

INSPECTION REPORT

THE COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL LEFTWICH

Northwich

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111415

Headteacher: Mr A J Sieber

Lead inspector: Mr D Roberts

Dates of inspection: 1st – 4th December 2003

Inspection number: 258806

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 to 16 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	889
School address:	Granville Road Northwich Cheshire
Postcode:	CW9 8EZ
Telephone number:	01606 41511
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr C Chapman
Date of previous inspection:	9 th March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in a housing estate dating from the 1950s and draws pupils also from further afield. The social and economic circumstances of its pupils and the standards they have reached before they come to the school are somewhat above the national average profile. There is a very small number of pupils for whom English is not the first language. Minority ethnic pupils are in a very low proportion. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including those needing statements, is in line with the national average. The school gained a School's Achievement Award in 2003 and had its status as an Investor in People renewed the same year.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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11041	Mr M Moore	Lay inspector	
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17378	Mrs M Miles	Team inspector	English
31159	Mr C Simmonds	Team inspector	Science
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19867	Mr M Pettitt	Team inspector	Art and design
1782	Mr A Lyons	Team inspector	Design and technology English as an additional language
15407	Ms M Harrison	Team inspector	Geography Citizenship
13155	Mr J Dixon	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
8360	Mr F Peacock	Team inspector	Music Special educational needs
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Overall evaluation

The overall **effectiveness of the school is good** and it provides **good value for money**. The school is well established and rightly popular with parents and pupils. It has many strengths and there is a commitment to continuous improvement.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The good achievement of the substantial majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs (SEN), leading to the above average standards seen in most subjects; particularly art and design and music. Pupils' progress is helped by very good standards of care.
- The well above average standards in the national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003.
- The good teaching overall, to which pupils generally respond well although, in some subjects, teaching is satisfactory rather than good.
- The good leadership provided by the headteacher and other key staff, although the school's improvement plan has some deficiencies.
- Statutory requirements are not met fully in the provision of a daily act of collective worship, in information and communication technology (ICT) for some pupils in Years 10 and 11, in reporting pupils' progress in ICT to parents and in the teaching of citizenship; the policy on provision for pupils with SEN is out of date.

The school's **improvement** since the previous inspection in 1998 has been **good**. In particular, the quality of teaching has improved from a half to now nearly three-quarters being good. The standards achieved by pupils have improved significantly at the end of Year 9 and remain above the national average at the end of Year 11. The curriculum has improved to take better account of the range of needs of the pupils. The school continues to have a positive ethos. The school now makes much better use of pupil performance data to identify how results can be further improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Performance compared with:		all schools			similar schools
		2001	2002	2003	2003
Year 11	GCSE/GNVQ examinations	B	C	B	C

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.

Standards achieved by pupils overall are good. They are well above the average nationally and for similar schools at the end of Year 9; results at the end of Year 11 are above the national average, and average compared to similar schools. The school exceeded its targets in relation to nationally expected levels at the end of Year 9 but fell a little short in GCSE results. In some subjects, the most capable pupils are not gaining the grades they should but, in general, these pupils too are achieving well, as are those with SEN. The very few pupils whose first language is not English are making at least satisfactory progress. Standards of work seen during the inspection were mainly above average at all ages. Pupils' standards of literacy and numeracy are well developed; their ICT skills are generally adequate to the tasks which they face across the curriculum.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. They have very positive attitudes to school and their work; they respond well to the school's high expectations of behaviour. Attendance is above the national average and pupils are punctual to lessons. There are mature and productive relationships among pupils and with staff.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education** which the school provides is **good**. Overall, the **quality of teaching and learning** is **good** through all years in the school. Very good teaching predominates in mathematics, art and design and music; there is a high proportion of good or better teaching in geography and science. The teaching is satisfactory rather than good in English and particularly ICT. Very little teaching is unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers have a good command of their subject and their enthusiasm motivates pupils well. Generally, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are high, although there are instances when the most capable pupils are not well enough extended. Pupils with SEN learn well because of careful planning, and the support of teaching assistants. Homework is used well in most subjects. In general, teachers manage pupils' behaviour well although, occasionally, the poor behaviour of a minority does inhibit the learning of others.

The **curriculum has strengths and weaknesses**. Particular strengths are the curriculum links with partner primary schools and the broad range of opportunities in Years 10/11 which is well matched to the needs of all pupils. The weaknesses lie in the lack of provision for some pupils of the statutorily required ICT course in Years 10/11 and the under-developed citizenship curriculum. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The quality of leadership provided by the headteacher is **good**, as is that of the school's leadership group and other key staff. The headteacher has led effective teamwork involving staff and governors in establishing the vision for the future of the school. The key priorities for improvement are reflected well in a new improvement plan but it does not yet have all the features of an effective plan. Management in general is **good** and the day-to-day running of the school and communications are very good. The work of the **governing body** is **satisfactory**. Governors help to shape the future direction of the school; they know its strengths and weaknesses well and are keen to improve in the role as critical friends. Their policy on provision for pupils with SEN is out of date and that on the daily act of collective worship is not properly implemented by staff.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

There is a good level of satisfaction. Parents are rightly very impressed with induction arrangements for their children, the high expectations of the teachers and the progress their children are making. One sixth do not feel well informed about their children's progress. Pupils say that they like the school, are taught well and are trusted to do things on their own. Many commented on the poor behaviour of a minority, but the inspection does not identify this as a significant issue in the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to raise the proportion of good teaching in subjects where this is too low and to ensure that the most capable pupils are fully extended in all lessons.
- Ensure that the school's improvement plan is explicitly directed to raising achievement, has clear success criteria and is linked to financial planning.
- Improve the information to parents on the progress their children make, including in ICT.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the governors' policy on daily collective worship is being implemented; that all pupils cover the programme of study for ICT in Years 10/11; that reports on pupils' progress include ICT, that requirements are met in citizenship and that statutory policies are up to date.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Achievement in Years 7 to 9 and in Years 10/11 is good. This has resulted in standards which were well above average in national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003. GCSE results in 2003 were above the national average. Standards of work seen were mainly above average, and average in English and ICT.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The substantial majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils, make good progress during their time at the school.
- In English, mathematics and modern foreign languages, the most capable pupils do not attain the high GCSE grades that they should and, in some other subjects, such pupils are not always fully extended.
- Progress in English and ICT is satisfactory rather than good.
- Standards of work seen during the inspection were above average in most subjects, with a predominance of well above average work in art and design and music in Years 10/11.
- GCSE results in 2003 were above the national average but below the school's target for the proportion to gain five or more good grades; pupils entered early for mathematics and statistics performed very well.
- Standards reached in all three core subjects in the national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were well above both the national average and that for similar schools; the school's own targets were exceeded.
- Pupils' standards of literacy and numeracy are generally well developed across the curriculum; those in ICT are average.

Commentary

1. Standards reached in the end of Year 9 national tests in 2003 were well above the national average and high compared with results in similar schools. In English, mathematics and science, but particularly in English and science, results at the higher levels were also above average. These results, in all respects, marked a significant improvement over those for previous years which, overall, were below the average for similar schools. In all three subjects, the 2003 results exceeded the targets which the school had set, and by a very significant margin in English. Both boys and girls performed better than the national average for their gender. The school's overall improvement trend over the years 1998 to 2002 has been broadly in line with the national trend.
2. These improvements are due largely to the impact of the national strategy for Key Stage 3 which has had an impact on approaches to teaching and has provided additional support for pupils who enter the school with lower attainment levels. Improvements to the teaching of literacy across subjects have also helped boost achievement.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	36.4 (33.8)	33.4 (33.3)
mathematics	37.2 (35.5)	35.4 (34.7)
science	36.1 (34.6)	33.6 (33.3)

There were 186 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. In the GCSE examinations taken in 2003, results showed a slight improvement on 2002 and were above the national average. The proportion of pupils who gained the nationally expected level of five or more higher grade passes (A*-C) was a little below the school's target. English results improved compared with 2002, while those in science declined slightly. Data from the local education authority indicates that, based on their performance in NFER tests when they joined the school in Year 7, the school added more value than the average across the local education authority. The school's overall improvement trend in GCSE results over the years 1998 to 2002 has been broadly in line with the national improvement.
4. Significantly strong subjects in the 2003 examinations were geography, and particularly art and design, music and religious education, whilst in drama and in the graphics and the resistant materials option courses in design and technology, pupils' attainment overall revealed weaknesses.

