

INSPECTION REPORT

THE GRENEWAY SCHOOL

Royston

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117542

Headteacher: Dr D Morton

Lead inspector: Mr D Gosling

Dates of inspection: 26-28 January 2004

Inspection number: 258812

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Middle deemed secondary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	9-13
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	500

School address:	Garden Walk Royston Hertfordshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Geoff Gill

Date of previous inspection:	9 February 1998
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CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school has 245 primary aged pupils in Years 5 and 6 and 255 secondary aged pupils in Years 7 and 8. The roll comprises 266 boys and 234 girls, mainly from white British backgrounds, with a few from minority ethnic groups and a very small minority speaking English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at 3.8 per cent is below the national average. The standards of work of many pupils on entry to the school are good but a significant minority of pupils have special educational needs and overall standards on entry are in line with national expectations. About eight percent of pupils either joined or left the school during the last academic year and this is above average for secondary schools. The school has gained a wide range of awards, including for arts and physical education provision, extra-curricular activities, health education and support for staff.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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4455	Robert Joslin	Team inspector	English
19528	Roland Portsmouth	Team inspector	Mathematics
15079	Tony Boys	Team inspector	Science
8052	Ken McKenzie	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
30563	Jackie Pentlow	Team inspector	Physical education Religious education
23324	Sylvia Greenland	Team inspector	Citizenship Geography History
15051	Lynne Kauffman	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The Greneway is an effective school, with some excellent features, and provides good value for money. Pupils generally achieve well, with excellent achievement in the creative and practical subjects. This, together with a wide range of extra-curricular activities, has helped create a school full of vitality, enthusiasm and commitment at all levels. The successful drive to build on excellence in these areas and in pupils' personal development has not been matched by the drive to raise standards in the core subjects in Years 5 and 6. This is currently being addressed rigorously by the recently appointed headteacher and the leadership team. Teaching is good overall, with high expectations and good quality classroom management.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The very successful strategy of providing a broad curriculum, and establishing excellence in creative, practical and physical achievement.
- Very good provision of pupils' personal development and the impact this has on their attitudes.
- Very good leadership provided by the headteacher and leadership team and the rapid changes in structures to develop improvement strategies and raise standards in English.
- A very good governing body which provides good direction, knows the school very well, and manages finances very efficiently.
- The wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer and taken up by pupils with enthusiasm.
- Boys are underachieving in writing at the higher levels in Years 5 and 6 and there has been a comparative lack of progress in improving English results in Year 6.
- There are weak improvement plans at subject and whole school level, although this is now being addressed.
- There is a lack of consistency in the use of assessments by teachers to target work on individuals and groups of pupils to take them to higher levels.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. It has maintained and built on its strengths. The rate of improvement is below the national trend at Key Stage 2 over a five year period but in the past three years standards have risen compared with national standards (see the table below). The school had not sufficiently focused on raising standards in the core subjects since the previous inspection but there has been rapid progress this year.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools*
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	C	C	E
Mathematics	B	A	B	D
Science	B	B	A	C

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

** Similar schools are those with pupils of similar attainment in Key Stage 1 tests at the end of Year 2. It must be remembered when using this data to judge pupil progress that middle schools do not receive the pupils until Year 5.*

Pupils achieve well overall despite the weaknesses when compared with similar schools at Year 6 in 2003. In 2002, attainment was above that of schools whose pupils had similar prior attainment and work in books and assessment records indicate that achievement is good and that the challenging targets set for 2004 and 2005 are achievable. Standards achieved are at least good in seven of the subjects inspected, satisfactory in two and unsatisfactory in one – religious education. The achievement in some physical education and art work is outstanding.

The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Their moral and social development is very good. The pupils' attitudes to school are very good: they behave well and are very enthusiastic. Pupils work hard and do their best.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good overall and the quality of teaching is good. The school is characterised by a wide range of extra-curricular activities and by a broad curriculum which is successfully developing an enthusiasm for learning. The provision of modern languages in Years 5 and 6 and media studies are examples of this. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and lessons are well-planned, providing a good variety of activities to engage and motivate pupils. This includes those with special educational needs where targeted work is leading to their making very good progress. Although some teachers are making very good use of assessment to plan work for individual pupils and groups, this is still not consistent and is the key area for development.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. A vibrant and enthusiastic learning community has been established and there have been significant successes in maintaining and developing provision and standards in the creative and practical subjects and pupils' personal education. There have been weaknesses in the management of core subjects and the drive to raise standards in these, but there has been excellent progress in these areas since the appointment of the new headteacher. The governing body is very good: it has a clear grasp of strengths and weaknesses, holds the school to account well, fulfils its statutory responsibilities and has been very skilful at managing resources.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are overwhelming positive about the school. At the parents' evening, the consensus was that the school was excellent and that it served as the heart of the local community. Similarly, in questionnaires, nearly all parents thought that their children were well taught, that they made good progress and that the school was well-led. Pupils were also very positive about the school in interviews and clearly took a great pride in it. In questionnaires they were very happy with the teaching; reservations that some had about pupils' behaviour were not confirmed during the inspection and, when pupils were interviewed, it was clear that they enjoyed school and that any misbehaviour was minor.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards in English in Years 5 and 6, particularly in boys' writing;
- ensure that the school development plan and subject leaders' action plans include rigorous strategies for raising standards, particularly in the core subjects and that their implementation is monitored;
- implement the rolling subject review programme recently introduced and ensure that subject leaders have a good grasp of standards and the quality of teaching in their subject areas for all year groups;
- ensure that all teachers are using assessments to plan work in lessons for individuals and groups of pupils and that pupils and teachers are clear about what is needed to reach the next level.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

