards and their achievement are satisfactory in boys' physical education and mathematics in Years 10 and 11. Though the quality of teaching is sound, it does not always interest pupils enough nor does planning ensure that pupils are making progress in all parts of the required programmes of study.
- 12 Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory in resistant materials and citizenship and standards are below average. This is because the full programme is not taught and teachers have not been prepared well enough to enable sufficient depth of knowledge and understanding to be taught and learnt. Pupils not following an accredited course in ICT in Years 10 and 11 do not achieve high enough standards because they are not taught the full programmes of study.
- 13 Very good literacy skills are a major contributory factor in pupils' academic success. In recent years the school has had a clear focus on developing pupils' literacy skills and this has helped boys in particular to make good progress. There are numerous examples of well-planned support for writing and opportunities to take part in meaningful well-structured discussion. Pupils' competence in mathematics is good, but there is no planned programme across subjects to ensure that these skills are developed systematically. Though good in Years 7 to 9, pupils' competency in ICT is not fully developed in Years 10 and 11 where not all pupils have a full opportunity to develop ICT skills in a taught course and not all subjects are able to give the opportunities to develop and improve ICT skills because there is limited access to computers.

#### **Pupils with special educational needs**

- 14 Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress overall. GCSE results show that pupils achieve very well, gaining at least one pass and sometimes several passes, often at the higher-grade level. The very good teaching they receive when working in small groups and the very effective support of teaching assistants alongside good and very good teaching in most subjects ensures their considerable achievement.

#### **Gifted and talented pupils**

- 15 The school does not receive additional funding to support work in this area and pupils have not been identified in all subjects. Some additional activities have been provided but on the whole teachers' high level of awareness of pupils' abilities and potential and their commitment to high achievement for all pupils, ensure that pupils with special gifts and talents across subjects are challenged in their work and do well.

#### **English as an additional language**

- 16 The achievement of the very small number of pupils at the early stages of acquiring English as an additional language is good. They have settled well into the school and are highly motivated. Older pupils are working at average and above average levels in their GCSE subjects. Younger pupils make good progress in lessons aimed at improving their English. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs, who has responsibility for the support of pupils learning English, provides effective oversight of the arrangement and the pupils settle well because of the school's caring ethos. Despite these positive features there are shortcomings in the whole school provision. In particular, there is no whole school policy to set out entry and assessment procedures; there is no guidance on teaching and learning strategies or on the use of support materials such as bilingual dictionaries.

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

Pupils' very positive attitudes to school and learning and their very good behaviour are major factors contributing to good standards. Pupils' attendance is very good and their punctuality is good. The number of exclusions is below average for a school of this size. Pupils' personal development and the provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school promotes good relationships, spiritual development and racial harmony exceptionally well. This creates a calm and mutually supportive atmosphere that is very conducive to learning.
- Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' conduct; as a result, pupils behave very responsibly during lessons and at other times.
- Good teaching and a strong sense of community underpin pupils' very positive attitudes towards school.
- Pupils are very committed to their studies and they enjoy taking part in the wide range of available opportunities.
- Pupils develop into confident, enthusiastic and mature young people.

## Commentary

- 17 Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and are very proud to belong to St Mary's Roman Catholic High School. Teaching provides interesting and stimulating lessons; teachers inspire their pupils to have very good attitudes towards school and towards their work. Pupils are very conscientious and do their utmost to produce work of the highest possible standard. Pupils' attendance has improved since the previous inspection and it is now well above average.

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (2002/3)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.9	School data	0.1
National data	7.2	National data	1.1

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

- 18 Pupils like and respect their teachers and classroom relationships are warm and mutually supportive. Pupils also get along very well with each other and they share ideas and resources amicably. Teachers have very high expectations of behaviour and conduct and they lead by example. Pupils share a strong work ethic and their sensible and mature behaviour has a very positive effect on the standard of their work and their academic progress. Analysis of the pupils' questionnaire, however, shows that just over one in four pupils knows of incidents of bullying or racist abuse. The inspection team explored this issue with many pupils during the inspection. Although they said that such incidents do occur from time to time, they all feel that the school attaches great urgency to such issues and deals with them very effectively. Inspectors agree with their positive views. Indeed, procedures for managing behaviour are very effective; there is little bullying and racist incidents are exceptionally rare.
- 19 There are many opportunities for pupils to take an active part in the day-to-day life of the school and they respond with great enthusiasm. For example, they are keen to assume responsibility for numerous areas of school life and a very large number participate in the wide range of house and extra curricular activities. Pupils' out-going and confident approach makes a significant contribution to the school's lively and vibrant atmosphere.
- 20 Pupils with special educational needs have very positive attitudes and their behaviour is rarely ever less than very good. Relationships with their teachers, who encourage them to work hard and do their best, are very positive. In withdrawal sessions with teachers or assistants, attitudes and behaviour are nearly always very good. Outside the classroom, pupils with special educational needs mix well with other pupils and are fully integrated into the day-to-day life of the school.

21 The school works hard to meet the needs of all its pupils. Links with external support agencies are very good and there are few exclusions. Pupils who have been excluded, as well as those who are putting themselves at risk of exclusion, receive very good support.

## 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	671	17	1
White – Irish	1		
White – any other White background	3		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1		
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1		
Black or Black British – African	3		

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

22 The school's contribution to the pupils' spiritual development is outstanding, with a strong emphasis on gospel values, promoted throughout the school, and a full and exciting calendar of events celebrating the Christian year. Caring for others and upholding moral values are central to the school's Roman Catholic and Christian ethos and provision for moral and social development is very good. Pupils carry out impressive work for charities, counsel younger children in the school, act as reading buddies, help local primary children in art and mathematics, and represent their peers on the school council. Cultural provision is good. Pupils visit theatres, museums and galleries, and in art, for example, they study foreign artists, and produce ethnic portrait collages and paintings based on aboriginal art. French and German exchange visits take place, and pupils take part in ceremonies to remember the war dead during their visits to battlefields abroad. Awareness of multi-cultural heritage, previously an area for further development, is now being addressed well in daily worship and inter-faith visits, for example, to a mosque and a synagogue. Some particularly good work has been done in English, using texts which highlight the difficulties encountered by Caribbean migrants to England, to the accompaniment of a steel band especially loaned for the occasion.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good. Though providing a good breath of subjects to meet individual needs, especially in Years 10 and 11, the curriculum is unsatisfactory in that it does not meet statutory requirements for citizenship and ICT for pupils in Year 10 and 11. Pupils are very well looked after and those with special educational needs are very well supported. Parents are very pleased with the education their children receive and the school's links with other schools and the community are very strong.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good and results in pupils' good achievement. Although very good in English, science, drama, art and design, German and history, arrangements for assessment and its use are satisfactory overall.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a high proportion of good and very good lessons.
- Boys and girls of all backgrounds and abilities are enthusiastic and effective learners and consequently they are achieving well.
- The quality of teaching and learning are very good in English, drama, science, history, German and art and design.
- Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good and teaching assistants are very effective.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory in resistant materials in Years 10 and 11 and in citizenship.
- Despite improvements since the previous inspection, ICT is not used often enough to support pupils' learning.
- There is no satisfactory system for assessing pupils' levels of attainment in citizenship and physical education.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 108 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (3%)	38 (35%)	45 (42%)	20 (19%)	2 (2%)	0 (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.*

- 23 The overall quality of the teaching is a significant factor in helping pupils of all abilities and backgrounds to achieve and do well. Pupils and parents are highly appreciative of the good quality of the teaching and support given by teachers across the school. There is a high proportion of good and very good lessons, more than were seen during the previous inspection. Four out of every five lessons are at least good and almost two in every five are very good or excellent. The school has had a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning and the contribution of a number of advanced skills teachers has helped to bring about these improvements.
- 24 Teachers have very high expectations of themselves, pupils' work and behaviour. Boys and girls rise to these expectations and they want to do well and succeed. Relationships between pupils and teachers are positive; there is mutual respect and good humour and these result in pupils enjoying their lessons and developing confidence in themselves and their abilities. It is considered "cool to learn" in this school by both girls and boys. Pupils' success and achievement in all areas of the school are valued by the pupils, the school and the community.
- 25 Teachers' high expectations of learning and achievement are reflected in lessons that are taught at a good pace and in activities that challenge pupils of all abilities to think for themselves. In a number of subjects, for example science and history, pupils are expected to think out problems and teachers guide pupils well through thinking processes. Pair and group work are common features of lessons and these encourage pupils to communicate well and work out problems collaboratively. In geography, enquiry-based fieldwork activity encourages pupils to think for themselves. In creative subjects, such as art and design, pupils are encouraged to experiment with images and techniques and this leads to lively, imaginative individual work. In many subjects pupils are developing very good learning skills that enable them to learn in different ways and without the direct aid of a teacher. Pupils are being well prepared for life-long learning.
- 26 Teachers' considerable expertise in their subjects and how to teach them are a major factor in influencing learning. Many teachers have great enthusiasm and passion for their subject

which is communicated to pupils and generates a great deal of enjoyment. This is especially the case in English, drama and history. Teachers' expertise ensures that pupils benefit from very clear and accurate explanations and demonstrations. Teachers use questioning well to encourage discussion and to probe pupils' answers and demand more of them. In modern foreign languages teachers use their language skills well to encourage pupils' frequent communication in the foreign language. A good understanding of what is needed for success in examinations helps teachers to provide very useful guidance to pupils but does not prevent them from ensuring pupils benefit from a broad range of learning experiences.