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	59 (58)	52 (50)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	91 (89)	91 (91)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	97 (95)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	36.9 (34.7)	36.0 (34.7)

There were 159 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 are judged to be achieving at least well in most of their subjects and very well in mathematics and design and technology. In English, geography and ICT, they achieve satisfactorily. In Years 10/11, achievement is very good in mathematics and art and design and good in all other subjects except English, modern foreign languages, physical education and ICT where it is satisfactory.
6. This achievement has resulted in the standards of work seen during the inspection being above average in all subjects in Year 9, except in English and ICT where they are average. In Year 11, the standards seen were well above average in art and design and music, above average in mathematics, science and the humanities subjects and average in English, modern foreign languages, ICT, physical education and design and technology. The gap between boys' and girls' attainment in English is wider at the end of Year 11 than it should be, while in music, history and physical education, boys are performing better than girls.
7. In general, these variations in the quality of work seen related to aspects of the quality of teaching in the different subjects and, in the case of ICT, to curriculum arrangements which result in some pupils not being provided with a structured course in ICT capability in Years 10/11 as well as the patchy use of computers within subjects.
8. Pupils' standards of literacy and numeracy are well developed using conscious strategies and pupils are thus well able to access all areas of the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, and those few for whom English is not the first language, achieve well and make good progress towards their personal targets. This is because of the co-operation and planning that takes place between teachers and teaching assistants. Since work is adapted to match pupils' needs, many improve their learning. All pupils with special educational needs leave school with recognised qualifications.
9. There is no school policy for the identification and teaching of gifted and talented pupils and so they are not treated consistently in different areas. In many subjects, notably art and design, music, mathematics, history and geography, teachers plan suitably challenging tasks for the

highest attainers, with the result that, overall, their achievement is good. They achieve very well in science where they are identified then provided for well by planned activities written into the scheme of work. Higher attainers are not challenged in ICT and so their achievement is unsatisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **good** attitudes to school and display **good** behaviour.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good relationships with one another and show a willingness to be enterprising and to take responsibility.
- Pupils have good levels of confidence and self-esteem.
- Pupils respond enthusiastically to most aspects of school life and display a good respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others.

Commentary

10. Pupils enjoy school life and have positive attitudes to their work – very positive in some subjects. Behaviour of pupils is good both in and out of lessons and they relate well to one another. Pupils enjoy the company of visitors and were polite to the inspection team which was impressed by their courtesy. Lunchtimes are pleasant, social occasions where pupils enjoy each other's company and discuss their morning's work in a mature and sensible way.
11. The school has high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond accordingly. During the inspection week, a successful fire drill was held where pupils demonstrated exemplary behaviour and acted responsibly and with maturity.
12. Through its enthusiastic involvement in the Behaviour for Learning aspect of the national Key Stage 3 Strategy, the school has benefited from the input of an external consultant in the evaluation of its behaviour management systems and has identified areas for future development.
13. Pupils have good relationships with teachers and other staff. They know who to go to for help and realise that the school has an ethos of care and support. The school is very pro-active in promoting relationships and inter-racial understanding. Pupils interviewed confirmed that incidents of bullying are rare but, when they do occur, are dealt with immediately and effectively by staff. Pupils have a very good understanding of the feelings, values and beliefs of others and have a strong knowledge of the principles to distinguish right from wrong.
14. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to be enterprising and to take responsibility. They are pleased to be appointed as prefects after applying and being interviewed and they take their duties seriously. The School Council is very successful in promoting pupils' citizenship skills and the school is particularly proud that some of its pupils have been elected members of the UK Youth Parliament. The school promotes well pupils' responsibility of living in a community. Year 11 pupils arrange an annual party for senior citizens, all pupils choose local charities to support, Year 10 pupils are selected to work in the local community service scheme and pupils take part in a community debating contest held in the local Magistrates' Court.
15. Aspects of personal development, including the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **good** overall, although planning for spiritual development across the curriculum is weak and pupils' spiritual awareness is underdeveloped. The promotion of the pupils' social, moral and cultural development is good. Pupils' have a good understanding of the diversity and richness of their own and other cultural traditions. They respect other people's feelings, values and beliefs and have a good appreciation of the principles which distinguish

right from wrong. Pupils' personal development is fostered well. Relationships throughout the school are mature and productive

16. Pupils with learning difficulties are happy in school and generally behave well. Because learning support assistants are good role models, pupils' personal development and self-esteem improve.
17. Attendance was 92.2 per cent in the last full reporting year, which is above the national average and is good; pupils are punctual to lessons. The school has very good procedures for the monitoring and promoting of good attendance and has appointed an attendance officer who monitors attendance on a first day of absence basis. Attendance in the current year is marginally less high.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	7.3
National data	7.8

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.5
National data	1.2

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

18. There have been two full-term exclusions and 66 fixed-term exclusions in the past year. All of these were given for good reason and procedures were meticulously observed.

Ethnic background of pupil

Exclusions in the last school year

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

No of pupils on roll
780
2
2
2
4
1
2
8
88

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
44	2
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
22	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good** overall. Teaching is largely good. The curriculum is satisfactory, although a few pupils do not receive their full statutory entitlement, and arrangements for teaching citizenship are not fully developed. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall, although provision in physical education is hampered by shortcomings in the accommodation and there is a lack of the computers necessary in design and technology. There is very good provision of extra-curricular activities. There is a very good standard of care for pupils, beginning with the very good induction arrangements before they join the school. The school's procedures for seeking and acting upon pupils' views are very good. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory overall.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning in the school are **good** both through Years 7 to 9 and in Years 10/11. The quality of teachers' assessment of the pupils' work is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good overall with very good teaching dominant in mathematics, art and design and music.
- Teaching is of good quality, and better, because of teachers' good command of, and enthusiasm for, their subjects.
- The planning and conduct of lessons reveal the mainly high expectations teachers have of pupils; however, not enough is always expected of the most capable pupils; and better strategies for pupils with SEN are needed in some lessons.
- Homework is used well in many subjects, but not in others – particularly English.
- As a result of the good teaching, pupils learn productively and develop confidence as learners, but opportunities for pupils to learn independently are restricted, particularly in ICT.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' work is thorough and constructive in most subjects; teachers do not use the lessons from these assessments well enough in planning future work.
- While many lessons are well structured, lesson endings are often insufficiently effective.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 116 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (2%)	37 (32%)	45 (39%)	30 (26%)	1 (1%)	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.

Commentary

19. The proportion of teaching in the school which is good or better has increased significantly, from about a half to almost three-quarters, since the last inspection. The quality of teaching is good overall and very good teaching is dominant in mathematics, art and design and music. A high proportion of teaching in geography and science is good or better. In ICT, pupils are not helped sufficiently to work independently. In many modern foreign language lessons, the teachers' use of the foreign language is not established well enough. Less than one per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory.
20. In general, there is a higher proportion of excellent and very good teaching in Years 10/11 than in Years 7 to 9, although in modern foreign languages and in citizenship, teaching is better with the younger age group.
21. Individual lessons are planned well and in a way which demonstrates teachers' high expectations of pupils, particularly in mathematics, science, geography, history, art and design and music. The subject schemes of work in English, modern foreign languages and religious education have shortcomings and individual subjects' schemes do not adequately incorporate plans for ICT or citizenship.
22. Teaching is of good quality because teachers have a good command of their subject and show an enthusiasm for their subject and for learning which engages pupils very well, particularly in mathematics, art and design and music. Good use of questioning, which at best is persistent, probing and well targeted, was seen in geography and mathematics. However, in some lessons, particularly in Years 10/11, expectations of what could be attained by the most capable pupils are too low. The structure of lessons is well thought through in the planning. Effective

starter activities were observed in mathematics but lesson endings were not always effective in drawing together the learning.