The standards attained in the school are above average at the end of Years 6 and 8. Overall, standards on entry to the school are in line with national expectations and achievement is good. The main areas of weaknesses are in boys' writing in Years 5 and 6 and religious education.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievement of pupils in their National Curriculum Year 9 tests after they left the school were very high.
- There are high achievements in the practical, physical and creative subjects - art, music, drama, design and technology, information and communication technology and physical education.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve very well.
- Achievement in English in Years 5 and 6, particularly in writing by boys, is an area of comparative weakness and there has been little improvement since the last inspection.
- Achievement in religious education in Years 7 and 8 is unsatisfactory and there has been a lack of progress in this area since the previous inspection.

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.3 (27.7)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.0 (28.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.0 (29.4)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 124 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. In 2003, the standards attained by pupils in the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds were above the national average for mathematics, well above for science and in line for English. When the results for all three subjects were compared with schools with similar prior attainment they were average overall, although they were above average in 2002. There are no national comparisons available for attainment at the end of Year 8 but value-added analysis produced by the local education authority shows that the pupils who attended The Greneway School achieved well above the average in the Year 9 tests they took a year after they left the school.
2. The overall trend of attainment over a five year period in the three core subjects in the tests for 11-year-olds is below the national trend. Results in mathematics and science have improved since 1999 but English results have declined. In the past three years, however, there has been an improvement of 12 percentage points in the proportion of pupils gaining a Level 4 or above in English. The key area of weakness in English, confirmed by the school's own value-added analysis, is the achievement by boys in writing at the higher level.
3. Standards achieved in the lessons indicate good achievement overall with no significant differences between year groups. In 97 per cent of lessons achievement was satisfactory or better and in 56 percent it was good or better. Standards observed were: very good in art and design, physical education, modern languages and information and communication technology; good in mathematics, and music; satisfactory in science and English; and unsatisfactory in

religious education. The school has set targets of 90 percent of pupils gaining Level 4 or above in English and mathematics for 2004 and 42 per cent gaining Level 5. Evidence from books and from assessment records indicates that these targets are achievable.

4. Standards are very high in the creative arts, and some are outstanding. In art and design, pupils work with great enthusiasm and they have produced very high quality displays which are visible around the school and in classrooms. In music, particularly in Years 7 and 8, the quality of performance is high. Role-play and performances in lessons show the pupils to be confident performers. High attainment in these areas is reflected in the Artsmark Gold Award. Standards in physical education are also a great strength; pupils achieve very well in lessons and in competitions and they are confident in trying out new ideas. Again, high standards are reflected in external awards - the Activemark Gold and the Sportsmark Gold.
5. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language is also very good. Pupils with special educational needs were challenged in lessons and, with extra help in ordering their writing from teacher assistants, were able to make very good progress in nearly all subjects. The few with English as an additional language have progressed well and two have progressed sufficiently to be removed from the register in the past year.
6. The standards of literacy work seen across subjects during the inspection were good overall. Pupils can generally write accurately, although a minority still display some weaknesses in spelling and punctuation. Reading is stronger. Pupils can read a range of texts and their comprehension is good. Pupils' number skills are well-developed and they have the skills to access the numerical demands of subjects where needed. Pupils have a very good range of information and communication technology skills and use them well in lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attendance and punctuality are very good. Their attitudes to school are also very good and they behave well during the school day; there have been no permanent exclusions. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils like coming to school and enjoy taking part in the excellent range of extra-curricular activities.
- Most of the pupils behave well during lessons and at other times.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibility and are very quick to use their initiative; they develop into confident and enthusiastic young people.
- Very good working relationships encourage pupils to work hard and do their very best.
- The school manages incidents of bullying or harassment very effectively.
- Pupils' social and moral development is very good.

Commentary

7. As part of the inspection, pupils were asked to complete a questionnaire and the overwhelming majority indicated that they enjoy coming to school. Inspectors agree: pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and are very proud to belong to The Greneway Middle School. The quality of teaching is good and, by providing interesting and stimulating lessons, teachers inspire and motivate the pupils. For their part, pupils speak highly of the teachers and appreciate the individual help and support they provide. Pupils also enjoy taking part in the many extra-curricular clubs and sporting activities; levels of participation are high, with the computer club proving to be especially popular.

8. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and the majority of pupils willingly comply. Little time is wasted during lessons and pupils get on with their work and make good progress. During breaks and lunchtime, pupils also behave well, although some can become noisy and boisterous. Analysis of the pupils' questionnaires showed that just over half knew of incidents of bullying or racist abuse. The inspection team explored this issue during formal and informal discussions with many pupils of all ages. They were puzzled and said that such incidents were rare. When they do occur, they involve only a very small number of pupils. In addition, they felt the school attached great urgency to such issues and acted to resolve them immediately. Inspectors agree with their positive views. Racist incidents are very rare and procedures for managing behaviour and all forms of harassment are very effective. There were four fixed period exclusions during the year preceding the inspection and these are fully documented and justified.

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
452	4	0
6	0	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
32	0	0

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

9. There is very little exclusion from the school because the school has effective procedures in place for classroom management and the school behaviour policy is rigorously implemented.
10. There are many opportunities for pupils to take an active part in the day-to-day life of the school and they respond with great enthusiasm. Pupils' out-going and confident approach makes a significant contribution to the school's lively and vibrant atmosphere. For example, many pupils represent their class on the school council, the charities committee or volunteer to become 'active listeners' who are identified and trained to listen to pupils' concerns. All pupils vote to elect the school's chosen charity and they organise fund-raising events, such as cake sales and non-uniform days.
11. Assemblies and religious education make a very good contribution to pupils' moral and social development. Pupils develop into friendly and articulate young people and know what is expected of them. They readily distinguish between right and wrong and, each year, sign up to the school's code of conduct. During lessons, pupils work well together and teachers provide frequent opportunities for pupils to express their views in paired work, group work and general discussion.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.7
National data	6.0

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.4
National data	0.3

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

12. Punctuality has improved significantly since the previous inspection; it is now very good. Attendance has been well above the national average for at least the last three years.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good throughout the school. The curriculum is good. It provides a broad range of experiences for pupils and is supplemented by excellent extra-curricular provision.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and the learning and achievement of most pupils are also good. The assessment of pupils' work and progress is good, although not used consistently enough in all subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The overall good quality of the teaching enables pupils to learn well.
- Lessons are carefully planned, with a good variety of activities to engage and motivate pupils.
- Most of the teaching in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology and physical education is very good for pupils of all ages as it is in French for pupils in Years 7 and 8.
- There are very good assessment procedures in many subjects which involve pupils in evaluating their own progress, but in some subjects the procedures are undeveloped.

Commentary

13. The table below indicates the quality of teaching across the school. The teaching is consistently good in Years 5 and 6, with nearly nine out of ten lessons good, very good or excellent and none unsatisfactory. It is mostly at least good in Years 7 and 8, though nearly one third is satisfactory and a very small proportion is unsatisfactory. Parents and pupils are very positive about the teaching in the school. Since the last inspection, the proportions of good, very good and excellent teaching have remained similar in each age group.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 75 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5 (7%)	21 (28%)	28 (37%)	23 (31%)	2 (3%)	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.

14. There are several common strengths in the teaching that promote the good quality of pupils' learning. The teachers plan their lessons well, use good resources and provide pupils with clear objectives, which they review effectively at the ends of lessons in most subjects to check what learning has taken place. They use a good range of interesting, varied and challenging activities to enable pupils to learn well. Most teachers have developed very good relationships with the pupils, encouraging and engaging them very well in lessons. Colourful resources accompany the lively teaching approach in some subjects. This encourages active learning, such as with younger pupils in French. Pupils feel challenged in most lessons, but in religious education and some mathematics lessons, they have too little opportunity for independent study. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils, but there are a few examples, including in English, where not enough is done for higher-attaining pupils.
15. Teachers expect pupils to behave well, and their very good attitudes mean that most learning takes place in a positive and very well-ordered atmosphere. In art and design, the excellent relationships and consistent approaches to behaviour and assessment underpin some inspired teaching and result in very good work. Most lessons provide opportunities for discussion in

pairs and small groups, encouraging pupils to share their thinking, develop their ideas and practise their social skills. Pupils collaborate well, listen carefully to each other's views and participate fully. Good questioning by teachers in science and geography, as well as good development of thinking skills in history help the pupils broaden their understanding. Teachers use homework well to build on the work of lessons and tasks set are of appropriate challenge.

16. There are many examples of very good and sometimes excellent teaching. Much of it occurs in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology and physical education. The best teaching occurs throughout the school, with nearly one-third of lessons excellent or very good in all year groups. Much of the teaching in French in Years 5 and 6 is also very good or excellent.

Example of outstanding practice

In this example the teacher showed how assessment could be used for learning in physical education and how pupils can be central to the process.