- 27 Teachers plan lessons well, building on pupils' prior learning. Well structured lessons in three main parts are used successfully in most subjects to ensure that learning is systematic and well considered. Pupils find out what they will learn; they then have plenty of opportunity to build knowledge, skills and understanding systematically through a varied and stimulating range of activities. Finally, they have an opportunity to review what has been learnt and consolidate what they know and understand.
- 28 There is a good focus across subjects on developing pupils' literacy, speaking and listening skills so that pupils develop confidence in their ability to write and communicate. The approach to improving pupils' numeracy skills is less well planned. Though improved since the previous inspection, for example through the provision of ten inter-active whiteboards in classrooms, the lack of access to computers in many subjects prevents the development of ICT skills in many subjects, including English, mathematics, design and technology, modern foreign languages and music.
- 29 Homework is used effectively to consolidate and develop what has been learnt in lessons and pupils are often encouraged to carry out their own research. Work is usually marked and helpful comments are made by teachers to help pupils know what to do to further improve their work.
- 30 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good overall. Expectations of both behaviour and attitudes are high, the work set is very well matched to pupils' needs and consequently pupils make very good progress. Teachers work very effectively with teaching assistants so that they make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Greater use could be made of ICT to help pupils learn in lessons.
- 31 Teaching is unsatisfactory in citizenship because there is a lack of planning and training which results in pupils not achieving the depth of knowledge and understanding required of a National Curriculum subject. Teachers involved in teaching the programme of citizenship have not had enough support and training. Teaching in resistant materials is unsatisfactory where activities are spread across more than one workshop, making supervision and monitoring of pupils' progress difficult.
- 32 Though satisfactory overall, less than satisfactory elements of teaching occur in a number of areas. In boys' physical education there is too little emphasis on developing boys' ability to plan and evaluate their own and each other's work. In mathematics, opportunities for pupils to apply the mathematics they have learnt in practical situations are limited and a lack of emphasis on improving pupils' numeracy skills is evident among some middle and lower attaining groups of pupils. In Years 10 and 11 there is a reliance on text books and consequently some higher attaining pupils are not challenged. Some homework has not been marked.

### **Assessment**

- 33 Since the previous inspection the school has revised its systems for assessing pupils' work. A co-ordinator has been appointed, who, with senior management and heads of department, has sought to establish a consistency of approach in assessing pupils' work. Information from standard tests of the attainment of pupils by the age of eleven provides a basis for

grouping pupils by ability, and the results of regular tests are scrutinised to ensure that each pupil is in the most appropriate group.

- 34 Assessment is well used in a number of subjects, for example, English, history and art and design. In these subjects there is regular, accurate assessment and target setting for individual pupils so that they are aware of the progress they make and what to do to improve. Good systems have been developed in science, geography and music. In general, only pupils in Year 9 and Year 11 know their target grade, although in most subjects any significant piece of work is carefully marked and its level of attainment assessed. All such marks are carefully recorded, and a number of departments have developed a spreadsheet that collates this information for each pupil, providing an accessible overview of the individual's performance in comparison with the target grade. However, in a number of subjects assessment is not fully used to guide teaching and to get the best out of pupils. There is no system for assessing pupils' levels of attainment in citizenship, and in physical education, no target grades are set, nor is the system clearly related to National Curriculum levels of attainment. In ICT there is no system for assessing the attainment of those pupils who do not have lessons in the subject in Years 10 and 11.
- 35 Not all departments check closely enough to ensure consistency in the systems of assessing work and the level of advice to pupils on how to improve on an individual basis. In most subjects, however, pupils have opportunities for self-assessment. Since the previous inspection, the school has improved assessment systems satisfactorily.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is unsatisfactory in that the school's arrangements for the teaching of citizenship in Years 7 to 11 and for ICT in Years 10 to 11 do not fulfil statutory requirements. Otherwise the curriculum is well-planned and provides a good range of courses that meets the pupils' needs and helps them to achieve well. Provision for special educational needs is very good. Opportunities for learning and activities beyond the school day are good as is the provision. Staffing and accommodation are adequate but there are not enough books in the library and insufficient computers throughout the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- A good range of learning courses for pupils of all abilities and aptitudes in Years 10 and 11, including good and expanding vocational provision, meets pupils' individual needs well.
- The school does not fulfil statutory requirements for ICT in Years 10 and 11 and for citizenship across the school, and not all pupils achieve the standard they should in these subjects.
- The pupils' experiences are enriched by a good programme of extra curricular activities.
- Subject planning is good with real strengths in English, history and art and design.
- There are not enough computers or books in the library and access to computers across a number of subjects is restricted.

### **Commentary**

- 36 There are many good features in the school's curriculum. However, the lack of statutory compliance with regard to the teaching of citizenship in all years and of ICT in Years 10 to 11 is an unsatisfactory feature. Though improvements have been made since the last inspection in teaching ICT to pupils in Years 7 to 9 and in developing an optional accredited course in Years 10 and 11, the full National Curriculum programme of study for ICT is still not taught to all pupils in Years 10 and 11.
- 37 There are strengths in the breadth of courses available for Year 10 and 11 pupils in this relatively small school, confirming the intent to develop an innovative curriculum. In science, pupils take a very wide a range of courses. There are accredited vocational courses at

GCSE in science and ICT. Year 11 pupils take accredited off-site work-related courses in construction and Year 10 pupils follow a "taster" vocational course before specializing in Year 11. The school has plans for expanding its vocational courses. High expectations support good equality of opportunity so examination entry rates and success are above average. There is good provision for careers education and guidance. A personal, social and health education programme, including aspects of sex, health and careers education, makes a good contribution to the development of the pupils' mature and confident attitudes.

- 38 Curriculum planning in subjects is good with strengths in English, history and art. There are weaknesses in the planning of the resistant materials courses throughout the school.
- 39 Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the National Curriculum and all statutory requirements are met. Pupils with the greatest difficulties receive good support in small withdrawal groups where they learn to improve their reading and other basic skills. There is very good provision for Year 10 and 11 pupils in the form of specialised courses and work placements. There are limited opportunities to use ICT programmes to support their learning.
- 40 The school effectively enriches its curriculum with good opportunities for extra curricular activities and for learning outside the school day. Participation in the arts is good with strengths in drama that are greatly valued by the pupils. Participation in sport is good in terms of competitive sport but recreational activities for boys require expansion. The school supports learning through a wide range of revision classes; a good range of trips in subjects such as history, geography and modern foreign languages; and a number of other recreational and educational clubs such as ICT and chess. Pupils confirm there is a good range of activities available. Pupils' regular participation in the activities considerably enhances their opportunities for success. However, the school is not monitoring closely enough the extent and rate of participation in this good provision.

### **Staffing, accommodation and resources**

- 41 The match of teachers to the curriculum is good overall. It is very good in English, science, art and history. Teachers have a wide range of experience and expertise, and five advanced skills teachers make a strong contribution to the quality of provision. Few staff leave and staff turnover rate is low. Teaching assistants are especially effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs. There is a shortage of technical support in design and technology, particularly in resistant materials.
- 42 Accommodation is very good in science and includes two new laboratories. It is good in music and ICT, and satisfactory elsewhere apart from physical education where there are poor indoor facilities. Indoor working areas for physical education are small and a low ceiling restricts improvement in games such as badminton. Accommodation is limited in English because there are not enough specialist rooms. Despite recent improvements in the provision of ICT, resources are unsatisfactory overall. There is less than the expected number of computers in the school and access to them in a number of subjects is limited. Library facilities are insufficient to enhance learning effectively.

### **Care, guidance and support**

Arrangements to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good. The school provides good support, advice and guidance and involves pupils well in its work and development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Links with external agencies are very good and pupils who are facing particular problems enjoy ready access to expert advice and guidance.



- An effective mentoring system provided by teachers across the school gives pupils in Years 10 and 11 good academic support and guidance.
- Day-to-day welfare procedures are very good.
- Well-planned and thoughtful induction procedures help incoming Year 7 pupils to settle quickly.
- Procedures for seeking pupils' views are effective.
- Pupils have good access to impartial guidance and careers information when selecting their options for Years 10 and 11 and when deciding what to do when they leave school.

## Commentary

- 43 Pupils are very well looked after during the school day and the standard of personal care is high. Close links with a wide range of external agencies enable the school to tap into a very good network of specialist support and this complements the school's internal systems very well. Child protection and health and safety procedures are comprehensive and well understood by all members of staff.
- 44 During discussions, pupils of all ages speak warmly of their teachers and other members of staff. Working relationships are very good and pupils trust the adults around them. They appreciate the way that teachers always make time for them and say that there is always someone to whom they can turn if they need personal advice or support.
- 45 Liaison with contributing primary schools is close and pupils in Year 7 speak appreciatively of the support they received when they first arrived. Many Year 5 and 6 pupils visit the school and, by the time they arrive at the start of Year 7, they will have already become familiar with the buildings and some of their new teachers. Incoming pupils are linked with older pupils and they receive individual support with their reading. Through the 'Listening Links' scheme, Year 10 pupils run lunchtime 'drop-in' sessions for anyone who has a particular problem. These sensitive and very well thought-out induction procedures help pupils to settle quickly and get off to a flying start.
- 46 Sound assessment procedures, along with thorough and constructive marking, enable teachers to provide pupils with good academic support. Each pupil in Years 10 and 11 is linked to a teacher, with whom they regularly meet in order to review their progress and to set targets for the future. In addition, pupils who are not doing as well as they could receive more frequent support and advice from their designated mentor. Pupils feel well supported and this gives them confidence; this contributes towards their very positive attitudes towards learning.
- 47 Procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs and bringing any concerns to the attention of the special needs co-ordinator are very secure. Individual education plans to support pupils' learning are of good quality, identifying suitable targets which pupils are involved in setting themselves. Teaching assistants are well deployed and give very effective support.
- 48 The school actively seeks pupils' views and circulates an annual questionnaire. Pupils and their parents are pleased with many areas of the school's work but a significant number expressed dissatisfaction with the state of the pupils' toilets. The school is well aware of their concerns and intends to improve these facilities as soon as practicable. In addition, the recently established school council has been able to influence aspects of school life such as the range of food sold at lunchtime and the installation of mirrors in the pupils' toilets.
- 49 Teachers provide pupils with good information about courses they can follow in Years 10 and 11. In addition, pupils visit an annual careers convention and an 'Industry day' that features numerous local companies. The majority of pupils transfer to Herefordshire Sixth Form College and they are able to undertake a wide range of courses. Work experience placements at the start of Year 11 also give pupils a very good insight into the world of work.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and the local community are very good. Links with other schools and colleges of further education are very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents make an outstanding contribution to their children's learning at home and at school.
- The quality of information provided for parents is very good. The school keeps them very well informed about day-to-day events, the curriculum and their children's progress.
- Parents hold the school in high esteem and there is little they would like to change.
- Links with the community make a very good contribution to pupils' personal development and to school improvement.
- Links with other schools and sixth form colleges enrich the curriculum and strongly support pupils' personal development.