23. Homework is used well in mathematics, science, modern foreign languages, geography, history and art and design to secure and complement pupils' learning in class but is not used well enough to support learning in English and music.
24. As a result of the generally good or very good teaching, pupils learn well in all subjects except English and ICT but, even in these subjects, learning is perfectly satisfactory. Learning is particularly productive in mathematics, science, art and design and music and pupils work well collaboratively in English, art and design, music and religious education. In geography, their skills as independent learners are enhanced through the enquiry work they do, including the programme of fieldwork.
25. In general, teachers manage pupils' behaviour well although, occasionally, the poor behaviour of a minority does inhibit others' progress in lessons, particularly in sets dominated by lower attaining boys.
26. Because of carefully planned teaching programmes, pupils with special educational needs learn well and make progress. Their individual education plans help many of these pupils to reach their targets. By ensuring that all teachers have clear strategies for teaching these pupils, more will achieve their targets. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the progress of pupils with a statement of special educational needs and this arrangement enables them to enjoy a full curriculum with other members of their class. Effective work in support of the lower attaining pupils is done in Year 7, where a significant proportion are withdrawn in small groups from one lesson per week for 'catch-up' work in literacy.
27. The very few pupils who are beginners in English are assessed when they enter the school. If they are found to be in early stages of English acquisition, then specialist support is requested from the local education authority. This is provided in conjunction with the school learning support department. In subject lessons, generally, teachers know their pupils and adapt their approaches to match their needs and abilities. When they have acquired a basic level of English, the responsibility for these pupils' learning is returned to the school and they are given additional help and support by the learning support department when required. These arrangements have ensured that such pupils have made secure progress.
28. Teachers' assessment of pupils' work is done well overall and is particularly thorough and constructive in mathematics, science, geography, history, art and design and music – in the latter two, the arrangements for pupils to self-assess are good. There are many examples of diligent and helpful marking, which makes it clear to pupils what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve. However, there is too much variability between subjects as to pupils' understanding of what they need to do to improve. This is best in art and design. Assessment strategies need some improvement in ICT, religious education and physical education, although good quality feedback is given to individual pupils.
29. Assessment data is provided for departments and these data are used particularly well in science, mathematics and art and design. For example, in science and mathematics, data are discussed in the department and widely used in setting groups, checking pupils' progress and setting their targets.

The curriculum

The curriculum which the school provides is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a broad range of curriculum opportunities matched to the needs of all pupils in Key Stage 4.
- There are very good opportunities for enrichment, participation in school life and supported learning outside school hours.
- Arrangements for pupils transferring from primary school and into education post-16 are very good.
- The arrangements which the school makes to ensure that all pupils follow a coherent course in citizenship are unsatisfactory.
- The curriculum in physical education is not broad enough because of inadequate indoor facilities in the school.
- Not all pupils receive their statutory entitlement to be taught ICT in Years 10/11.
- Some pupils do not receive their full curriculum entitlement because of catch-up work in Year 7 or through studying separate sciences in Years 10/11.
- The governors' policy to provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils is not properly implemented.

Commentary

30. The curriculum which the school provides is broad, balanced and relevant. From the outset, the arrangements to help pupils make the transition from primary school are very good, with a residential week to help them to get to know one another and develop a team identity. In mathematics, there are particularly good arrangements to ensure that the school can build upon what pupils learned in the primary school.
31. There is good provision through the curriculum for all pupils, irrespective of their prior attainment. A well-planned programme provides for their personal development, including health and sex education, and information about drug and substance misuse. Careers education and preparation for the world of work and education after age 16 are well provided for and well supported by local post-16 institutions and the Connexions organisation.
32. Initiatives to improve the effectiveness of learning in the early years of secondary education have been taken on board by the school and have proved very effective in promoting high standards, especially in mathematics. The quality of the curriculum offered in art and design, music, mathematics and science is particularly rich and very effective. The school makes effective use of the Increased Flexibility Programme to tailor the curriculum for older pupils to their specific needs and interests. Relevant vocational and other courses are provided at a number of establishments in the area and, for a small number of pupils, there is work-related learning in the workplace. Some pupils who are withdrawn from their normal timetable to take part in catch-up lessons in literacy, and those older pupils who have opted to study three separate sciences, are not able to receive their full curriculum entitlement in personal, social and health education and citizenship.
33. Provision for activities which take place outside normal school hours is very good. There are good opportunities for pupils to undertake private study and to take part in booster or revision lessons after school, and the school provides a particularly wide range of cultural, sporting and recreational activities which are well supported and much enjoyed by pupils of all ages. The school council, which represents pupils' interests in the school, provides very good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and make their views known, and its decisions are taken seriously by the management of the school.
34. The provision which the school makes to ensure that the programmes of study for citizenship are followed by all pupils is at present unsatisfactory, and the provision for all pupils to be taught ICT up to age 16 does not satisfy legal requirements, although the school has plans to remedy this situation in the very near future. The breadth and range of curriculum experiences which the school can offer in physical education are seriously hampered by the school's unsatisfactory indoor facilities. The governors have put in place an appropriate policy to provide

a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. However, this is not being implemented by all staff, and practice is consequently in breach of statutory requirements.

35. Because the provision is good, pupils with special educational needs have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. The learning support manager liaises well with teachers and there is a close working relationship with the local education authority agencies. In view of this, those pupils with a statement of special educational needs are given good support to improve their learning and personal development. The flexible learning programme for older pupils who become disaffected provides enrichment opportunities in addition to what the school already provides. Whilst the resources and accommodation are adequate, there is insufficient space for small group work.
36. Accommodation, staffing and resources are all satisfactory. The problems in music, science and the library which were identified in the previous inspection have been resolved. The school enjoys a well-run, well-stocked library and a dedicated arts studio. Despite satisfactory resources and very good technician support in design and technology, the failure to provide CAD/CAM fully in Years 7 to 9 means that curriculum requirements are not being met.
37. The problems identified in the previous inspection in physical education remain. Poor accommodation, especially for indoor work, impacts upon provision. Dance, too, is restricted by inadequate access to the studio.
38. Staffing is satisfactory. The vast majority of teachers are specialists in the subjects they teach. Arrangements in humanities, where teachers cover all the specialisms, are satisfactory since they support each other to eliminate any problems that may arise.

Care, guidance and support

The provision the school makes for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **very good**. Its provision of support, advice and guidance to pupils is **good**. Arrangements to involve pupils in the school's development are also **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child protection procedures are very good.
- Procedures to ensure pupils work in a healthy and safe environment are very good.
- Induction arrangements are very good.

Commentary

39. The school has very good child protection procedures. The child protection officer is very aware of her role and has arranged for all staff to receive up-to-date training. Child protection training is also included in induction procedures for new members of staff. Regular health and safety audits are carried out, and each department has very good procedures for monitoring risk assessment. The school has an appropriate number of qualified first-aiders and accidents are meticulously recorded and records of administration of medicines are kept well.
40. The school offers a very good standard of care to all its pupils. Pupils who have social or pastoral needs are identified, monitored carefully and are well supported by staff. Form tutors work well with heads of year and senior management to track progress of all groups of pupils and, as a result, their learning is enhanced and they make very good progress. Relationships are a strength of the school. Because teachers and teaching assistants know individual pupils well, there are trusting relationships that develop pupils' self-confidence. Pupils confirm that they have very good access to well-informed support, advice and guidance for their personal and academic development; they know who to go to for any help.

41. Induction arrangements for pupils are very good. The school makes strong efforts to ensure that transition between primary and secondary school is painless and successful. Regular meetings take place between primary and secondary school teaching staff, and the headteacher and staff regularly visit the primary school to meet pupils. The school arranges 'taster days' for prospective pupils and a residential visit to Conwy. As a result of the very good transition arrangements, pupils make a very good start to their secondary education.
42. The school has very good procedures for seeking, valuing and acting on pupils' views. The school council is used as a vehicle for obtaining pupils' opinions, and pupils from each year group are pleased to be elected to represent the views of their peers to school management.
43. The well-run lunchtime club allows pupils to talk informally to staff, do homework, play games or just simply relax in a safe environment. To help Year 7 pupils improve their literacy skills, many Year 10 pupils listen to their younger colleagues read each morning during registration.
44. All pupils have regular reviews of their progress. Unfortunately, the progress reports from subject teachers do not always make it clear what pupils are able to do and the National Curriculum levels at which they are working. Pupils play an important part in their own development by contributing towards their targets.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents and the community are **satisfactory**. Links with other schools and colleges are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are generally happy with the provision which the school makes for their children.
- The school generally communicates well with parents, although there is room for improvement in the information provided on pupils' progress.
- The governors' annual report to parents is insufficiently detailed in some respects.

Commentary

45. One quarter of parents responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire. The overwhelming majority felt that their children are making good progress, the school is well led and managed, staff treat children fairly and their children are not bullied or harassed. One sixth feel that they are not kept well informed about their children's progress. The inspection findings agree with the positive views and, to some extent, with the negative views expressed.
46. Information provided by the school is satisfactory. The school has provided a very good prospectus, which is well written and parent-friendly, although some of the examination results data is difficult to follow. Regular newsletters are produced, giving good information about the school's future events. Parents are informed about their children's progress via full reports and via the outcomes of the twice-yearly monitoring of pupils' progress. The reports do not indicate pupils' progress in ICT if they do not take it as an examination option subject in Years 10 and 11. The governors' annual report to parents does not give sufficient accounting detail or full information about the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs.
47. A parents' evening for all pupils is held during the year. In addition, a special evening is held for all the parents of Year 7 pupils shortly after they have started school to see how they have settled in. Parents' evenings are also held for parents of Year 9 pupils to discuss GCSE options, and parents of Years 10 and 11 pupils to discuss careers.
48. Parents are able to contact the school at any time if they have any concerns and are warmly welcomed into school by arrangement. A small number of parents help in the school by acting

as escorts, working in the laboratory, as invigilators for examinations and helping on school visits. The 'friends of the school' is a small but effective body that works hard to arrange social events and, last year, raised a considerable sum for school funds.