In a Year 7 gymnastics lesson of girls and boys, while most pupils continued to practise their group sequence activity, a group of pupils were carrying out a self-evaluation exercise. They were watching a video of their sequences, using correct technical terms to explain the task set and through this showing an understanding of the analysis of movement. The group were provided with cards containing pupil friendly guidance on National Curriculum Levels 4 to 7. The cards covered all strands and gave guidance on subdividing the levels into three. This work developed the peer evaluation work so that pupils could accurately assess their own levels and those of their group and explain what is needed to raise the work to the next level. It is an exercise that incorporates and draws together many aspects of the physical education curriculum.

17. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The teachers and teacher assistants have considerable expertise and they have high expectations. Pupils with special educational needs were understanding and appreciated some challenging texts during the inspection. They were effectively provided with individual support and simple structures to tackle reading and writing tasks.
18. In some English lessons in Years 5 and 6 there is insufficient challenge for the more able boys in writing in terms of the range and difficulty of writing tasks set. This is a key factor in the underachievement of more able boys in writing. A plan is in place to address this.
19. Assessment is good. The best practice is in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology and physical education, where pupils are involved in assessing their own progress. This sharpens their understanding of assessment criteria and what they need to do to improve, helping them become more independent.
20. Pupils' work is marked regularly and there is very good marking in a most subjects, especially the practical ones. In music, religious education and citizenship, systems for assessment are at a very early stage of development and not yet consistent with other subjects. Most teachers use assessment results to support their planning, but this aspect is best developed with pupils who have special educational needs and in information and communication technology and design and technology.
21. Teachers of practical subjects use data well to plan appropriate work for the various needs of pupils in each class. The amount of information provided for pupils is varied. Few subject areas have modified the National Curriculum statements in order to make them easier for pupils to understand, but most pupils say teachers' comments are helpful and give them a good understanding of how to improve. Several subjects review their assessments with other schools to reach agreement on National Curriculum levels and to check that pupils continue to make good progress when they leave.

The curriculum

The curriculum offered is good and provides a good range of worthwhile opportunities for pupils. There are excellent opportunities for enrichment through a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures that their individual needs are met.
- Excellent opportunities are provided for enrichment through a wide range of lunchtime and after school clubs.
- Art and design and physical education make outstanding contributions to the curriculum.
- The school's commitment to inclusion permeates key aspects of the school's curricular planning.
- The teaching of French enriches the personal and academic development of pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- Limited curriculum time for geography and history makes curriculum coverage difficult.
- Citizenship is not yet fully embedded in, or delivered by, the curriculum.

Commentary

22. The curriculum meets well the pupils' aptitudes and interests and it meets statutory requirements. Curricular provision for religious education is unsatisfactory in Years 7 and 8, although statutory requirements are met. French and personal, social and health education are taught as discrete subjects in Years 5 and 6, and this benefits the development of pupils' academic and personal skills. The provision of French in Years 5 and 6 is in advance of the National Strategy for Foreign Languages and is a positive example of the school's thoughtful approach to meeting the needs of its pupils. Teaching time is above the average for middle schools and, with the exceptions of history and geography, is sufficient to teach the curricular content in each subject. Pupils are taught in mixed-ability groups in Years 5 and 6 and in broad ability bands in Years 7 and 8. This is providing benefits for pupils with special educational needs, although planning for activities to extend and challenge the more able pupils are relatively undeveloped.
23. Curriculum planning is generally good and effective use is made of national schemes of work. Planning for pupils with special educational needs is a significant strength. In many cases these activities have been imaginatively adapted to meet the needs of pupils. Curricular provision is also marked by a number of key strengths. Provision in physical education is excellent and the three hours allocated to this subject each week, an allocation which is above national recommendations, is well used and standards are outstanding. There is a strong emphasis on creativity and the arts and this is reflected in art and design, which has maintained its outstanding contribution to the curriculum since the last inspection. In addition, the introduction of media studies and drama to Years 7 and 8 has successfully enriched the curriculum. Drama in particular shows promise and its excellent planning makes clear links with English and information and communication technology.
24. The provision of personal, social and health education is satisfactory and carefully planned. Sex and relationships, drugs and health topics are taught to all year groups through whole-school activity days. They are reinforced by class assemblies and through relevant areas of other subjects, such as reproduction in science and healthy eating in food technology. However, provision for citizenship does not meet statutory requirements. The school has been innovative in its development of basic skills with tutorial time each morning devoted to literacy and numeracy.
25. There is an excellent range of activities for learning and support outside the school day and this enrichment is an excellent feature of school provision. Extra-curricular sports provision is excellent and participation, with nearly 90 percent of pupils involved, is outstanding. There is a

challenging programme of improvement in sports for talented pupils. In addition there are numerous clubs with music, art, drama and information and communication technology being particular strengths. Pupils in all year groups have the opportunity to engage in trips and visits, including an annual one week residential trip.

Example of outstanding practice

This shows some of the outstanding work taking place in art. It shows how art can build on the work of the other subjects such as geography and English to motivate pupils and build on learning.