### Commentary

- 50 Parents are very interested in their children's education and they provide exceptionally good support. They ensure that their children attend very regularly and try to avoid taking holidays during the school term. Links with parents of pupils with special educational needs are especially close and their attendance at review meetings is very good. By involving parents so closely, the school has created a strong network of support. This helps to put these pupils in a position where they are able to commit themselves fully to their studies and produce work that is well above the expected standard. Activities organised by the school association are very well supported and significant sums of money are raised to provide, for example, additional learning resources and to help fund overseas trips.
- 51 As part of the inspection process, parents were asked to complete a questionnaire. Analysis of their responses shows that there are no particular areas of concern. Parents are especially pleased with the school's strong work ethic and the good progress their children make.
- 52 From the moment their children arrive in Year 7, to the time when they leave at the end of Year 11, parents receive very comprehensive written and verbal information on all aspects of school life. Parents receive interesting newsletters as well as comprehensive annual reports and interim bulletins; these provide a good picture of how their children are getting along. Parents can also obtain general information through the school website and teachers are always willing to see parents if they request a meeting. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed about their children's progress and are fully consulted and involved in annual reviews.
- 53 The school's new status as a specialist school for science is helping it to expand the already strong links with contributing primary and other secondary and special schools. There are many valuable opportunities for pupils, parents and the wider community. For example, teachers visit the main contributing primary schools and advise teachers on particular aspects of English, mathematics and science. They also help to teach Year 5 and 6 pupils and this helps everyone to get to know each other well before the start of Year 7. Local companies provide mentors who help to deliver the careers programme. They advise pupils on their future options, including practical guidance on, for example, their interview and telephone technique. This support is valued highly and their contribution encourages pupils to have high aspirations for the future.
- 54 The school works very closely with several other secondary schools, as well as Herefordshire Sixth Form College. Members of staff meet regularly and these very constructive links enrich the curriculum and extend the range of opportunities available.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are good. The head teacher sets high standards and provides very good leadership. He is well supported by a very able deputy. The leadership of other key staff is good. Governance is good and management, though good in many respects, is satisfactory overall. Statutory requirements are not met for teaching citizenship across the school and ICT to all pupils in Years 10 and 11.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very strong Christian ethos is created by leaders and supported by all staff such that it pervades all parts of the school's work.
- The headteacher is ambitious and effective in terms of pupils' achievement and well being.
- Governors are highly committed to the school and have a good understanding of the work of the school.
- Clear strategic planning is well focused on maintaining high standards and improving the quality of learning for pupils.
- The leadership team are not rigorous enough in identifying where improvements are needed and ensuring improvements are carried out in some subjects.
- Performance management arrangements work well providing opportunities for staff development.
- The quality of management of subjects is inconsistent.
- Initial teacher training is well managed within the school.

### Commentary

#### Governance

55 A highly committed governing body provides very good support for the headteacher's vision for the school. Many governors are involved in the school's work on a day-to-day basis. The well established system of linking governors to departments enables them to talk to heads of department regularly and find out through direct experience how the school works. A good level of expertise amongst governors helps them to ask critical questions of managers and hold the school to account for spending and educational decisions. For example, the governors were not satisfied with the targets set for GCSE and insisted on having the targets broken down to ensure that the effect of recently introduced vocational examinations on overall results would be clearly evident. Governors have had a positive influence on the school's long term development, for example, giving much support to the successful bid for science college status. They have given much support to the purchase of a residential building by a separate board of trustees, enabling the school to expand in response to its increasing popularity. The governing body fulfils most of its statutory responsibilities but, despite significant improvement since the last inspection, not all pupils in Years 10 and 11 receive their statutory entitlement to the full programme of study for ICT and citizenship is not taught in sufficient depth to fully meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.

#### Leadership

56 The headteacher provides strong and committed leadership that successfully maintains a focus on raising academic standards and providing a caring and supportive Christian environment for all pupils. There is a clear focus on improving the quality of learning and teaching and maintaining high standards through the systems of strategic planning, self-evaluation, performance management and professional development. Alongside this, there is a longer term view of how the school can develop within the community and this has led to the school's successful bid for science college status and the development of a nearby residence to enable the school to expand.

57 The head has created groups of competent leaders in the three leadership groups. These groups, together with leaders of subjects and pastoral areas, have a clear understanding of

their roles and are increasingly taking responsibility for maintaining high standards and improving the quality of provision in their areas. However, the effect of leadership across subjects has been variable and in design and technology, citizenship, ICT and physical education not as much has been achieved as might be expected.

- 58 The school is committed to providing education for all pupils whatever their background, beliefs or social circumstances. A good proportion of pupils, though from homes of broadly Christian beliefs, are not necessarily of the Roman Catholic faith. A number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and of totally different faiths. The school accepts a number of pupils from other schools who have lost interest in education and are in danger of not attending. The school has been successful in providing courses that are relevant to their interests and needs and consequently pupils have maintained an interest in their education and futures. Considerable efforts are made to develop choices within the curriculum in order to provide for all pupils, especially in Years 10 and 11. The increasing range of vocational courses offered both within the school, and in partnership with local colleges, is an example of the school's commitment to providing education to meet all pupils' needs.

### **Management**

- 59 The school's systems for reaching decisions, devolving responsibility and ensuring good communication are satisfactory. The three teams which manage the day-to-day running of the school, as well as long term planning and development, work efficiently. Interested members of staff are able to join the curriculum team and thus opportunities are provided for regular in-house staff development.
- 60 Performance data are used well to support, monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in most subject areas and have led to good teaching, learning and achievement in these areas. The headteacher and deputy headteacher undertake reviews of the work of departments which involve analysis of examination data and observation of teaching. However, though successful in some areas of the school in identifying what needs to be improved, the arrangements for review are not frequent enough, nor rigorous enough to ensure that areas in need of improvement are recognized and followed up with effective action quickly enough. Review and self-evaluation are not carried out consistently by heads of subject or other staff with leadership roles. Consequently the tasks fall mainly on the headteacher and deputy and this lessens the opportunity for regular and rigorous review. As a result, whole school developments are not consistently implemented. For example; the use of assessment is not consistent across subjects; the development of pupils' mathematical skills is not systematically planned for across subjects.
- 61 Good performance management systems are in place. Targets are linked to school and subject priorities and have led to improvements, for example, in improving staff confidence in using ICT. A well organized programme of staff development linked to the school's priorities, benefits from much internal expertise among the staff and is contributing to improving teaching.
- 62 The school is a leadership school for Initial Teacher Training and arrangements have benefited developments in teaching, learning and lesson structure throughout the school. The school benefits from the arrangements in that a good number of trainee teachers stay on. Newly qualified teachers and new teachers are well supported by a thorough programme of induction.
- 63 The quality of leadership and management in subject areas is inconsistent. Departments such as English, drama, science, geography, history and art are very well managed, but in other departments, such as citizenship, design and technology, ICT for all pupils and physical education, leadership and management have been less effective.
- 64 The leadership and management of special educational needs provision in the school is very good. The progress of pupils is carefully monitored as they move through the school and

regular testing leads to effective intervention. Very good liaison with the English department ensures that pupils' literacy skills are very well developed. Statutory requirements are fully met. Staff development is good for both assistants and teachers. Teaching assistants are well deployed and are well monitored. However, they do not sufficiently measure pupils' progress in lessons against the targets set out for them in their individual education plans.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1917078	Balance from previous year	-24666
Total expenditure	1880984	Balance carried forward to the next	-51343
Expenditure per pupil	2880		

- 65 Financial management is good. Procedures for day-to-day management are robust, ably led by the new business manager. Budget monitoring is carried out regularly by the senior staff and governors. Financial planning is good and includes long-term forecasting by the headteacher, which will enable the school to reduce its budget deficit gradually over the next three years. Expenditure is closely linked to school priorities and monies allocated for specific purposes such as special educational needs are spent appropriately. The principles of best value are applied effectively. The school compares its performance with other schools within the local education authority and with similar schools throughout the country. It consults well with pupils, staff and parents: for example, parents were involved in extensive consultations over specialist college status and the acquisition of Lugwardine Court; pupils were involved in interviews for appointing new caterers. The school explores alternatives to find the most effective way of addressing priorities; for example, whether to invest in interactive white boards or laptop computers for teachers. It rigorously seeks best value for major purchases and follows the local education authority procedures for competitive tendering.
- 66 The cost of running the school is broadly average; pupils are relatively advantaged and come with positive attitudes and above average standards. They achieve well academically and develop into mature and responsible young people. The school therefore provides good value for money.

**OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES**

**RESOURCED PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is **very good**.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils make very good progress and achieve very well.
- The resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed and, with shared expertise, leadership is good, and very good in Years 7 to 9.
- Assessment arrangements are very good.
- All pupils are fully accepted and well integrated within the school.
- Teaching assistants provide strong support, and work well as part of a team.
- ICT is not used enough to support learning in lessons.
- Practical skills and creative activities are not developed well enough, particularly music, to enhance all-round personal growth.