49. A school planner is provided for each pupil and is used well as a two-way form of communication between school and parents. This enables staff and parents to fully track pupils' progress and has a significant impact on the progress pupils make.
50. The school has satisfactory links with the community and good links with other educational establishments. Pupils are pro-active in supporting local charities; Year 10 pupils work in the community service scheme but the school has not been successful in persuading local businesses to support their bid for Media College status.
51. The shared provision arrangements for Years 10 and 11 pupils to attend Rease Heath Agricultural College and Mid Cheshire College work very well; and very effective links with Sir John Deane's Sixth-Form College enable pupils to make a positive start to their education.
52. Parents of pupils with special educational needs attend the annual review of statements and they are invited to contribute to the education programme and targets in the individual education plans. These arrangements are effective.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**. The quality of leadership provided by the headteacher is **good**, as is that of the leadership group and other key staff. The effectiveness of management is also **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective work under the new headteacher's leadership to establish the school's vision for its future and the key priorities for its improvement.
- The process of drawing up a new development plan has secured the staff's commitment; however, the plan needs further development if it is to secure improvement.
- Pupil performance data is used with increasing effectiveness and has had an impact on success.
- The leadership group of senior staff works well as a team and is effective in its support for other team leaders; leadership of mathematics, science, history, art and design and music is very good.
- Communications and day-to-day management are good.
- Performance management and review are now good and are linked to good induction and continuing professional development programmes.
- Governors help to shape the future direction of the school, know its strengths and weaknesses, understand their role well and are keen to improve as critical friends.
- The policy document and annual reporting to parents with regard to SEN provision need improving to bring them in line with the latest Code of Practice.

Commentary

53. The leadership provided both by the headteacher and by other key staff is **good**. The headteacher, during the five terms that he has been in post, has worked carefully and purposefully to establish a shared understanding about the future directions of the school and the principles which will underpin its work. Teaching staff feel well consulted in the process and, as a result, work well together to the benefit of pupils.
54. While the school clearly has, as a central concern, the desire to raise the achievement of pupils in a broad sense, including their academic achievements, the school's development plan

makes no explicit reference to targets for improved outcomes in national tests and examinations. Success criteria are insufficiently precise in this regard. However, in practice, the school does focus considerable, and increasingly effective, energy on raising standards and this commitment needs to be better reflected in the development plan. The school's broader ambitions and goals are well reflected in the recently produced plan. Staff teams within the school have responded with enthusiasm and in a variety of ways which reflect their commitment. This has resulted in a school development plan, as currently published, which is somewhat unwieldy and variable in quality. Yet it is a plan towards which staff have loyalty and which is, therefore, likely to harness energy and resources in an effective way over the coming months.

55. Staff in the leadership group of six work well together. They, and most other key staff with leadership roles, are good at motivating their teams. Among subjects, leadership is best in mathematics, science, art and design and music where, in all cases, it is very good. In no subject is leadership unsatisfactory. Pupils respond well to the quality of leadership, and the role models, provided by staff and this helps them to feel secure in their learning and in the ways they take on responsibility.
56. Coupled with some effective early outcomes to the workforce remodelling programme, the leadership of support staff is now improving. The group of staff is well motivated and makes an important contribution to the generally contented and smooth running of the school.
57. Management in general is **good**. The school does engage in self-evaluation so that, in general, team leaders know about the strengths and areas for development within their teams and they work effectively to secure improvement. Performance review of teaching staff, and other opportunities for observation, lead to constructive feedback, supported by the imaginative range of continuing professional development which flourishes in the school. There is scope to improve the ways in which outcomes of self-evaluation are recorded so that the school can become more able, systematically, to chart its own improvements and be more confident in identifying any weaknesses and the way they are handled.
58. The monitoring of pupil performance data is very thorough. Data from primary schools are used very effectively to place pupils on intake into appropriate groups. The progress of individual pupils is monitored carefully to identify any who appear to be falling behind expectations, leading to appropriate additional support being applied. Patterns of performance are carefully reviewed to see what adjustments to schemes of work and/or approaches to teaching and learning might be needed. For instance, a range of new strategies has recently been deployed which appears to have had a positive impact on outcomes in the national tests at the end of Year 9. Alternative curriculum arrangements have been made for a number of pupils in Years 10/11 in response to analyses of their needs.
59. The performance management process for teachers is well embedded in the school's procedures, and is supported and appreciated by the majority of staff. There is a clear focus on classroom performance and the process has been effective in bringing about improvement in some areas of the curriculum. The opportunities for continuing professional development at the school are a real strength, and include innovative arrangements such as the Masters Programme run at the school in conjunction with Manchester Metropolitan University, attended by ten teachers. The predominant ethos is one of a commitment to self-improvement. As a result, the school has seen standards improve – most significantly at age 14. There is also a very effective induction programme for the school's group of newly qualified teachers. Performance review of support staff has not yet been introduced but plans to begin this shortly are now in place.
60. The school has been effective in recent years in recruiting suitably qualified and experienced teaching staff. There has been significant turnover of teaching staff over the last two years and some of this has resulted from the high quality professional development which the school provides for its teachers. The turnover is not judged to have had any negative effect on the

overall quality of provision for pupils and has had the positive impact of providing new opportunities for other teachers at the school, who have responded with enthusiasm. Where any teaching is done by non-specialist staff, this is well planned and well resourced to ensure no detriment to pupils.

61. Members of the leadership group of senior staff have very significant workloads. A key new role for each of them is that of 'leadership link' to a number of staff teams. While this new role puts further pressure on these staff, the arrangement is proving to be very effective in improving support, management, communication and accountability. Rightly, it is highly valued by team leaders and leadership group personnel alike. In the light of this positive evaluation, it would now be timely to clarify and publish a description of this role. The learning support manager has a clear vision of support for learning, and the team of teaching assistants co-operates well and shares good practice.
62. Other forms of communication are also effective, including regular staff briefings and the leadership group's half-termly newsletter to staff. In general, all subjects are well represented through the regular meetings of curriculum managers, although arrangements in relation to the creative arts should be reviewed. The staff handbook is a thorough compendium, although its scale and complexity hamper its accessibility.
63. The school has dealt well with the budget difficulties which arose in the last financial year. The steps necessary to achieve a balanced budget have been largely successful. These have included the need to increase the size of many teaching groups but this is not judged to have had a negative impact on pupil performance. There is a need now to improve the way budget is allocated to curriculum areas, and other spending areas, so that the budget can be aligned to the development plan. At present, it is not. As a result, some developments in the current plan are insufficiently well costed and there remains a lack of clarity as to whether individual development actions are supported by the necessary resources. Coupled with relatively weak success criteria, this will make it hard to evaluate the outcome of the plan as currently published. In the exercise to balance the budget, the school did engage in some benchmarking activity but now needs to establish a more rigorous approach to securing best value.
64. Governance is **satisfactory**. Governors have been involved with the shaping of the new development plan and several have been able to attend special sessions, jointly with staff, which have been established for this purpose. They have been keen to see included the priority of involving the school more with its local community. Governors have, over the years, been efficient in their review of policies to ensure that all their statutory duties are met. They are right to feel the need now to take new stock of this process, particularly with regard to policies relating to the curriculum, where not all statutory requirements are met, and to provision for pupils with special educational needs, where their policy does not take account of the latest Code of Practice.
65. Governors, particularly the chair and vice-chair, who have regular meetings with the headteacher, have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are rightly keen to ensure that their access to information about the school's performance is fully secure so that they feel increasingly confident in their role as critical friends to the school. Pupil performance trends and targets for improvement are largely discussed within the curriculum committee. Steps to improve its effectiveness would secure the governors' important role here.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	2,602,933	Balance from previous year	59,222
Total expenditure	2,658,904	Balance carried forward to the next	3,251

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Above average	Average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Teaching and Learning	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Leadership	Satisfactory	
Management	Satisfactory	
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Development planning demonstrates a clear focus on training and resources to improve examination results.
- Efficient classroom management and good relationships with pupils generate a good environment for learning.
- Provision for very able pupils needs strengthening.
- Question and answer sessions do not adequately involve all pupils.