Art and design works 'outside the box' in stretching and challenging pupils' personal expectations. Corridors are filled with outstanding representation of whole-school activities, such as the work on world citizenship, which sets the tone for expectation of art and design across the school. Year 8's adventure into the art and craft of Africa was an example of the innovative work happening in the school. Year 8, already studying Africa in geography, seized the opportunity to work on African culture and lifestyle through art and design. Teacher planning and presentation, in close cooperation with the art technician, introduced layer upon layer of exploration of colour and texture; ideas that built on other artists' interpretation, plus story telling that inspired pupils' critical analysis of their own and other artists' work. All this content wove a rich tapestry of line, tone, mark making and observational drawing into pupils thinking and original quality sketch book ideas. Active one-to-one feedback fired the imagination of all abilities through intense discussion that kindled and extended pupils' own thinking. Outcomes were amazing and many pupils visibly swelled with pride at their achievement.

Care, guidance and support

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The high standard of personal care enables pupils to work hard and do their very best.
- Strong links with contributing and receiving schools support very effective induction programmes.
- Very good academic support helps pupils to make good progress in their work.
- The school actively seeks pupils' views and accommodates their suggestions and preferences whenever possible.

Commentary

26. Members of staff work as a high quality team to ensure that pupils receive very good personal care. Child protection and health and safety procedures are comprehensive, and teachers and other adults fully understand their individual responsibilities. The school liaises closely with a range of external agencies, including social services, educational psychology and health. In addition, governors provide one-to-one support to those who are not progressing as well as they should.
27. Very good liaison and transfer arrangements with contributing first schools ensure a smooth transition when pupils enter the school in Year 5. Pupils speak warmly of the support they receive and this ensures that they make good progress from the moment they arrive. Relationships between pupils and adults are very good and pupils say that their teachers are kind and very approachable. Almost all the pupils move onto the nearby upper school. Pastoral links are very close and there are regular opportunities for pupils to meet other Year 8 pupils who will move up at the same time. For example, the neighbouring upper school recently hosted a shared murder mystery day. This gave pupils from both schools an early opportunity to get to know some of their new teachers and to make new friends.
28. Procedures for the assessment of pupils' work are good and teachers provide individuals with very good academic support. Most of the pupils are fully aware of the levels at which they are working and how they can improve their work. In several subjects such as English and art and

design, assessment information is used particularly effectively to identify underachievement so that teachers can provide individual guidance and support.

29. The school actively seeks pupils' views and, wherever possible, acts upon them. There are numerous ways in which pupils can put their views forward, including the school council and the charities committee. Pupils can also ask questions through the 'pupil voice' initiative. Under this scheme, pupils are able to lead assemblies and pose topical questions to guest speakers. In addition, the school circulates a bi-annual questionnaire on bullying, and Year 6 pupils are currently participating in research that helps to identify and build upon pupils' individual learning styles.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are very good. Links with the local community and other schools are also very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very close liaison with other schools enriches the curriculum and broadens the range of social and educational opportunities for pupils and staff.
- Parents provide very good support for their children's learning and their involvement in extra-curricular activities.
- Strong links with the local community support pupils' personal development very well.

Commentary

30. This school works very closely with other schools within the Royston pyramid; teachers from all phases meet regularly in order to exchange pastoral and academic information about their past and present pupils. From time to time, teachers from the various schools also share professional training and pupils use each other's facilities, such as the swimming pool at the upper school. Pupils also visit the other schools for special events and they attend each other's drama productions. Close links with a nearby special school provide pupils with opportunities to visit in order to help and learn about those who have physical difficulties. These reciprocal links support pupils' learning very well, and pupils speak warmly of their experiences and of the opportunities that arise.
31. Parents encourage their children to work hard and also provide very good support for the school's 'friends association'. Significant sums of money are raised and these funds are used to enrich the range of learning resources and equipment. Parents also ensure that their children attend school regularly and that they arrive on time. Parents also provide very good practical support for activities such as swimming and school trips.
32. Strong links with the local community enrich the curriculum and broaden the range of opportunities available for pupils. For example, music groups attend local fetes and, each year, the choir sings in a festival organised by the Rotary Club. Community groups also make a very good contribution to the school's 'Citizenship Days' and representatives from local theatre groups and charities regularly come in to perform and to speak to pupils about their work. These links help to develop pupils' awareness of the wider world and raise the profile of the school within the local community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Governance is very good, leadership is good and management is satisfactory. The school has been led innovatively, successfully striving to create a distinctive ethos.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has been successful in maintaining and building on the excellence of standards and provision in the arts, practical subjects, physical education and pupils' personal development.
- The recently introduced system for monitoring and evaluating standards and teaching in subject areas, and writing plans for improvement is rigorous and already making an impact.
- The governing body has a very good grasp of the school's and its own strengths and weaknesses, knows where the school needs to go, and has managed finances very efficiently.
- There is a strong ethos of teamwork in the school where the views of staff, parents, governors and pupils are taken into account, and there are very good levels of communication and support.
- Some key weaknesses identified in the last inspection such as standards in English and the quality of development planning remain but there have been significant improvements in recent months.