**Commentary**

- 67 The school identifies 18 pupils for specific resourced provision; ages range throughout the school, the majority being boys. The school copes well with the complex nature of their particular needs, which include varying degrees of general or specific learning difficulties. Other problems relate to speech and language, hearing and visual impairment, movement, social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties, with additional medical aspects affecting learning in some cases. All pupils have statements of educational need. Pupils have access to all areas of the National Curriculum within mainstream classes, though English and mathematics groups are taught in two base rooms and classes include other pupils with special educational needs in the school. These classes are taken by the two highly skilled specialist teachers, who share responsibilities.
- 68 Pupils achieve very well against their own targets and make very good progress. Average standards are sometimes gained in aspects of English, science and mathematics in Years 7 to 9 and at GCSE in some subjects. Pupils achieve better standards in practical or creative projects, such as drama and art. Overall, these standards reflect very good achievement for these pupils. Older pupils do well on link courses with the College for Further Education and the Agricultural College. Pupils do well in an accredited Award Scheme involving a personalised skills' development programme. Older pupils take part in regular work experience in the community. Pupils are entered for tests and examinations as appropriate, with additional help as needed, such as a reader or a scribe or extra time. Most pupils take a pride in their written work and present it neatly.
- 69 The quality of teaching observed in the base room and in the main school for both younger and older pupils was very good, with staff knowing individual needs well and stimulating pupils to try hard and make every effort to learn. Teachers are strongly backed by education support staff, who carefully record and report on each aspect of behaviour and learning. Close co-operation between all staff ensures consistency and strongly promotes personal development as well as subject learning. High expectations engender maximum effort and a desire to learn. Modified work is suitable and creates interest and better understanding, as was seen in a Year 9 science lesson on reproduction. Planning is very good and assessment is thorough. Staff insist on high standards of behaviour. Pupils show respect and relationships are very good.
- 70 The resourced provision is very well managed to ensure that all pupils have access to the National Curriculum and are fully included in school life. The very good assessment procedures and close monitoring of achievement and progress help to maintain pupils' high levels of commitment. Staff throughout the school fully co-operate. Regular meetings and feedbacks between departments and personnel occur. Careful records are kept and all aspects of annual reviews are attended to thoroughly. Parental support is appreciated; contact with parents is ongoing. Leadership is good overall and is shared by the two teachers in charge, who are also the school's co-ordinators for special educational needs, so links are maintained across the school. All staff are involved in writing work plans to match pupils' different learning needs. All staff contribute to effective individual education programmes, which are overseen by the co-ordinators and regularly reviewed.
- 71 Visiting professionals give additional help to some pupils. Regular support from the teacher for the hearing impaired and learning support service is greatly valued. Advice for helping pupils with movement, sight and speech problems has also been given and acted upon. There remains close contact with the educational psychologist and outside agencies. Social skills programmes are important; personal development is high on the agenda. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties have particularly benefited from this input. Great improvements have been shown in this respect. Careers education programmes are also highly beneficial.
- 72 Little use is made of ICT to support learning in lessons and this needs to be a priority. A good sense of team-work is evident and the full support of the head teacher, governors and all staff strengthens the work undertaken and enables pupils to achieve. The school copes well with a

range of special educational needs. The Resourced Provision, as such, was not reported at the last inspection.

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

## SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4

### ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

#### English

Provision in English is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results are consistently well above average in Year 9 national tests and at GCSE. 2003 GCSE results were outstanding.
- Achievement is very good as a result of very good teaching which enthuses and motivates the pupils.
- The leadership of the department is outstanding.
- The teachers' excellent team-work and very high expectations of each other and of the pupils result in very challenging teaching.
- Some of the best practice requires extension throughout the department.
- Resources and arrangements for accommodation require improvement.

	Years 7 to 9	Years 10 to 11	Overall
Achievement	Very good	Very good	Very good
Standards of work seen	Well above average	Well above average	Well above average
National tests and GCSE 2003	Well above average	Well above average	
Teaching	Very good	Very good	Very good
Learning	Very good	Very good	Very good
Leadership	Excellent		
Management	Very good		
Changes in effectiveness since the previous inspection	Very good		

#### Commentary

- 73 Pupils have above average standards in English when they join the school in Year 7. Results in the 2003 end of Year 9 national tests were well above average, as they have been since 1998. The pupils did significantly better than might have been expected. In the 2003 GCSE English examination the proportion gaining A\* to C grades was well above average. Results were also well above average in 2002. In 2002 and 2003 the proportion at grades A\* and A grades was over thirty percent, significantly above the national average. A small group took the non GCSE Certificate of Achievement; all gained distinction. In literature the results were also very high in relation to pupils nationally from an entry rate broadly in line with the national average.
- 74 Standards in Years 9 and 11 are well above average, matching previous results in national test and examinations. Pupils' achievement is very good. Although reading, speaking and listening standards are well above average it is the quality of the pupils' writing that secures their very good achievement. Almost half of Year 9 pupils write with the skills associated with the higher levels. They organise extended pieces effectively; punctuate and spell accurately;



and express themselves with engaging phrasing that commands interest. Others are less mature in their phrasing and less accurate in spelling and punctuation, but organise their work clearly to reach average standards. A few are below average because of more frequent errors. However, middle and lower attaining pupils make very good progress in their reading, and are able, for instance, to identify rapidly, how features of news reports are structured.

- 75 In Year 11, writing is a significant strength. The course work of about forty percent of the pupils is consistently at grades A\* and A. Middle attaining pupils increase the length and detail of their writing and show secure knowledge and understanding of the texts they study. Few are not working at the standards associated with at least a grade C. A small number are taking the entry level course. They make very good progress on a course well-matched to their abilities. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of very good support, teaching and curriculum planning. The planning for the development of ICT is very good but its impact is undermined because of a lack of access to computers. The subject's contribution to numeracy skills is satisfactory. Pupils learning English as an additional language progress at the same rate as other pupils because they receive very good support and teachers recognise their needs.
- 76 The quality of teaching and learning is very good with some excellent features. The teachers' considerable subject expertise and their high level of expectations ensure that lessons are characterised by pace and challenge. Right from the start of Year 7 pupils are frequently required to complete extended pieces of writing in a range of styles and formats. The marking of the work is very good. It specifically identifies strengths and weaknesses. The best practice uses level and grade criteria frequently so that pupils are focused on their targets and know how to achieve them. Progress is monitored closely. However, these effective procedures are not securely in place throughout all classes. Each lesson comprises a busy menu of activities linked to secure learning objectives. These are not always shared with the children explicitly enough or reviewed enough both during and at the end of lessons. The teachers convey great enthusiasm and passion for their subject which enthuses and encourages the pupils. During lessons pupils of all attainments are very responsive when answering questions. Although the teachers exemplify clearly how to improve there are many opportunities for pair and group work so enhancing the pupils' independence. Teaching methods are inventive and imaginative including excellent team teaching.

**An example of outstanding practice in teaching and learning in a Year 11 GCSE English where three groups were brought together and taught by three teachers.**

A Year 11 lesson on the GCSE anthology poem "Not My Business" perfectly encapsulated the department's exceptional teamwork and innovative approach. Three groups were brought together in the drama studio with their teachers. One teacher outlined crisply the learning aims. An immensely powerful role play by three pupils crystallised the poem's theme on the penalty of indifference. Another teacher "hot-seated" a character to draw out further insights. A rapidly managed brainstorm led to pupils in pairs recalling their personal experience of the poem's issues which they and their teachers shared. Despite there being about a hundred present there was a powerful mood of honest personal reflection and mutual sharing. Another teacher led a conventional question and answer session on the poem. While annotating the text, pupils answered questions revealing a high degree of divergent and convergent, conceptual thinking. All remained focused. The lesson closed with a final and no less powerful devised piece from other pupils, again including "hot seating". This broadened the issues and provided clear links to the following lesson. All left with their intellectual and emotional understanding of the text's issues and its use of literary devices considerably deepened: an inspiring experience.

- 77 The leadership of the head of department is excellent. Principled vision is shared by colleagues. The quality of teamwork is outstanding as shown by the high degree of collaboration in the revised schemes of work and the highly successful collaborative teaching. The department is very well managed but the monitoring of the best initiatives requires additional rigour. Although teaching and learning are varied and exciting, some innovative methods are constrained because of shortcomings in accommodation and equipment. The department's books require updating. The library does not include sufficient books of either fiction or non fiction. Not enough hours are allocated to ensure it is always

supervised enough to promote independent learning. Since the previous inspection there has been very good improvement in results, teaching, learning and departmental leadership.

### Language and literacy across the curriculum

- 78 The standards of language and literacy skills across all subjects are well above average. Pupils write confidently and accurately at length. Their speaking and listening skills are assured and fluent. They have a good range of higher order reading skills that allows them to gain access to information quickly. Those with lower reading ages are well-supported through targeted programmes and make very good progress.
- 79 The overall provision for literacy is good. History provides a good model for other subjects. In history, pupils read texts of different styles and also write in different contexts; preparation for writing is very thorough with teachers effectively developing the impact and quality of the pupils' writing; there are good opportunities for discussion. In other subjects most make good provision for the development of speaking and listening skills and for the use of key vocabulary. However, in design technology and physical education literacy skills are not dealt with explicitly enough. The whole school development of literacy is well led by the co-ordinator. Effective monitoring has not been fully established but there are plans to improve this.

### Modern Foreign Languages

German is taken by high attaining pupils only, beginning in Year 9. They make very good progress using a recently published textbook aimed specifically at their needs. Two lessons of German were sampled, one in Year 9 and one in Year 10. Pupils' achievement in Year 9 was very good because they were learning very well independently and they were stimulated and challenged in learning a second foreign language. Standards were better than is usually found during the first term of learning a new language. Teaching and learning were good in Year 9 and very good in Year 10. Year 10 pupils were making very good progress towards high standards at GCSE. Such standards have been reached in the last two years, when over 90 per cent of the candidates gained grades A\* to C. This represents very good achievement in the three years of the course.

Provision in French is **good**.

	Years 7 to 9	Years 10 to 11	Overall
Achievement	Good	Good	Good
Standards of work seen	Above average	Above average	Above average
GCSE results 2003	-	Above average	-
Teaching	Good	Good	Good
Learning	Good	Good	Good
Leadership	Satisfactory		
Management	Satisfactory		
Changes in effectiveness since the previous inspection	Satisfactory		

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently good and was very good in a third of the lessons seen.
- Standards are above the national average and pupils' personal development is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well taught.
- Assessment, though satisfactory, is not used well enough to influence individual pupils' learning.
- Limited access to ICT limits pupils' achievement.