Commentary

66. Results in the end of Year 9 national tests in 2003 were well above the national average, with 90 per cent of pupils gaining Level 5 or above. This demonstrates a significant improvement on the previous year's results which were broadly in line with the national average. In the GCSE examinations, the proportion gaining grades A*-C fell by four per cent from the previous year but was still in line with the national average. English literature results, at 65 per cent of the cohort gaining A*-C, were in line with the national average. In comparison with other subjects, boys are not performing as well as girls in GCSE examinations.
67. Attainment on entry is above average and pupils continue to achieve satisfactorily through both key stages. Pupils make steady progress in developing speaking and listening, reading and writing. By the end of Year 9, pupils can write about figurative language in poetry and extract information from text. By the end of Year 11, they are able to write at greater length and in a variety of styles. The library makes a significant contribution to raising standards of reading. At the end of Year 9, pupils have had good preparation to study Shakespeare in greater depth. By the end of Year 11, pupils are able, with support, to respond to increasingly difficult texts. The very highest ability group do not always reach the standards that they might as they are not extended fully.
68. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. Around half the teaching is good at both key stages. Relationships with pupils are very good and there is unfailing praise for pupils in all that they do to encourage them in their work. Pupils' attitudes are very good as a result of experienced classroom management, and examples of poor behaviour are few. This leads to an environment conducive to learning. Where teaching is less good, unvaried activities, for example lengthy question and answer sessions with lower ability groups, lead to some pupils

losing concentration. Where teaching is good, activities are broken up and varied. Reluctant pupils are prompted to answer and given time to do so. There is often a polarisation of gender groups, with one group dominating the lesson so that there is passivity in the other. In planning, learning objectives are not always fully considered or made clear to pupils. Consequently, pupils are unsure as to what progress they have made through the lesson. The plenary session is rarely used to celebrate work or assess what learning has taken place. Homework is only occasionally set or requested. Marking of work is rich in comment and correction so that pupils understand how they may improve. All teachers use collaborative work to good effect, and pupils respond in a mature way. A particular strength is the ability of teachers to ensure that social and moral development is addressed. Opportunities for this are rarely overlooked and pupils respond eagerly. There is good provision for those pupils identified as needing literacy support in Year 7.

69. Leadership and management of the department are satisfactory with some good features. Strategies for improvements in examination performance are planned and implemented after close scrutiny of results. However, there is no specific provision for gifted and talented pupils which might further improve their results. Schemes of work are yet to be completed following the recent full audit of the curriculum in Years 7 to 9. There are plans to strengthen teaching and learning which should be brought forward to ensure earlier impact.
70. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Assessment is now in place and well co-ordinated. The use of ICT is evident in work samples but was not observed in practice. Library resources are now rich, and varied. Monitoring of teaching is carried out and is beginning to lead to the necessary improvement in the proportion of good teaching. Group work is well established and is now a strength.

Drama

71. Teaching is good at both key stages. Pupils very quickly learn the behavioural response which is required of them, in what is a difficult teaching environment. They settle to work immediately and can move from noisy active planning to silence in a few moments. Consequently, learning is good and pupils make progress from exploring and expressing emotion to evaluating a dramatic piece delivered by their peers.
72. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic and hard-working subject co-ordinator who has developed her expertise through professional development. Pupils enjoy access to a purpose-built studio. A clear and concise development plan for the subject has been written which will extend provision at both key stages.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

73. These skills are generally well developed. Pupils are able to write critically and at some length in history. They demonstrate good analysis of text to detect bias. Use of audio tape and class discussion has developed very good listening skills. However, listening skills in physical education lessons are less well developed. In science, some good examples of extended writing for homework were observed and pupils are able to use some very advanced vocabulary in their writing generally. Sequencing and cloze procedures aid reading, comprehension and writing in mathematics, design and technology, humanities and science. Where definition and spelling of key words are taught as part of a strategy, as in science, music and mathematics, pupils are demonstrating a thorough knowledge of subject-specific vocabulary.

Modern foreign languages

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

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Above average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Satisfactory
Teaching and Learning	Good	Satisfactory
Leadership	Good	
Management	Satisfactory	
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Examination results are above average.
- Teaching is good, especially in Years 7 to 9.
- The leadership of the department is good.
- The scheme of work is unsatisfactory.
- The target language is not used consistently enough in teaching.

Commentary

74. Attainment is above average in modern foreign languages. In 2003, almost half the 14-year-old pupils attained standards above the national average in French, although results of teachers' assessment have fallen quite sharply over the past three years. The difference between boys' and girls' attainment at this stage is similar to the national picture. In the GCSE examinations, nearly two-thirds of the pupils entered achieved grades A*-C in 2003 – above the national average, although a considerably lower proportion than in 2002. There were very few of the highest grades A* and A in 2003.
75. In the work seen during the inspection, standards were generally above average by Year 9. Most pupils, including lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, achieve levels which are at least satisfactory and often good relative to their capabilities. Standards are higher in the understanding of language and in some writing activities than in speaking, because in a number of lessons the emphasis is on more mechanical approaches to language than to its active use. Pupils' attitudes to learning languages are generally very positive.
76. Able pupils in Years 10/11 achieve well; they reach very high standards relative to the examination requirements. Average and lower attaining pupils generally achieve satisfactory standards, although some lower attainers do not have satisfactory attitudes to learning French and, consequently, underachieve.
77. Teachers work hard to help pupils make progress. Most lessons are thoroughly prepared and contribute well to the progress which pupils make. There is a range of teaching styles in modern foreign languages; in some lessons with both older and younger pupils the focus is on vocabulary and the mechanics of language rather than on more active speaking activities. In these lessons, the teacher does not use the target language enough, and there is insufficient active rehearsal of the spoken word. As a result, pupils' speaking is their least well-developed skill and their accents are not as good because of the lack of role model from the teacher. In some good and very good lessons which do contain an imaginative range of speaking activities, expectations are higher and pupils make better progress in all aspects of the language. Pupils' work in books is generally well presented and helpfully marked by the teacher.
78. The modern foreign languages department has undergone a number of radical changes in the recent past. The head of department is recently appointed and half the teaching staff are new to the profession. Leadership is good; there are clear policies and good planning which suit the

department's immediate needs. Teachers work well together as a team and share ideas. The head of department provides a good role model for her colleagues, although there is an urgent need to develop a shared approach to the use of the target language in the classroom as required by the National Curriculum. The departmental scheme of work, produced prior to the arrival of the current head of department, is unsatisfactory.

79. The department has been able to sustain its above-average examination results despite the recent period of staffing instability, and standards at age 14 have risen since 1998. There was some unsatisfactory teaching in the last inspection, which is no longer the case. Overall, improvement has been satisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Above average	Above average
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and Learning	Very good	Very good
Leadership	Very good	
Management	Very good	
Progress since previous inspection	Very good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good, promoting effective learning.
- The enthusiasm and commitment of the head of department and the staff who work well together as a team.
- Relationships in lessons are very good; pupils behave well and work hard.
- The extensive and effective use of ICT to support learning.
- The very good achievement has led to test results at the end of Year 9 which have improved significantly; GCSE results are improving too and the number of higher grades now needs to be improved.

Commentary

80. Results in tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were above the national average. When compared to similar schools, standards were well above the average. The proportion of pupils reaching the required level rose significantly in 2003. In GCSE examinations in 2002, the proportion of pupils gaining A*-C grades was above the national average. These results have risen steadily since the last inspection. In 2003, the proportion was even higher.
81. Standards of work seen in lessons and in the pupils' books were above the expected level for many pupils. Achievement is very good. Pupils with special educational needs work and achieve as well as other pupils in their years. Most pupils are able to draw accurate graphs and interpret and analyse data. The connection between fractions, decimals and percentages is understood well by the majority of pupils.
82. Teaching is very good overall. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives which are shared with pupils. In the best lessons, the teachers have high expectations of the pupils, the pace is good and a variety of tasks are prepared to challenge the pupils. A very good programme of investigative work is incorporated into the teaching programme, providing vital practice for later coursework projects. The extensive use of ICT is a strength of the department and is used very effectively by the pupils for producing spreadsheets and graphs. The department is responding very positively to the National Numeracy Strategy and this is raising standards.