Commentary

33. The first target in the school development plan for 2002 to 2005 is to strengthen the role of creativity and the arts. There has also been an emphasis on developing an "active" curriculum, with significant time allocated to physical education and information and communication technology. Resources have also been focused on design and technology, drama and media studies. All of these areas have also been supported by a wide range of well attended extra-curricular activities and the development of a new information resource centre. The school target has been achieved and has led to a vitality and enthusiasm for learning which is highly valued by parents and pupils. Standards in the arts, physical education and information and communication technology are very high. The school has established an ethos where pupils are effectively developed across a broad range of areas, including their personal development. Success in this area is reflected in the number of awards gained by the school including Artsmark, Healthy Schools, Activemark Gold, Sportsmark Gold and the National Schools Extra for extra-curricular activities.
34. The monitoring and evaluation process for subject areas introduced by the headteacher has addressed some key weaknesses. This system has established a rolling programme of rigorous analysis of the quality of teaching and standards in subject areas and the writing of improvement strategies which address identified weaknesses. The process is initially targeting the core subjects and the process sensibly began with a review of English which has already been completed. This review has led to the introduction of a range of appropriate strategies for raising standards. These include the targeting of resources and teaching of individuals and groups of pupils who are underachieving or just below average. The impact of this can already be seen in English lesson plans.
35. The governing body monitors, support and challenges the school very well. It ensures that the school fulfils all statutory requirements. Progress in the implementation of the school development plan and also with the post-OFSTED action plan from the last inspection has been monitored and evaluated, and the headteacher's reports provide analyses of standards and the quality of teaching. The governing body has also received reports from the subject team leaders, including the English team leader, and has been alert to weaknesses in this subject. Governors have also conducted a self-review of their role and written an action plan to improve their effectiveness. A particular strength has been the management of finances. The finance committee has significant expertise at its disposal and has established very efficient systems for monitoring the budget and setting a budget plan.

36. The school has achieved the Investors in People award and rightly prides itself on teamwork and the valuing of individuals. The inclusive nature of the school is reflected in the high quality management of special educational needs and the provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language. The channels of communication, within and beyond the school, are excellent. There are regular timetabled meetings not only for subjects, year groups and the senior management team but also for teaching assistants and midday supervisors. A weekly news bulletin is published for all staff, parents and governors. Governors and the "Friends of Greneway" are very active in supporting the school and significant sums of money have been raised. The induction of new teachers and the staff handbook which provides very comprehensive guidance to all staff are of very high quality.
37. A key weakness in the school, already identified by leadership, has been the quality of monitoring and evaluation of standards in subjects and the improvement strategies to address them. There is insufficient emphasis on raising standards in the core subjects of English and mathematics in the school development plan. The subject team leaders' plans written last year lack rigour. They are not sufficiently specific and do not address areas of weaknesses identified by audits. This is clearly a contributory factor to the comparatively low achievement in English in the end of Key Stage 2 tests in recent years and lack of success in addressing this area since the last inspection when it was identified as a weakness. The lack of drive to raise standards in English is partly reflected in the low targets set for the subject last year. These issues have largely been addressed now by the systems described above and targets have been raised.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	155,472
Total expenditure	155,547
Expenditure per pupil	3,098

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	173,580
Balance carried forward to the next	172,837

38. Although there is a comparatively large surplus, this is all committed money apart from approximately £50000.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 2 AND 3

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English

Provision for English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Speaking and listening are good and pupils explain their ideas clearly and confidently.
- Teaching is good; teachers have high expectations and use detailed subject knowledge to help pupils learn.
- Teacher assessment is good and much improved since the last inspection.
- Lesson planning is very rigorous and well matched to pupils' needs and abilities.
- Behaviour is very good and pupils have very good attitudes to learning.
- Whilst the standard of writing is generally good in Years 7 and 8, standards in Years 5 and 6 are not high enough.
- Assessment data is still not used sufficiently well to track pupils' progress.

Commentary

39. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 the school's results were in line with the national average, but pupils' progress from the results at the end of Year 2 was well below average. Standards are not as good as in mathematics and science, and achievement has declined since the last inspection in comparison to national performance. Standards are better than those reflected in the tests. However, standards in Years 7 and 8 are higher than in Years 5 and 6, and pupils make more significant progress. The focus since the previous inspection on writing has led to clear improvements, with some work of the highest quality, but standards in writing are an area for improvement. In the current academic year, management has implemented a rigorous programme of improvement following a complete review of teaching, use of data and pupil performance. Value-added data held by the school indicates that the subject has the capacity to achieve its challenging targets and rectify underachievement.
40. Achievement overall is satisfactory. Pupils write in a range of styles and forms and at length, often showing a vivid use of language and expression. For example, Year 5 extended writing on "Evacuees" reflects imaginative response and personal style expressed in a range of sentence forms. In Year 6, pupils write carefully organised arguments to show their views in response to the question 'Was Henry VII a good king?' as part of a history-related topic. Speaking and listening is a strength; pupils throughout the school express themselves confidently and show understanding of the stories and poems which they read. In Year 5, reading journals help pupils to describe their responses and understanding to a range of texts. In Years 7 and 8, progress in speaking and listening is good and the development of drama makes good links with these skills and with information and communication technology.
41. Since the last inspection the team has been developing ways of improving writing, and there has been success in Years 7 and 8. The positive attitudes of pupils towards writing in Years 6 to 8 provide evidence of success. A small minority of pupils have poor handwriting and make frequent spelling and punctuation mistakes, but pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Some able pupils produce descriptive and analytical writing of the highest quality but there are insufficient strategies in Years 5 and 6 to stretch the more able so that excellent writing occurs more frequently. The teachers are fully aware of this issue and a coherent strategy for improvement is now in place.