## Commentary

- 80 In 2003, about two thirds of the Year 11 pupils took GCSE in a modern foreign language. Just over half of those who took French gained a grade C or better, and the lowest grade was F. Girls did better than boys, as they did nationally. These results were, however, not as good as those achieved in 2002 when results were well above the national average. In Year 9 in 2003, teachers' assessments were well above average, though the diverse nature of groups in the current Year 10 means that standards are not quite so high.
- 81 Teachers have high levels of experience and commitment, which promote good learning. They use their languages effectively in lessons. Year 9 pupils with special educational needs are amongst those who benefit most from being taught in French. They find writing difficult, but nevertheless speak French as well as average pupils because teachers encourage much talk in the foreign language and this develops confidence. Teachers' expectations regarding both work and behaviour are high, and pupils respond well. By the end of Year 9, pupils of average attainment and above are conversant with a range of tenses and use these in speaking and writing. Very good teaching of pupils with special educational needs results in pupils learning to build phrases easily by using language as building blocks. All pupils, including those learning English as an additional language, respond well to techniques such as guessing games.
- 82 In French in Years 10 and 11, the structure of the modular GCSE course supports the learning of the majority of pupils well, through regular on-going assessment of pupils' work. Pupils achieve well in Year 11 because they learn exactly what they need to do to pass the examination. Some high attaining pupils are not learning enough, are insufficiently challenged and could read more widely.
- 83 Though assessment materials are used, there is too little opportunity for teachers to set targets and to monitor pupils' progress towards them. The lack of access to ICT referred to in the previous report has not improved enough. The importance of ICT in modern foreign languages teaching has not been fully recognized and ICT is underdeveloped as a support for learning. For this reason progress since the previous inspection is not better than satisfactory, despite rising standards and the maintenance of good teaching. An effective team is established but there is insufficient opportunity to make regular checks on teaching and learning and to promote the sharing of best practice.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in Years 7, 8 and 9, and pupils achieve well.
- Assessment in class and end of unit tests are used well to inform teaching and to help pupils improve; however the quality of marking is variable.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good and pupils behave well.
- Recent disruption in the continuity of staffing has had an effect on standards and during the inspection only 2 of the 4 full-time staff were in school.

- GCSE results are improving and are well above average but are still not as good as in many subjects including science and English.
- Systems to check on the quality of teaching and learning are insufficiently developed.
- The range of teaching strategies is too limited and there is insufficient use of ICT to support learning.

	Years 7 to 9	Years 10 to 11	Overall
Achievement	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Standards of work seen	Above average	Above average	Above average
National tests and GCSE in 2003	Above average	Well above average	-
Teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Learning	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Leadership	Satisfactory		
Management	Satisfactory		
Changes in effectiveness since the previous inspection	Good		

### Commentary

- 84 In 2003, results in National Curriculum tests in mathematics at the end of Year 9 were above average compared with the country as a whole, and also above average when compared with similar schools. The results of higher attaining pupils were well above average compared with similar schools. Results over the past four years have improved in line with the national trend. Standards seen in Years 7 to 9 are also above average, with both girls and boys achieving well. By Year 9 all pupils have a basic knowledge of geometry and algebra; higher attaining pupils apply their knowledge of geometry to 3-dimensional problems and use a variety of methods to solve equations. Standards of numeracy are above average overall, but they are lower than expected in some lower attaining groups. This limits the progress of some pupils.
- 85 The proportion of pupils gaining A\* to C grades in GCSE in 2003 was well above average when compared with all schools and with schools with pupils of similar prior attainment (based on the 2003 Autumn package comparisons). All pupils in the year were entered for GCSE and almost all achieved a graded result. The number of pupils achieving a higher grade (A\* to C) increased significantly from the previous year, with a much higher percentage of A\* and A grades. More boys than girls achieved a higher grade. Coursework on statistics was of a high standard and very well presented with accurate graphs, neat tabulation of results and good evaluation. Despite these improvements in 2003, results in mathematics are not yet as good as many other subjects including science and English.
- 86 Standards in the current Years 10 and 11 are above average and are not as high as the previous year's GCSE results would suggest. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Year 10 pupils are competent in the handling of discrete and continuous data and understand the concept of simple correlation. By Year 11 pupils have consolidated their knowledge and understanding of number, algebra and geometry, but, because there is insufficient challenge in some lessons, attainment is limited. Pupils are articulate and can explain their reasoning. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory overall and has been affected by staff absence.
- 87 The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is also good in Years 7, 8 and 9, and satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. Smaller teaching groups aid pupils' progress. Gifted and talented pupils achieve similarly to other pupils. A number of Year 7, 8, 9 and 10 pupils competed successfully in a regional Maths Challenge.

- 88 In Years 7, 8 and 9 teaching is good overall, and some is very good; in Years 10 and 11 it is satisfactory. Lessons are well planned, building on prior learning. Teachers use questioning skilfully to develop understanding and pupils are given opportunities to discuss their methods and explore alternatives. The new interactive white boards are used effectively to prepare board work in advance and hence ensure good use of time in the lessons. Their use with mathematical software is not yet developed. The Key Stage 3 National Strategy is only partly implemented; most lessons in Years 7, 8 and 9 begin with a starter activity, but these are not well developed. The sets of individual white boards are rarely used. As a result, there is insufficient emphasis on numeracy skills with middle to lower attaining pupils. Teachers share the objectives of the lessons with their pupils and most lessons conclude with a short plenary session to reinforce what has been learnt. Teachers employ a limited range of teaching strategies, relying heavily on the textbook scheme as their main resource. In some lessons, the textbook is followed so methodically that there is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11. Teachers rarely use ICT to extend pupils' learning, and opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematics are limited. Assessment is used well in class to motivate and to inform teaching. Regular end of unit tests inform pupils of how well they are doing compared to the class average. Homework is set regularly and usually marked; however, some higher attaining pupils in Year 11 have not had their books marked for several weeks. Teachers set and maintain high standards of behaviour and relationships are very good. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and are very well motivated. They take a pride in their work and set it out neatly and accurately.
- 89 The department's development plan focuses appropriately on raising achievement, and includes the introduction of a thinking skills programme in Year 7. Schemes of work are currently being reviewed to match the textbook scheme. There are insufficient checks on the quality of teaching and learning. Some classroom observation took place last year, but neither teachers' lesson plans and records, nor pupils' work are systematically checked. Consequently, opportunities to share best practice and to identify where work needs to be improved are missed. Currently there is a lack of leadership in the department as the head of department is on sick leave and there is no appointed deputy. Departmental records are accessible and teachers use the information on pupils' prior attainment to set individual pupil targets and to track pupil progress. The department is well resourced overall, but there is limited access to the ICT suites.
- 90 Since the last inspection, standards have risen. GCSE results are now well above average, with significantly more pupils obtaining higher grades. High standards in Years 7, 8 and 9 have been maintained. The department is now well resourced with textbooks, graphic calculators and interactive white boards. There is still insufficient use of ICT by pupils.

#### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

- 91 Standards of mathematics across the curriculum are above average overall, though numeracy skills of some lower attaining pupils are lower than expected. All teachers received training on the use and teaching of mathematics across the curriculum eighteen months ago but there has been little follow up and there is currently no whole school approach to mathematics. There is good planning for the teaching of mathematics in science, history and geography. Other subjects make a contribution to pupils' mathematics skills, when the need to use mathematics arises, but this is not planned systematically.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

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

- National test results at the end of Year 9 and GCSE results are well above average.
- Teaching and learning are very good, leading to very good achievement.

- Accommodation and resources are very good and enhance learning.
- The use of data-logging equipment by pupils is not fully developed.
- The systems used for marking pupils' work vary across the department.
- Links with external agencies could be improved.

	Years 7 to 9	Years 10 to 11	Overall
Achievement	Very good	Very good	Very good
Standards of work seen	Well above average	Well above average	Well above average
National tests and GCSE 2003	Well above average	Well above average	
Teaching	Very good	Very good	Very good
Learning	Very good	Very good	Very good
Leadership	Very good		
Management	Very good		
Changes in effectiveness since the previous inspection	Good		

## Commentary

- 92 National test results at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were well above the national average and the average for schools with pupils of similar prior attainment. The school's targets were exceeded. The dual award results and those for pupils taking the separate sciences at GCSE level in 2003 were also well above average. The pupils who sat the separate science examinations achieved 100 per cent success in achieving A\* to C grades. All pupils who followed the entry level course achieved a distinction. There has been a good overall improvement in all examination results since the last inspection. The comparative performance of boys and girls has varied from year to year.
- 93 Standards of work seen during the inspection are well above average in all years and the achievement of pupils is very good, including those with special educational needs, due to the very good support that they receive in lessons. Pupils in Year 9 carry out food tests and explain the need for a balanced diet, whilst Year 11 pupils discuss the effects of temperature on the rate of chemical reactions. The written work of all pupils is of a high standard and shows evidence of very good literacy skills. Pupils are well behaved during lessons and rise to challenging questions. They handle apparatus with confidence and display very good investigative skills in all years. They listen attentively and remain on task during written and practical work.
- 94 Teaching is very good overall in all years and pupils learn well because of this. Lessons are well prepared and contain a variety of activities, which maintains the interest of pupils. Number skills are successfully practised in the use of scientific formulae and the drawing of graphs appropriate to the science curriculum. Attention is paid to literacy, with emphasis on new terminology. The use of ICT has been underdeveloped, until recently, due to a shortage of equipment. Lessons are well prepared and teachers have sound subject knowledge, enabling them to give clear explanations to pupils to enhance their learning. Work is always matched to the needs of the pupils. Homework is set on a regular basis and is used to reinforce work covered in lessons. Pupils' work is carefully marked and annotated with clear guidance on areas for improvement but is inconsistent in style across the department. Assessment and target setting are good and regular testing takes place.
- 95 The department is very well led and managed and the newly appointed head of department has a clear sense of direction and is keen to continue improving standards and results. Assessment, recording and monitoring are good. Accommodation and resources are very good and the department is already benefiting from the recently awarded Specialist Science

College status. There are very good links with primary schools, although links with external agencies such as local industries could be fostered and would be appropriate for the new Applied Science course. The department receives good technical support. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and the same high standards have been maintained.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **unsatisfactory** overall, though provision is good in Years 7 to 9, and in Years 10 and 11 where pupils are taught ICT as a separate subject. (See the section on Business and other Vocational Courses for a full report on the GNVQ ICT course)

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 9 are above average and pupils are achieving well.
- GNVQ examination results in 2003 were well above average; the achievement of pupils who take this course is good.
- Where pupils are taught ICT as a separate subject, teaching is good and they learn well.
- Pupils bring very positive attitudes to their work.
- Access to computers outside lessons is very good.
- For pupils who do not take an examination course in Years 10 and 11, standards are below average and they are underachieving.
- Not all pupils in Years 10 and 11 are being taught the full National Curriculum in ICT.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects.