83. Some good starter exercises were seen in lessons in all years. The ending of lessons is sometimes not so well focused, with pupils' learning not always appropriately consolidated. Teachers make effective use of questioning, encouraging pupils to explain their answers and solutions to the rest of the class. As a result of effective teaching, most pupils acquire knowledge of basic skills and concepts which enable them to work on their own to improve their understanding. Literacy skills are improved very well by the emphasis on key words, the insistence of teachers on the correct use of mathematical language and the very good oral work in lessons. Pupils have a positive attitude to mathematics, they behave very well in lessons and relationships between pupils and with their teachers are very good.
84. Assessment procedures are very good. Marking is both encouraging and informative. Pupils' attainment data is used to monitor their progress and set targets.
85. Leadership and management of the mathematics department are very good. The new head of department has a clear vision of what needs to be done to raise standards and has made an impressive start. He is well supported by the commitment and hard work of the team of teachers. Teacher support outside lessons is extensive, through a residential weekend for higher attaining pupils, booster classes and mathematical challenge competitions. Liaison with the feeder primary schools and post-16 institutions is good.
86. Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. There is now a greater range of learning activities, teaching has improved considerably and the use of ICT is now an integral part of the curriculum.

Mathematics across the curriculum

87. The key features of the National Numeracy Strategy have been shared with all staff in the school at a training day and that has helped in raising awareness of how pupils can develop their mathematical knowledge and skills in other subjects across the curriculum. This has ensured that pupils cope well with the mathematical demands made in other subjects. The science department is focusing on graphs at the moment and some very good graph work was seen, as well as numerical work used in investigations and the use of formulae. Pupils were able to analyse and interpret data and draw different types of graphs in geography. Measuring and weighing were carried out accurately in design and technology, where pupils also developed shape and space skills. Formulae were worked out and used during spreadsheet work in ICT. Members of the mathematics department have met with the other curriculum managers to offer help in further developing the pupils' mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Above average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and Learning	Good	Good
Leadership	Very good	
Management	Very good	
Progress since previous inspection	Very good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good achievement leading to much improved results in the national tests at the end of Year 9.
- The assessment of pupils' progress is very good.
- Teachers are highly qualified and share good practice.
- The quality of leadership is very good and provides a clear vision.
- More work needs to be done on the coursework element of GCSE to raise standards further.

Commentary

88. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2002 were above national figures, but well below similar schools based on prior attainment. Boys did better than girls. In 2003, there was an exceptional improvement and the results were well above the national average and well above those of similar schools. Results in the 2002 GCSE examinations were well above average both in the A*-C range and in the higher grades of A* and A. Boys did better than girls. Results in 2003 fell slightly, but were still above national figures.
89. By the end of Year 9, pupils' knowledge of science is above average. They show confidence when doing practical work and can accurately predict outcomes of experiments. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment can construct word equations and have a good command of scientific vocabulary used in appropriate context. This reflects the way the department has focused on the skill of scientific writing. Scrutiny of their books shows that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout Year 7 to Year 9. By the end of Year 11, pupils' practical skills have become more sophisticated. They collate, tabulate and analyse results effectively and often redraft work to eliminate anomalies and errors. This is particularly strong in the chemistry area of the double award science. However, they are less confident working without teacher support on their GCSE coursework, and evaluation is less precise.
90. Teaching is good across the subject. Strong features of the most effective teaching are planning, challenge and assessment of pupils' progress. Assessment is very good and is a strength of the department and the pupils receive well-focused feedback on their work that helps them to understand how to improve. Teaching in class is geared to checking and developing understanding. The probing questions from the teachers encourage pupils to consider their answers more carefully and therefore develop their thinking skills so they learn more quickly. Teachers need to develop a more cohesive approach to the coursework part of GCSE in order to raise achievement. The sharing of innovative ideas and good practice is helping to raise standards.
91. The department is led and managed very well, and there is a focus on ensuring the highest possible standards. Innovation is rife, and sweeping curricular changes have been made. The leadership places a high priority on helping to develop teachers' skills and sharing their good practice. The improvement in standards reflects a department with ambition. Very good progress has been made since the previous inspection. There is a very wide range of textbooks which are used to reinforce work done in class. The quality of teaching is much improved. The use of ICT has also improved considerably and the use of PowerPoint presentations and the interactive whiteboard adding a new visual impact to learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Average	Average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Teaching and Learning	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Leadership	Satisfactory	
Management	Satisfactory	
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Some pupils in Years 10 and 11 do not have their statutory entitlement to the National Curriculum for ICT.
- Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject provide a secure basis for pupils' learning.
- Help given to individual pupils in lessons is based on good knowledge of their learning needs.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are good, providing a good atmosphere for learning.
- The use of ICT in other subjects is patchy, with no co-ordination to promote or reinforce learning.
- There are too few opportunities for gifted and talented pupils to make independent decisions in their learning.

Commentary

92. The small number of pupils taking GCSE in the subject in 2002 and 2003 gained good results. Standards are satisfactory at the end of Year 9, and for those pupils studying ICT at the end of Year 11. Pupils using ICT in other subjects to help their learning have sufficient capability to do so without difficulty.
93. Year 7 pupils enter the school with average standards overall in ICT. By the end of Year 9, they are technically competent. The most able work accurately and with good understanding. The majority do not consider fully the purpose of the activity or the needs of the user in their self-evaluation, and so their work reflects their personal preferences rather than the needs of the user. Where they produce their own designs, as for example in drawing cartoons for children, their work is competent. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their ability, helped by close guidance given in class. They use computers well to help their literacy and numeracy.
94. By the end of Year 11, standards of those pupils following a taught ICT course are satisfactory. Work meets the demands of the GCSE syllabus. Pupils training for the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) work with care, almost all producing coursework at the standard of the tests. The very close guidance that they are given allows lower attainers to produce work that meets examination requirements. However, it inhibits the independent decision-making of the highest attainers, who are very well prepared for examination success but do not exhibit the flair often seen among pupils of their age. Boys work more systematically and take more chances in their designs, whereas girls tend to design to please themselves. Achievement is therefore satisfactory in terms of examination results. Overall, the achievement of the majority of pupils is satisfactory in comparison with their attainment on entry. The lowest attainers' achievement is good in relation to their ability, and the use of ICT supports the development of their literacy and numeracy.
95. Those pupils who do not take either the ICT or ECDL courses depend on the use of ICT in other subjects to develop their capability. Their attainment is usually sufficient for the purposes to which it is put but is not high enough to fully meet expectations at this age.

96. Teaching is satisfactory overall in all year groups. Relationships in class are good, with teachers supporting individual pupils well and gaining their respect. Pupils feel confident in the lessons, enjoy the work and sometimes are sorry that the lesson has ended. Teachers support pupils with clear step-by-step instructions. They give higher attainers too few opportunities to make their own decisions. Teachers set useful homework and mark work, pointing to areas for improvement. Pupils therefore know how well they are doing. In Years 7 to 9, teachers' objectives are good, to develop the pupils' understanding but, in practice, the lessons have too much material to be completed in the time. It is therefore difficult for teachers to pull together the pupils' learning at the end of the lesson. The GCSE course is very carefully planned to meet the requirements of the examination. In this course, guidance is such that pupils know exactly what they have to do, to the extent that work from all pupils is very similar. Multimedia presentations, in particular, vary only in choice of colour and clipart. ICT teachers need to work more closely with other subjects, as for example when some pupils learning a spreadsheet procedure had already used it in mathematics.
97. The leadership and management of the discrete courses are good. The main members of the department work very well together and use lesson plans that give good support to non-specialist teachers. They collaborate well to capitalise on their expertise. Accommodation is well organised to support learning at computers and away from them, although one room is too overcrowded to allow easy access to pupils working at the back of the room. There is a good range of equipment to support demonstration and individual work. The staff in general have been trained in, or are knowledgeable about, the use of ICT.
98. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. There is now a wider range of courses to meet the needs of different pupils. Improved teacher skills and equipment have made it possible for science, mathematics, art and design and music to use ICT well to help learning. However, statutory requirements for the National Curriculum in Years 10/11 are still not being met.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

99. There has been some improvement since the last inspection when it was a key issue. In science and mathematics, ICT is used very well to support and develop pupils' learning. ICT is used well in music and physical education. In design and technology, pupils use ICT sufficiently to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum, but their achievement is constrained by the lack of equipment for computer-assisted manufacture. In art and design, there is insufficient use of computers to manipulate images in Key Stage 3 lessons. Pupils' attainment in ICT is sufficient to support the activities that they are required to carry out. The majority of use in other subjects is dependent on pupils using their home computers and is not planned to promote subject learning. Management of ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. There is too little co-ordination to help departments to meet their National Curriculum obligations. Teachers in most subjects are not taking opportunities to develop pupils' understanding by co-ordinating the taught ICT course and cross-curricular use of computers.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Above average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and Learning	Good	Good
Leadership	Good	
Management	Good	
Progress since previous inspection	Good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good assessment and data recording procedures enable monitoring of pupils' progress.
- Teachers have high expectations and successfully challenge pupils of all abilities to produce good work.
- There is good provision for the development of pupils' independent learning skills.