42. As at the previous inspection, reading is a major strength and pupils read a range of challenging texts with understanding and expression. Attitudes to reading are good and pupils show enthusiasm and understanding when talking about the books which they are reading in school and at home. A project on picture books in Years 5 and 6 resulted in some very good examples written by pupils using information and communication technology and showing awareness of the genre and language appropriate for younger readers. These positive attitudes are sustained in Years 7 and 8 and pupils make good progress in their discussion and analysis of a range of challenging texts.
43. Teaching and learning are good in all years. The National Literacy Strategy together with the Key Stage 3 Strategy inform the very good planning which identifies clear objectives for learning. While most teachers engaged and challenged pupils, there is some variation in Years 5 and 6 where activities lacked crisp pace and did not challenge all pupils. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and use this to target learning through good use of questions, a range of lively activities, high expectations and challenging work. Very good teaching is marked by an insistence on high quality work and practical activities which involve all pupils. Good use is made of media, group discussion and sharply focused language work. As a result pupils learn well and have very positive attitudes to learning. This is reflected in their confident answers in class, their sustained concentration when writing and their evident enjoyment of the subject. Behaviour is very good.
44. The assessment of pupils' work is an area of significant improvement since the last inspection. All work is regularly marked, although there is some variation regarding the quality of feedback which pupils receive. There is evidence of very good assessment which shows pupils what they need to do to make further progress and thus reach their targets. Such assessment praises and challenges pupils to do better.
45. Leadership is satisfactory, but there have been significant strides during this academic year and there are now some significant strengths. The team leader has a clear vision for the subject and has worked dynamically to develop a very good planning process, which effectively integrates the key elements of the national strategies. This planning is detailed, focused on language and provides excellent support for specialists and non-specialists alike. Since being appointed, the team leader has driven actions to improve writing and there is evidence that these steps are having a positive effect. Communication is good and the subject is well resourced. As a result the subject has established cohesion and direction throughout the school. However, the use of assessment data is not used effectively to track pupil progress. Until recently, the team lacked a self-evaluation system which would identify and share the best practice. The headteacher and team leader have conducted a thorough review of teaching and learning in this subject and identified areas for development.
46. Improvement since the last inspection has been mixed. Leadership and planning have moved forward significantly and the subject has built upon its good practice in reading, speaking and listening. However, improving performance in writing has not been successfully addressed and this had contributed to the disappointing results at the end of Year 6.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47. Standards of literacy are good. The school has been involved in the Key Stage 3 national strategy and elements of the literacy programmes inform work in most subjects. Progress in writing in English is below national expectations and too little use is made of data from the national tests in Year 6 to track individual pupil performance.
48. The school's approach to basic skills is a good example of the steps it takes to raise standards of literacy. Individual subjects provide examples of good practice. Teachers in Year 6 make very good links between history and English using discussion and investigative reading to write well structured arguments. In French in Years 5 and 6, the National Literacy strategy has been

influential in improving practice. Technical terms such as 'connective' are used freely by teachers and pupils alike, and pupils have a good understanding of parts of speech and verb tenses. These strengths are carried forward into Years 7 and 8, and pupils are able to elicit their own rules when practising the formation of their language work.

49. Good opportunities are provided for group discussion in design and technology, English, history and drama; pupils are able to speak confidently about their learning. Oral work is a particular strength in science and physical education. Standards of reading are good in all subjects and pupils show enthusiasm when reading a wide range of texts demonstrating well developed personal responses and good understanding. Pupils make good use of the learning centre and can access both written and information and communication technology texts, retrieving appropriate information effectively through the use of skimming, scanning and analytical skills.

French

Provision in French is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at the end of Year 8.
- Very good teaching in Years 5 and 6 leads to very good achievement and a firm foundation for further study.
- The department is very well led, with a clear vision and very good teamwork.
- Teachers use French in lessons, but not enough to ensure that pupils are confident when using it themselves.