	Years 7 to 9	Years 10 to 11	Overall
Achievement	Good	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Standards of work seen	Above average	Below average	Below average
Teacher assessment of Year 9 pupils and GNVQ 2003 for around one third of Year 11 pupils.	Average	Well above average	
Teaching	Good	Good – for pupils taught ICT as a separate subject	Good
Learning	Good	Good – for pupils taught ICT as a separate subject	Good
Leadership	Good	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Management	Good	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Changes in effectiveness since the previous inspection	Good	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory

### Commentary

96 Standards of work seen in Year 9 are above average. The full National Curriculum is now being taught and results in national tests in 2004 are expected to be an improvement on 2003 when not all elements of the National Curriculum had been taught. Both boys and girls create good quality presentations for particular audiences using above average skills in the use of word processing and desktop publishing software. They manipulate data through the use of spreadsheets and databases and illustrate the outcomes in charts and graphs. They have a clear understanding of electronic communication and use their school e-mail addresses to good effect.

- 97 Given their starting point in Year 7 pupils are achieving well, acquiring a good range of skills and the knowledge and understanding of how these skills can be used to support their learning in every subject. By Year 11, standards for those pupils who continue with the examination course in ICT, around one third, are above average and they continue to achieve well. Basic skills are above average. Their design work in improving the efficiency of business enterprises by analysing problems and designing solutions using a range of suitable applications, is of a high quality. Independent learning skills are well developed.
- 98 Pupils who do not opt to take an examination course in Years 10 and 11, though most follow a course in ICT, do not cover the full National Curriculum programme; their standards are below average and they are underachieving. Although they have satisfactory basic skills, their design skills are poor because not enough curriculum time is allowed for the course they follow to enable them to extend their skills or be challenged further. Their work is not assessed or measured against any external criteria so that this group of pupils does not know how well they are doing. Pupils with special educational needs in all years make good progress because the support they receive in lessons from teacher assistants is effective in helping them learn.
- 99 Teaching and learning are good where pupils are taught ICT as a separate subject. Teachers have very supportive relationships with pupils which give pupils confidence to attempt tasks without the fear of failure. Staffing of the department is good and all teachers have good knowledge of the subject, which enables them to explain concepts clearly and accurately and in ways pupils can understand. Management of pupils, who in all years bring very positive, mature attitudes to their work, is good and no time is wasted establishing and maintaining control. Assessment procedures in Years 7 to 9 tell pupils where they are in relation to pupils nationally and set targets for improvement showing what to do to reach those targets.
- 100 Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of significant improvements. Standards in Years 7 to 9 have improved. A successful vocational course has been introduced and all elements of the National Curriculum in Years 7 to 9 are now covered. There are now more computers in school which pupils have very good access to out of lesson time and are used well to support their learning. However there are few computers in the library. Sufficient technician support is now provided. However, in the crucial area of ensuring that all pupils in Years 10 and 11 receive their entitlement to the full National Curriculum in ICT there has not been enough improvement and therefore the leadership and management of this curriculum area are unsatisfactory. The leadership and management of ICT where it is taught as a separate subject are good. Arrangements to check on the quality of teaching and standards are effective within taught ICT and there have been significant curriculum improvements since the previous inspection.

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

- 101 The use of ICT to support pupils' learning across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. This is principally because the school has fewer computers than is expected for a school of this size. Although its use is planned for in most subjects, the difficulty of access to computers restricts the use of ICT. Consequently, some subjects, such as music, modern foreign languages, citizenship, art and design and design and technology are not fulfilling the statutory requirement to use ICT to support pupils' learning. This is despite improvement in the use of control technology in design and technology. In history the use of ICT is firmly embedded and very good use is made of new technology. In history, a wide range of software is used to create imaginative and original presentations; for example, creating a tourist brochure for Ancient Rome and a newspaper page from the time of the industrial revolution. Even in history, however, access to computers is difficult. In other subjects there is satisfactory use of ICT mainly in presenting work using word processing and desk top publishing skills, and in the use of the Internet for research. The provision of ten interactive whiteboards in classrooms such as religious education, mathematics and science has helped to improve the use of ICT in these areas.



## HUMANITIES

### Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE examination results are very good.
- The leadership and management of the department are very good and have enabled pupils to achieve well during a period of significant staff changes.
- The use of ICT to support learning is underdeveloped.
- Opportunities for pupils to undertake fieldwork are good and have allowed pupils to develop good enquiry skills.
- Assessment information in Years 7 to 9 is not used fully enough to inform pupils about how well they are achieving and to plan future learning.

	Years 7 to 9	Years 10 to 11	Overall
Achievement	Good	Very good	Good
Standards of work seen	Above average	Well above average	Well above average
GCSE 2003	-	Well above average	-
Teaching	Good	Good	Good
Learning	Good	Good	Good
Leadership	Very good		
Management	Very good		
Changes in effectiveness since the previous inspection	Good		

#### Commentary

- 102 In the GCSE examinations in both 2002 and 2003 pupils attained standards which were significantly above the national average. All pupils attained grades A\* to G and over four fifths gained A\* to C grades. These results represent very good achievement for the pupils concerned. Pupils' standards, as assessed by teachers at the end of Year 9 in 2003, were above average and pupils achieved well compared to their attainment when they entered the school.
- 103 The department has experienced considerable staff changes over the last three terms and very good leadership and management have ensured that pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well in Years 7 to 9 and very well in Years 10 and 11. A new staff team is now being created very effectively so that teaching and learning overall are good. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and is often good or very good. Teachers plan and structure their lessons well, which engages the interest of most pupils and enhances their learning. A range of attractive resources and interesting activities, including very good opportunities for enquiry-based fieldwork, keep most pupils on task and encourage them to think for themselves. In some lessons both lower and higher attaining pupils lose concentration and the pace of learning slows down. Higher attaining pupils in Year 11 explain geographical processes and patterns with confidence. They manipulate data well to produce high quality coursework, for example, on the issues concerned with the Malvern Hills. Lower attaining pupils understand basic terminology but their work is descriptive rather than analytical.

- 104 The leadership and management of the department have a very clear vision for future improvement and appropriate priorities have been identified for development. Teaching and learning are monitored very effectively and good support is given to less experienced teachers. Good systems are in place for assessing pupils' work. Assessment information is not used fully in Years 7 to 9 to inform pupils of how well they are doing and so pupils are not always clear about how to improve their work. Good use is made of available resources, such as computer linked projectors, but the use of ICT to support learning, research and data analysis is not fully developed because access to computers for use by all pupils is limited.
- 105 Improvement since the previous inspection is good. Very good examination results have been maintained and pupils' achievement has improved. The department has the capacity and the commitment to improve further.

## History

Provision in history is **very good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Dynamic, imaginative teaching motivates pupils and leads to very effective learning.
- Standards and results are well above average throughout Years 7 to 11.
- The subject makes a significant contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills.
- Leadership is excellent and subject management is very good.
- Marking comments are not always followed up.

	Years 7 to 9	Years 10 to 11	Overall
Achievement	Very good	Very good	Very good
Standards of work seen	Well above average	Well above average	Well above average
GCSE 2003	-	Well above average	-
Teaching	Very good	Very good	Very good
Learning	Very good	Very good	Very good
Leadership	Excellent		
Management	Very good		
Changes in effectiveness since the previous inspection	Good		

## Commentary

- 106 Assessments at the end of Year 9, for the last 3 years, show that girls and boys are achieving well above the national average in history. GCSE results have been well above average for the last five years. In three of those years boys did better than girls, which is against the national trend. Pupils develop skills in analysing sources, extended writing and the organisation and communication of their ideas. All pupils, including those who are gifted and talented, girls and boys, those from different ethnic backgrounds and those with special educational needs, achieve very well because the work they are asked to do is exciting and challenging. During the inspection groups of pupils in Year 7 were creating tour guide brochures for a time travel company offering visits to ancient Rome. Year 9 pupils were writing shock/horror newspaper articles about conditions in nineteenth century Cotton Mills. Creative tasks such as these have played a major part in developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are adept at seeing connections, charting consequences and arranging their research into coherent answers.

- 107 The teachers' passionate enthusiasm for their subject, their expert knowledge and focus on key skills and the sheer enjoyment generated in their lessons ensures very good learning for all pupils. The teachers have high expectations of themselves, and their pupils, and work very hard. Pupils are constantly challenged to think for themselves through class discussions, small group work and as individuals. Lessons move at a fast pace and all pupils are able to keep up and develop their knowledge and understanding. Pupils are encouraged to conduct their own research but at present the library does not offer a sufficiently wide range of historical texts. Assessment is effective and thorough and helps pupils to be aware of their progress and how they can improve. Marking is detailed and positive, but comments are not always followed up, either by pupils or teachers. Good emphasis is put on the skills necessary for examination success, as well as generating an enthusiasm for history which extends beyond the classroom.
- 108 This is a very good department. Inspiring leadership motivates staff and a vision of development is shared. The department is committed to continual improvement and self-evaluation is rigorous. The very high standards and good progress seen at the last inspection have been maintained.

## TECHNOLOGY

### Design and technology

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

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE results in food technology and textiles technology are above the national average.
- Pupils show a positive attitude to learning and behave very well.
- Teaching assistants are used very effectively to support learning across the department.
- Pupils' achievement in resistant materials is unsatisfactory.
- Accommodation is poor and resources are not well organised.
- ICT work is underdeveloped and under-resourced in all areas of the department.