Commentary

100. Results in GCSE examinations were well above average in 2003 and above average in 2002.
101. Standards of work seen in Years 7 to 9 during the inspection were above average. Pupils come to school with above average attainment and maintain this standard through good achievement. All pupils develop good map and diagram skills, and numeracy is well supported by the use of graphs. Higher attaining pupils produce very good detailed writing and all pupils learn to use geographical terms. Lower attaining pupils write factual answers but do not always complete their work.
102. In Years 10/11, standards in work seen are also above average; all pupils have good geography skills. The examination fieldwork shows good use of ICT and the pupils' ability to work independently. Lower attaining pupils may not include an evaluation or conclusion for their coursework, and linking information remains a weakness. Pupils with special educational needs and some lower ability pupils take a certificated entry course and all passed in 2002. The work seen for this course is to a consistently high standard.
103. Teaching is good overall. Lessons are very well planned with good, varied resources to support and motivate pupils. Lower attaining pupils are supported by structured worksheets, but clearer outcomes are needed to encourage pupils to complete work. Varied activities and good enquiry work motivate pupils to concentrate on their work. In a very good Year 10 lesson, resources were well prepared and pupils worked independently on a range of tasks preparing a local case study. In an excellent Year 10 lesson on the Amazon with lower ability pupils, the variety of tasks, including individual creative display work and very good literacy input, ensured concentration throughout a double lesson. Marking is good for all pupils and supports their learning.
104. Leadership and management are good within a well-managed humanities faculty. Since the previous inspection, the gap between girls' and boys' attainment has been closed and teaching is now good overall, including that from non-specialist teachers.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Above average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and Learning	Good	Good
Leadership	Very good	
Management	Very good	
Progress since previous inspection	Good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good with a high level of challenge that encourages pupils to reason independently, resulting in very good, extended, written argument.
- Teachers plan very well for progression in pupils' learning by frequent references to comparisons with aspects of history studied in previous units.
- Teachers share their expertise.
- The unsatisfactory behaviour of a small minority of pupils lowers the achievement of pupils in some classes.
- The teaching makes too little use of numeracy and ICT to help pupils learn.

Commentary

105. Standards at GCSE in 2002 were slightly below average for pupils who opted to take history. Results in 2003 were similar to those in the previous year. In both years, boys performed better than girls. Comparison of these pupils' results in other subjects shows, however, that their performance was similar to that expected of them. Work seen during the inspection was above average both in Year 9 and in Year 11. Pupils link ideas from the topic being studied, showing good overview of the history studied in Years 7 to 9. They listen well to the ideas of others and make relevant responses to add to discussion. The highest attainers perform well with mature understanding of the use of historical sources. Pupils with special educational needs keep up with the work of the class because they are well supported. The highest attainers in Year 11 write closely-argued essays in which their ideas flow logically, effectively challenging accepted wisdom. Lower attainers express ideas clearly with some evidence to support them. During the inspection, there was little difference in the standards of boys and girls in class. Pupils entering the school slightly above national average, therefore, achieve well by the end of Year 9 and again by the end of Year 11. Pupils across all ages and the whole ability range are challenged to perform at their full potential, with particularly impressive written argument and explanation.
106. This good performance is the result of good teaching overall, with very good planning to help non-specialist staff to teach effectively. Teachers have high expectations to which almost all pupils respond very well. In a few instances where pupils' unsatisfactory behaviour threatens to disrupt learning, teachers' good knowledge of individuals helps them to adopt tactics that defuse situations so that work can continue. Teachers ask probing questions to challenge pupils. They give good attention to the needs of particular pupils but also encourage them to support each other, so that there is a positive atmosphere in almost all classes. They mark work regularly, giving useful comment to help pupils improve. Teachers work well in collaboration with support assistants, knowing what should be done to help individual special educational needs. Pupils, therefore, often learn very well, with learning that is always at least satisfactory.
107. The subject is very well led within the humanities curriculum area, with teachers who have a similar outlook working well together. Efficient systems allow good practice to be shared and evaluated to meet the needs of individual pupils. History makes good use of literacy and

citizenship to develop historical thinking and expression. Teachers miss opportunities to use skills of numeracy and ICT to help learning in history. However, they make a significant contribution to speaking and listening skills with the result that pupils are willing to speak, support their views and listen with interest to the views of others. In addition, the curriculum is well planned to raise pupils' awareness of the experience of life in multicultural Britain. The department makes good use of its high quality textbooks and wide range of visual and written sources so that pupils enjoy a good variety of activities. Non-specialist staff have good training opportunities and, therefore, teach history well.

108. Improvement since the last inspection is good because of the department's focus on giving pupils an overview of history that helps them to make reasoned decisions based on informed links between historical periods. Pupils' understanding and expression of ideas have, therefore, improved.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Above average	Average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and Learning	Good	Very good
Leadership	Good	
Management	Good	
Progress since previous inspection	Good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievement of the substantial majority of the pupils is restricted by the inadequate amount of time given to the subject; it could be very good, leading to still higher standards.
- Marking of pupils' work should be improved.
- Schemes of work should be completed and brought up to date.

Commentary

109. Overall standards are above the national average. Teacher assessments and standards seen and heard during the inspection indicate that the substantial majority of the pupils exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and the national expectation for pupils of their age. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into all lessons and achieve well. Pupils in Year 7 have a good understanding of the story of Creation. Year 8 pupils have a good appreciation of the main Christian, Jewish and Muslim festivals. Year 9 pupils make good progress in their understanding of Judaism and the importance of the Torah.

110. Pupils reached standards which were well above average in the GCSE examinations in religious studies in 2003. Girls achieve better than boys. Standards of work seen in current GCSE lessons are above the national expectation. Pupils in Year 10 have a clear understanding of the medical and Christian ethics involved in issues such as abortion and euthanasia. Year 11 pupils have a very good understanding of such issues as 'the nature of belief', 'good and evil' and 'Christianity and human relationships'. They make very good progress in expressing their own opinions on these and other issues. Extended writing effectively develops the pupils' literacy skills. Higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress.

111. Teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9 are good. In Years 10 and 11, they are very good. The majority of the teachers have good subject knowledge and pupils learn well. For example, Year 9 pupils, in addressing the issue of the existence of God, demonstrate sincerity and good

spiritual perception as they establish their own beliefs. Relationships are mature and productive and teachers use a range of teaching methods to sustain the pupils' interest. For example, Year 11 pupils relate well to the teacher and the subject when discussing the topic of abortion and the attitude of the law and of Christians towards this issue. Teaching is best when lessons have clear objectives and are delivered within a time frame. Teaching is least effective when there is a lack of substance in the lesson and limited conviction towards the subject.

Management and planning of lessons are good and pupils with special educational needs and more able and talented pupils are identified and appropriately challenged. The pupils' work is effectively assessed as the lesson proceeds. Marking of the pupils' work should be improved and they should be made more aware of their individual levels of performance.

112. Leadership and management are both good and the department is well resourced. The revised scheme of work should be completed. Statutory requirements are being met but, as in the previous report, less time is allocated to the subject at both key stages than is recommended in the local education authority's agreed syllabus. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good in that good standards have been maintained.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Above average	Average
Achievement	Very good	Good
Teaching and Learning	Good	Good
Leadership	Good	
Management	Good	
Progress since previous inspection	Good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The improvements in staffing, accommodation and resources since the last inspection ensure a curriculum which meets requirements.
- Pupils make very good progress and achievement in Years 7 to 9 and attain well.
- Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour enable the well-prepared teachers to teach effectively and pupils to learn well.
- Good leadership enables effective lesson planning, and good management provides a focus on improvement.
- Insufficient access to ICT, particularly computer-aided design and manufacture.

Commentary

113. In the GCSE examination, overall results in design and technology vary year on year and between specialisms, largely because the makeup of the groups also varies. The overall results are satisfactory, broadly at national averages overall. Some more able pupils now choose other subjects. Scrutiny of work identifies that pupils are doing better in their coursework year on year. This is because they now receive more time for the subject in Years 7 to 9 than they did previously, and teachers are challenging pupils to do even better.

114. Standards at entry are well below the national expectation. At the end of Year 9, pupils' attainment is above the national averages at Level 5 and above. Currently, there are few pupils working at the very highest levels but the school has identified this as a matter to address. Progress then is very good and all pupils achieve very well. In Years 10 and 11, achievement still varies. Some pupils are very highly motivated and produce work of the highest quality. Others

take a more mundane view and are too easily satisfied with their achievements. This is starting to be challenged effectively, so that now pupils in Year 10 are producing work of a higher quality in class. Neither girls nor boys do better than the other and teachers give pupils with special educational needs good support so they achieve just as well at practical work as others.

115. Improved teaching is ratcheting up standards year on year. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils who respond to their teachers willingly. Lessons are challenging and pupils are producing appropriate work of quality. Learning then is good because pupils are busily engaged on appropriate and interesting tasks. They behave well, listen attentively and follow instructions well.
116. There is good leadership of the team of proficient teachers and day-to-day matters are managed well. There is a new and developing scheme of work, which is reviewed and improved together with good development plans. There is insufficient analysis of current pupils' attainment to ensure a focus on the needs of all pupils.
117. Since the last inspection, the accommodation and resources have been improved. More computers are required, particularly in the fields of computer-aided design and manufacture. Overall, the improvement since the last inspection has been good.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

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

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Above average	Well above average
Achievement	Good	Very good
Teaching and Learning	Very good	Excellent
Leadership	Excellent	
Management	Very good	
Progress since previous inspection	Very good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE results are consistently very high because of excellent teaching in Years 10 and 11.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to art and design because of the excellent leadership of the subject.
- All pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities and, in Years 10/11, very well.
- While there has been increased use of computers, pupils have limited opportunities to use ICT for practical work in Years 7 to 9.

Commentary

118. Results in the GCSE examination are consistently very high for all pupils. By the end of Year 9, pupils' practical skills are above average. The quality of observational drawing is good. Manipulative skills across a range of media, including print-making, ceramics and sculpture, are secure. Sketchbooks are used very well to record and collate images from a wide range of sources, and design ideas show imagination. Pupils are more variable in their level of understanding of artists studied. By the end of Year 11, practical skills are well above average and often outstanding. Pupils show confident understanding of artists and can articulate their intentions well. Design ideas are highly imaginative, build on a wealth of research and result in substantial final pieces across a wide range of media.

119. In Years 7 to 9, pupils benefit from well-planned lessons, giving maximum time to practical work. Pupils progress well because teachers have high expectations and set challenging tasks in a wide range of media. Homework is used well to consolidate technical skills, and the quality of marking and assessment ensures pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work.
120. In Years 10 and 11, teaching methods promote high levels of independent learning. Teachers' expectations are very high and they are sensitive to each pupil's needs, providing a learning ethos that unlocks pupils' creativity and enables them to experience the enjoyment of artistic endeavour. Teachers possess a profound understanding of art and develop a respect for skill acquisition combined with creative integrity in all pupils' work.
121. There is an excellent aesthetic vision for the department that permeates all aspects of its work. Pupils take pride in the substantial range of high quality displayed work around the school. The regular programme of visits to national art collections, and the range of European and world art studied significantly enriches pupils' cultural education. Development planning is appropriately managed and recognises the current limitations for Years 7 to 9 to use ICT to manipulate images. Very good progress has been made since the previous report.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Above average	Well above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and Learning	Very good	Very good
Leadership	Very good	
Management	Very good	
Progress since previous inspection	Good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of leadership is very good and provides a clear vision.
- Pupils achieve very well in Year 11 because of the high standard of teaching.
- The extra-curricular activities and instrumental lessons add value to the subject.
- There are insufficient opportunities to develop singing in lessons in Years 7 to 9.

Commentary

122. The teacher assessments were above average for Year 9 pupils. Results in the GCSE examinations were well above average and continue a rising trend. Overall, boys performed a little better than girls. By the end of Year 9, pupils' musical ideas are well developed. This represents good achievement considering that the majority of pupils enter Year 7 with underdeveloped musical skills. At age 16, standards are well above average and pupils achieve well compared with their prior attainment. Very good teaching is a key factor in improving the quality of learning. Many pupils, including some who have special educational needs, play instruments and take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including concerts and foreign trips. Visiting instrumental teachers play a full part in raising standards of performance and use the brass initiative to forge strong links with the feeder schools.
123. Very good teaching in Year 7 to 9 inspires pupils to do well. The high standard of planning, pace and challenge ensures that pupils are motivated and work hard. Many pupils work in the department at lunchtime and after school to improve their musical ability. Although the choir rehearses well, no singing was heard in lessons. Very good teaching in Years 10 and 11 leads

to a positive commitment from pupils. Because of this, they do well in their composing and performance modules. Good, constructive assessment and the high standard of accommodation and resources also support learning.

124. The department is led and managed very well and the inspired leadership of the teacher in charge ensures that music has a high profile in the school. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**. (No non-examination class lessons were observed in Years 10/11).

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Above average	Average (GCSE only)
Achievement	Good	Satisfactory (GCSE only)
Teaching and Learning	Good	Good (GCSE only)
Leadership	Good	
Management	Satisfactory	
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching leading to above average standards.
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards physical education and this contributes to good learning.
- A good level of extra-curricular sport contributes to good standards and pupils' enthusiasm.
- The unsatisfactory accommodation restricts the range and quality of activities.
- There is limited use of assessment to further develop teaching strategies and pupils' achievement.

Commentary

125. Results in the 2003 GCSE examinations were above average and an improvement on the previous year. The relative performance of boys and girls has been variable in recent years. Standards by the end of Year 9 are above average in performance, knowledge and understanding. This reflects teacher assessments. There is no significant difference in standards between boys and girls, and levels of skill and understanding are particularly good in games and gymnastics. It was not possible during the inspection to observe lessons in the core physical education course in Years 10/11 or to make judgements on standards here. However, the minority of pupils following the GCSE option have average standards, although standards in practical skills are higher than in theoretical knowledge and understanding. By the end of Year 9, pupils of all levels of ability, including pupils with special educational needs, higher attainers and those with English as an additional language, achieve well. Pupils on the GCSE course achieve satisfactorily, with boys achieving better than girls; these pupils in Year 11 have a lower level of knowledge and understanding and weaker literacy skills than 16-year-olds in the previous year. No gifted and talented pupils were identified during the inspection.

126. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers communicate their very good subject knowledge effectively to pupils, and well-motivated pupils respond to the teachers' high expectations of what they can achieve. This was very evident in the way challenging passing skills were introduced in Year 9 rugby and when Year 9 girls were encouraged to develop group balances in gymnastics, showing good poise and control. Pupils are given good feedback in lessons on how they can improve. Achievement in GCSE lessons is sometimes restricted by an

insufficient match of activities to the specific needs of individuals in classes with a wide range of ability.

127. The department is well led; there is a clear perception of how the curriculum can be developed to provide greater variety, and dance has recently been introduced. Management is satisfactory; there is good day-to-day management, but a limited amount of monitoring to spread good practice, and there is limited use of assessment to improve achievement, especially for older pupils. Accommodation is unsatisfactory, and the inadequacies of indoor facilities restrict both the range of activities and sometimes the quality of learning in lessons. Pupils do, however, enjoy the good range of extra-curricular sport.
128. Progress since the previous inspection has been satisfactory, with existing strengths in teaching, attitudes and progress being sustained, but no significant improvements in accommodation.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

Media studies

129. A sample of work in the new course was examined, and shows that teaching and learning are good, with planned development of evaluative judgement and reasoned explanation. The teacher gives clear instructions while allowing pupils to form their own views based on observation.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a committed subject leader with a good understanding of how the subject can be further developed.
- The subject is without representation on the school's curriculum management team.
- Teaching resources are inadequate.
- There is no reference to citizenship in other National Curriculum subject schemes of work, and this is currently limiting the full coverage of the subject.
- Active citizenship provision is good but needs further development.

Commentary

130. Work was not available for scrutiny, and assessment procedures have not yet been developed. The subject is new to the school and attainment cannot yet be formally measured.
131. Teaching was only seen in personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons as no specific citizenship units were being taught during the week of the inspection. Teaching in these lessons was good overall, particularly in Years 7 to 9. The same teachers are responsible for teaching citizenship within the PSHE programme. Teaching of discrete citizenship within other subjects was not apparent during the inspection, except in some history lessons where it was a strength.
132. In the good PSHE lessons, there was good pace and challenge and pupils were provided with a variety of activities which ensured good learning. In one lesson, which was judged overall as satisfactory, pupil interjections dominated the time for discussion and writing, thus limiting opportunities for good pupil participation.

133. There is a good focus on the development of active citizenship in other areas of school life; in particular, the very effective school council and the pupils' contribution to links with the community.
134. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory and the subject co-ordinator is committed to improvement, but the current arrangements for the management of the subject within the school limit further development. There is insufficient management and team time available for oversight of the large number of teachers involved in teaching the subject through the PSHE programme. To improve the delivery of the subject, more resources are needed, and all teachers need a greater understanding of the subject requirements to ensure that standards and achievement can be assessed and reported.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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