	Years 7 to 9	Years 10 to 11	Overall
Achievement	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Standards of work seen	Average	Average	Average
GCSE 2003	-	Average	-
Teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Learning	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Leadership	Unsatisfactory		
Management	Unsatisfactory		
Changes in effectiveness since the previous inspection	Unsatisfactory		

### Commentary

- 109 GCSE results in 2003 and 2002 in both food and textiles technology were well above average. Results in resistant materials were below average. Current standards vary across the department. Standards in food and textiles technology are above average with standards in resistant materials below average. This represents good achievement from an average starting point in Year 7 for food and textiles technology. The good progress that pupils make over time in these two subjects is a result of the good teaching they receive. However, pupils'

achievement in resistant materials is unsatisfactory. Girls achieve significantly better standards than boys across the department. Lack of organisation of resources, poor accommodation and not enough technical support, all hold back pupils' achievement in resistant materials. Achievement is also held back in resistant materials by pupils' inappropriate choice of project tasks and lack of development of ideas, poor drawing and general presentation skills. Design ideas are not explored and developed well enough and so the highest attaining pupils do not reach their full potential.

- 110 Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. However, it is unsatisfactory in resistant materials. In food and textiles, teachers organise a good range of well-planned activities designed to fully engage all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Very effective use of teaching assistants is a strong feature of the practice of the department and makes a positive contribution to many pupils' learning. Pupils show a positive attitude to learning and behaviour in lessons is very good. The teaching of textiles design and technology is a strong feature of the department. In one of the lessons observed a large range of activities were taking place at the same time, all carefully monitored by the teacher and all pupils were making very good individual progress. The teachers in food and textile technology showed good subject knowledge with demonstrations being a strong feature. The use of ICT is currently underdeveloped. Facilities for computer-aided manufacture are a requirement of the current GCSE specifications for all design subjects and the department has none. Teaching and learning were unsatisfactory in resistant materials where activities were spread across more than one workshop making supervision and the monitoring of pupils' progress very difficult to manage. Teachers do not give pupils enough guidance in resistant materials on selecting appropriate project tasks and developing design ideas.
- 111 Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. Though checks are carried out by senior management, regular formal checks on teaching and learning are not carried out by the head of department. Standards and teaching and learning in design and technology have not improved since the last inspection. A shortage of technical support is an unresolved issue arising from the last inspection. Though the technical support available is effective, the limited time allocated for this work restricts opportunities for practical work particularly in resistant materials. The poor accommodation and lack of organisation of resources places limits on extending pupils' skills in resistant materials.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

Art and design and music were inspected in depth and drama was sampled.

- 112 Four lessons of drama were observed. GCSE results in 2003 were above average and significantly above average in 2002. Standards of work seen in Year 11 are significantly above average. Teaching and learning in lessons seen were very good overall and ranged from good to excellent. Because of exciting, inspirational and sometimes gifted teaching, pupils have developed a broad range of high level performance skills. They also evaluate effectively using the technical language of the subject appropriately. Their approach to the subject is very mature. Their response to a challenging reflective warm-up superbly led by the teacher was highly focused and serious. Their achievement is very good, especially given that they experience less formal drama teaching in Years 7 to 9 than is the case in many schools. However, good foundations are laid in Year 7 to 9 through effective use of drama in English lessons. Their enthusiasm for the subject is reflected in the fact that about half the current Year 11 pupils are seriously planning to continue with drama at post 16 level. The subject makes a very good contribution to the school's extra curricular programme through a range of performances and theatre visits. It contributes very well to the pupils' personal development: pupils often organise themselves for productions and assist younger pupils in drama clubs and productions.

**An excellent Year 11 drama lesson based on rehearsals for assessed pieces for GCSE assessment.**

The teacher's use of mesmeric persuasion to coax pupils into character provides an excellent start to the lesson. Working individually, each pupil "shakes off" the world outside and warms up for drama both physically and mentally via the subtleties of the teacher's prompting. All respond very well, moving quickly into their respective working groups and rehearsing with the highest levels of concentration, collaboration and mutual support. The teacher's optimistic enthusiasm successfully conveys the highest expectations. Pupils respond to her knowledgeable, subtle guidance on the use of levels, blocking, gesture and tone with assurance, maturity and professionalism. They display a serious and highly controlled approach to implementing the teacher's guidance in order to maximise the impact of their performance. A real sense of energy and dynamism fills the lesson. Pupils throw themselves into the work and are fully engrossed. Their confident commitment reflects excellent prior teaching and learning.

**Art and design**

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

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in sculpture and three-dimensional modelling are very high.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Drawing and painting skills are well developed.
- Pupils have positive attitudes and are able to work independently and collaboratively.
- The use of ICT in the classroom is underdeveloped.
- Accommodation is in need of refurbishment.
- Practical tasks for homework are not used enough.

	<b>Years 7 to 9</b>	<b>Years 10 to 11</b>	<b>Overall</b>
Achievement	Very good	Very good	Very good
Standards of work seen	Well above average	Well above average	Well above average
GCSE 2003	-	Above average	-
Teaching	Very good	Very good	Very good
Learning	Very good	Very good	Very good
Leadership	Very good		
Management	Very good		
Changes in effectiveness since the previous inspection	Good		

**Commentary**

- 113 GCSE results at A\* to C were well above average in 2003, and are an improvement on those of 2002. All pupils who were entered for the examination gained a grade in the range of A\* to F, which is also better than the national picture in this subject.
- 114 Current standards are well above average throughout the school, and represent very good achievement as a result of careful planning and very good teaching. In Years 7 to 9, pupils develop very good drawing and painting skills. They also begin to understand the work of important artists and designers and how it can influence art and design in general and their own work in particular. By Year 11, pupils are moving securely towards the higher grades. They work confidently in the style of famous artists in two and three dimensional materials.
- 115 Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Pupils make very good progress, working both independently and collaboratively. The sculpture and three-dimensional work created by all

age groups is exceptional. The sculpture demonstrates scale, colour and a sensitivity rarely seen in pupils' work. Pupils are also encouraged from Year 7 upwards to experiment with images and techniques. By Years 10 and 11 all pupils are experimenting with confidence and showing lively and dramatic sketchbooks full of demanding drawing, colour studies and very individual images. The use of ICT is currently underdeveloped because access to ICT equipment in the art working areas is limited. Software to enable image and photographic manipulation is not used a great deal and so pupils' skills are not extended enough and opportunities are lost to engage and interest pupils. Pupils show a positive attitude and respect for each other's work, and behaviour in lessons is very good.

116 Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The ambition, direction and energy of the staff to establish the subject as a major influence in the school are positive features of this department. The scheme of work, although having very good academic content, does not give enough guidance on developing practical skills through homework tasks. The accommodation is in need of refurbishment and the distance between the art rooms is a restriction on developing teamwork and the sharing of resources. Further technician support is needed for this intensely practical subject. Art and design has improved well since the last inspection mainly because teaching, learning, and standards of pupils' work have improved.

## Music

Provision in music is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning is good as a result of good teaching.
- Results in the most recent GCSE examinations were very good.
- The provision for ICT is unsatisfactory.
- Classroom instruments are in poor condition and deteriorating rapidly.
- Large numbers of pupils learn to play an instrument.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes.

	Years 7 to 9	Years 10 to 11	Overall
Achievement	Good	Good	Good
Standards of work seen	Above average	Above average	Above average
GCSE results in 2003	-	Very good	-
Teaching	Good	Good	Good
Learning	Good	Good	Good
Leadership	Good		
Management	Satisfactory		
Changes in effectiveness since the previous inspection	Satisfactory		

## Commentary

117 Because of interruptions to staffing in the music department there were no entries for the GCSE examination in 2002. In 2003, almost half of those entered were awarded A\* or A grades. However, total numbers are too low to be statistically significant. Teachers' assessment in 2003 indicated that the attainment of pupils by the age of 14 was well above average. Standards seen in all year groups were below this level, partly because of recent

interruptions to the continuity of teaching in the department and, in Years 10 and 11, because pupils' overall ability is lower than in previous year groups.

- 118 Most pupils enter the school with average attainment in music, but a significant proportion have either started to play an instrument by that time or begin to learn within a short time. As a result, pupils' general musical knowledge and use of musical terms is good. Because teaching pays good attention to developing an appropriate descriptive vocabulary, pupils are able to respond perceptively to music they hear. When performing, many pupils lack confidence, and those of lower musical ability cannot maintain a regular pulse or co-ordinate with other parts in ensemble work. Most pupils, because they learn well, follow guidelines to create compositions, but these are not always musically effective. However, when they are given the opportunity to develop instinctive musical skills through improvisation, they make rapid progress and their work becomes lively, inventive and stylistically convincing. No class singing was heard during the week of the inspection, but the activity is embedded in the traditions of the department. Pupils form their own vocal groups on an occasional basis, and two other singing groups meet each week.
- 119 Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in music because they are taught in smaller groups in Years 7 to 9 and have better access to the equipment. Pupils who are talented in music achieve well in listening and appraising but because there is no specific provision for these pupils in practical work in lessons, their achievement in lessons is only satisfactory.
- 120 Most pupils in Years 10 and 11 have a good understanding of the features of different types of music and can describe these in appropriate terms. Around half of those who have chosen the subject have not had formal instrumental tuition, but many play well, particularly in rock groups. In comparison, formally taught pupils, although they play accurately, are not careful enough about interpretation. Pupils' composing, with one or two exceptions, is unimaginative. Written work, boys' in particular, is untidy. Because there are no computers with music software, pupils are not able to store and refine their ideas and present scores in a readable form.
- 121 Pupils learn well because they are well taught. The recently appointed head of department has established very good relationships and gives pupils confidence in their abilities to succeed. Teaching is well informed and systematic, and expectations are high. Lessons include challenge for pupils of different abilities, but the highest attaining pupils in mixed ability classes in Year 7 to 9 are not always given suitably demanding work. This is partly because systems for identifying pupils with higher musical ability are not rigorous enough and the school's arrangements for grouping pupils by ability are not always appropriate in music. The poor condition of classroom instruments and the need, in larger groups, for sharing keyboards, prevents pupils from improving their technical and aural skills.
- 122 Leadership is enthusiastic and provides a positive role model for pupils such that they are highly interested in the subject and many are committed to activities beyond the classroom. After a period of discontinuity, new schemes of work and systems of assessment are now in place. However, this system is not sufficiently clearly linked to recommended National Curriculum levels of attainment so pupils do not always know how well they are doing. The large and increasing number of instrumental lessons is well organised, and extra-curricular activities are increasing. The department is about to install some recording equipment, but the unsatisfactory condition of most other resources and the lack of ICT is a barrier to the achievement of pupils at all stages, and is a constraint on the development of the department. Although the accommodation is good, ventilation and sound-proofing are unsatisfactory. By its provision for creative work, its programme of concerts and opportunities to entertain patients in the local hospice, pupils' personal development is well supported. To improve pupils' cultural understanding, the department needs to develop opportunities for contact with traditional and ethnic group musicians.

- 123 The recent period of discontinuity caused a fall in standards in comparison with those found during the previous inspection, but the situation is now stable, and standards are once again rising.



## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Girls' standards are above average and they achieve well as a result of good teaching.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and participation rates are very high.
- Standards in the major team games, particularly netball and football, are above average.
- There are good recreational sports opportunities for girls.
- The curriculum for Year 10 and 11 pupils is too narrow.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory.
- Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory and development planning is weak.

	Years 7 to 9	Years 10 to 11	Overall
Achievement	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Standards of work seen	Average	Average	Average
Teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Learning	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Leadership	Unsatisfactory		
Management	Unsatisfactory		
Changes in effectiveness since the previous inspection	Unsatisfactory		

### Commentary

- 124 Current standards of work in Year 9 and 11 are average for boys and above average for girls. Girls have above average standards in netball. They understand and can rehearse tactics and can apply skills effectively in competitive situations. In gymnastics they are well coordinated and understand the dynamics of movement, using flight effectively to create and link a sequence of movements using a variety of apparatus. They know how to select and plan skill practices and have good planning and evaluating skills. Boys' standards are not as high because their planning and evaluating skills are under-developed and they still rely too much on their teachers to tell or show them what to do. In badminton, boys' standards are above average. They have a good understanding of tactics in singles play and can sustain a rally within the confines of the court. By Year 11, girls are still achieving above average standards in netball but boys' standards in badminton have fallen back to average because the poor accommodation has inhibited progress. Standards in boys' football are above average. Boys have good ball control and know how to create space both for themselves and their team. As in Year 9, girls have above average planning and evaluating skills whilst for boys these skills are average. Girls' standards are supported by the extensive opportunities they have to develop their skills through extra-curricular activities, for example, in netball. In all years, pupils with special educational needs, both boys and girls, make good progress because they receive very effective support from teaching assistants.
- 125 Apart from a few lessons in Year 7, boys and girls are taught separately. Teaching and learning for boys is satisfactory and for girls is good. Both groups are effectively managed and relationships are good so that participation rates are very high and pupils enjoy their sport, bringing very good attitudes and behaviour to their work. Teachers all have good subject knowledge that they use well to give clear demonstrations and explanations enabling pupils to learn new skills and techniques rapidly. Pupils are not told where they are at in terms of national standards and are not set targets for improvement. Girls have a greater understanding and knowledge of the activities they do because the teaching is deliberately

focused on their developing skills in planning and in evaluating their own and others' performance. This aspect is a weakness in the teaching of boys. Boys have not learned how to make informed choices about what role they want to take in each activity and have not developed the skills needed to judge how good a performance is and what they need to do to improve it.

- 126 The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. There has been little improvement in the three key areas identified in the previous inspection: assessment procedures are still unsatisfactory; development planning still fails to focus on raising standards and improving achievement and boys' planning and evaluating skills have not been targeted for improvement. The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is too narrow; there is no GCSE course or other accredited course, such as the Junior Sports Leader's Award, and only girls have the opportunity to do tennis. Boys only do dance in Year 7. This allows insufficient time for the development or progression of skills. Indoor accommodation is very limited; small working areas and low ceilings restrict improvement in games such as badminton.

## **BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES**

The GCSE business studies and the new GCSE applied science courses were both sampled.

- 127 Business studies has achieved steadily rising results since 2000, and in 2002, the seven pupils entered achieved creditable results: three Bs, one C, and three Ds. In 2003, the school decided to enter 23 pupils for the Young Enterprise examination only and to resume entering pupils for the GCSE course in 2004. Lessons seen in both GCSE Business Studies and Applied Science were well taught and pupils are making good progress.
- 128 In addition, the school offers several other vocational courses. Most of these are taken by lower attaining pupils, some with special educational needs, though the school has plans to offer them to pupils of all levels of ability. These were also sampled.
- 129 As part of the Increased Flexibility Initiative, ten Year 10 pupils are attending a taster programme at the local college of further education, very ably supported by a teaching assistant. They are presently acquiring knowledge and skills in catering. It is clear, from the lesson observed, that the pupils receive first-class instruction, sensitive to their needs, and they are achieving very well. The course also makes a valuable contribution to their personal and social development. Next year, they will transfer to a Level 1 NVQ course of their choice.
- 130 Five pupils in Year 11 are completing a Level 1 NVQ course in Building and Construction. This involves a placement locally in which they receive very good training in woodwork and carpentry. Pupils also spend time at college, acquiring skills in painting and decorating. All are on target to achieve their certificates and are well motivated and very knowledgeable.
- 131 Child development was sampled in Years 10 and 11 and one lesson was seen in Year 10, where pupils were actively participating in group discussion work. Teaching and learning were very good and pupils displayed a good knowledge of both the physical and emotional needs of a baby. Examination of their coursework in both years indicates standards which are reflected in the GCSE examination results which were above average in 2002 and 2003.

## Information and communication technology

Provision in the GNVQ information and communication technology course is **good**.

	Years 10 and 11	Overall
Achievement	Good	Good
GNVQ results in 2003	Well above average	Well above average
Standards of work seen	Above average	Above average
Teaching	Good	Good
Learning	Good	Good
Leadership	Good	
Management	Good	

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results over the past two years were well above average.
- Pupils achieve well because they are well taught and have very good attitudes towards their work.
- Pupils are capable of working independently.
- Lower attaining pupils do well.

### Commentary

- 132 The GNVQ intermediate award in ICT is a successful course and around one third of pupils in Years 10 and 11 take the course. Results in both 2002 and 2003 were well above average with almost all pupils who were entered gaining four A\* to C grades. Pupils demonstrate well above average design and analysis skills from planning stages through to execution, for example when planning internet web pages. They make effective use of complex search criteria. They use technical language accurately in their writing. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment achieve well in relation to their standards in Year 9.
- 133 Teachers' strong subject knowledge enables very clear demonstrations, for example of styles and layout of business letters in Year 10. Very good relationships between pupils and teachers based on good humour help pupils to maintain high levels of interest and motivation. Well structured lessons, when pupils are aware of what they will learn from the outset, help pupils to pay good attention and remain well focused. A good variety of teaching approaches, including open-ended tasks and easy access to on-line support, encourages pupils to work independently. Well timed intervention in pupils' learning by the teacher leads to pupils refining and improving their work, for example in presentation techniques. Pupils' progress is assessed appropriately and pupils have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and what to do to improve.
- 134 Leadership of the course is effective in maintaining high standards in pupils' achievement and in teaching. The course was not in place at the last inspection.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship was inspected in depth and the programme of personal, social and health education was sampled. Six lessons of personal, social and health education were observed, some of which contained elements of careers education. Teaching was good overall and never less than satisfactory. Form tutors teach a planned programme of work and pupils achieve well. Good links have been developed with 'industrial tutors' that ensure that older pupils are well informed about job applications, interviews and career choices. The programme of sex education requires further

development to provide continuity from Year 7 to Year 11 so that all pupils have access to appropriate information. The subject contributes well to pupils' personal development, helping them to develop mature attitudes and gain confidence.

## Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning is inadequate and so the full National Curriculum programme is not covered to the depth required.
- Teaching, learning and achievement are unsatisfactory because pupils do not learn the full subject.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are very good, meeting the teachers' high expectations of them.
- Pupils' progress is not properly assessed and reported to parents.
- Management is unsatisfactory because standards achieved, teaching, learning, and the curriculum are not monitored.
- Resources are inadequate.

	Years 7 to 9	Years 10 to 11	Overall
Achievement	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Standards of work seen	Below average	Below average	Below average
Teaching	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Learning	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Leadership	Unsatisfactory		
Management	Unsatisfactory		

### Commentary

- 135 Citizenship is taught partly by form teachers through personal, social and health education lessons, though it is not assessed, and partly through subjects across the curriculum. As yet, there is no planned programme which ensures all pupils develop their skills of participation and responsible action within the school and in the community.
- 136 Work seen in lessons for the two elements, knowledge and understanding and skills of communication and enquiry, was almost wholly oral and lacked the detail and depth necessary for a National Curriculum subject. Nevertheless, in one personal, social and health education lesson observed on rights and responsibilities, the quality of pupils' oral responses was high at all levels of ability as a result of apt illustrations and a more challenging approach by the teacher. An exception to the imbalance of oral and written work was the substantial, very good written work relating to citizenship seen in English.
- 137 Where citizenship is taught through other subjects, teachers are not identifying to pupils when it is being taught and it is not assessed as a distinct subject. Consequently, the subject has a low profile in the school, and, when questioned, pupils could not say what they had learned or how to improve their performance in the subject.
- 138 Teachers' oral questioning is often targeted and effective and they provide adequate opportunities for discussion. Praise is used well to reward and encourage. However, some teaching is not good enough. Lesson planning does not include work in appropriate depth and in sufficient detail for a National Curriculum subject. Nor does planning identify methods

of assessment to suit pupils of all abilities. In one very well taught, enjoyable and challenging science lesson, groups of higher attaining Year 11 pupils used laptop computers to carry out research on the Internet. They looked into the religious, social, moral and cultural implications of genetic engineering in preparation for a short oral presentation. However, there are not enough opportunities to develop pupils' independent learning and ICT skills. Teachers manage their classes well, enjoy very good relationships with their pupils and, as a result, pupils' punctuality and their attitudes to learning are very good.

- 139 At present, no team meetings take place to plan ahead and share good practice, and there is no budget which could be used to provide training and contribute to the development of schemes of work and teaching materials. There are no rigorous systems yet in place to check on the quality of teaching and learning, homework, assessment and the curriculum. These are needed to ensure that the full programmes of study are taught and high standards are developed across the subject.

## 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>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	5
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	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
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>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

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