Commentary

50. Over half the pupils, who left at the end of Year 8 in 2003, were on course to reach Level 5 by the end of Year 9. This is slightly above the national average and represents good achievement during their time at the school. Girls reach higher levels than boys, as they do nationally, although the achievement of both groups is similar and all are thoroughly involved in lessons. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a very secure foundation of knowledge and skills and enter Year 7 with levels of attainment which are well above national expectations. Standards in lessons and in pupils' books and folders show they cover a lot of ground, including verb tenses and the use and application of grammatical terms. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and achieve as well as all other pupils.
51. Teaching and learning are very good in Years 5 and 6, where pupils are highly motivated by very well judged teaching which meets their needs very well. Lessons are lively, involving songs, games and literacy-based activities, all of which require the active involvement of all pupils. The good teaching in Years 7 and 8 has many of these strengths and teachers include a variety of types of activity, covering the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. It is department policy to use French in all year groups, but this is not applied consistently. Some teachers speak it more than others, and overall it is not used enough to give pupils confidence when using it themselves. Pupils use computers well for preparing and publishing their written and display work, but they do not communicate electronically with children in France or carry out independent research on the Internet. A residential visit for pupils in Year 8 provides a very good opportunity for over half the pupils to put their learning to practical use.
52. The department is very well led and well managed. Teachers work together on planning, preparing resources and generating ideas. They are very highly motivated and create a colourful, attractive learning environment with work which meets pupils' needs. The teachers are not complacent and are very good at improving the effectiveness of their work. A review of assessment data has been a feature of the department's work for several years, but has not yet been used to analyse the different needs of girls and boys or to check whether all pupils,

including those from minority ethnic groups, achieve as well as they should. Improvement since the last very good inspection report has been satisfactory. Information and communication technology is used more and the department is now very well led. Standards in Years 5 and 6 have been maintained.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good well-planned teaching that interests pupils.
- The positive attitudes of pupils towards mathematics.
- The scheme of work is effective but lacks detailed inclusion of tasks for using and applying mathematics.
- Target setting encourages development but feedback to pupils in their exercise books is inconsistent.

Commentary

53. Standards seen during the inspection in Year 5 indicate that pupils are working at levels that are broadly in line with the national average. However, standards of work seen in Year 8 indicate that many pupils are working at levels that are above the national expectations. This means that the achievement of pupils during their time at The Greneway School is good.
54. The quality of teaching is good; in most lessons seen it was good and no lessons were unsatisfactory. This has resulted in good achievement by pupils. Teachers prepare lessons well and use a range of strategies to encourage pupils to work hard. Teachers in Years 5 and 6 use different worksheets to cater for the range of ability levels that exist in their classes so that work closely matches pupils' ability. Lessons start well and pupils settle quickly. Lessons are interesting and teachers use explanations that relate well to pupils' own experience. This means that pupils work at a good pace throughout lessons. The three-part lesson of the National Numeracy Strategy is used well by teachers. Questioning to develop an enquiring mind and to encourage proof is used, but at present is underdeveloped. Well-planned mental arithmetic starters lead into the focus of the lesson; review sessions at the end generally summarise learning, and a few effectively point the way forward. One review session involved the lower-attaining pupils explaining their work to the class. This greatly encouraged them and raised their self-esteem. Books are marked regularly but the quality of the feedback to pupils is inconsistent and sometimes not sufficiently informative. Labels stuck on the front of exercise books set improvement targets for pupils. Pupils with special educational needs receive extra support and consequently make at least as good progress as their peers. This is because teachers understand their needs and adapt material for them. There is some extension work for pupils who are gifted and talented but otherwise extension work is insufficiently developed.
55. The good teaching evokes a good response from pupils. Pupils behave well and are prepared to work hard and make positive contributions to their lessons. They readily work and explain solutions to questions on the board for the whole class. Their books are neat, and they supplement their work with illustrated notes, highlighted to emphasise key points. Pupils ask clear questions to clarify their understanding when difficulties arise. Teachers support this by re-wording questions as necessary. Pupils' involvement in lessons is increasing with the use of interactive whiteboards.
56. The curriculum leader is new to the post but has a good vision for improvement and has started to develop teaching and learning within the mathematics area. There is a good scheme of work that includes timings for various topics to support planning and sustain pace. The use of electronic calculators and computers to enhance learning are included. Regular assessments

monitor progress. There is some analysis of results and discussion to improve teaching. This, coupled with formal monitoring of teaching has already started to show improvements in Year 6. Rooms used for teaching are a generous size; this encourages teachers to use a range of different teaching strategies and hence create a stimulating atmosphere for effective learning. The use of computers is well established and supports learning well, although there is a lack of investigative software at present. Teachers are mutually supportive and have a common desire to raise standards. Improvements since the last inspection have been good, standards have risen and teaching has improved.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. Number skills are well developed and teaching the efficient use of electronic calculators is part of the mathematics curriculum. This means that pupils can access all subjects. Lesson starters in mathematics reinforce mental arithmetic skills. The National Numeracy Strategy provides an effective foundation for these exercises. There is good use of numeracy in science where pupils draw graphs, charts and diagrams. They can also read scales well when using instruments to measure. There is some good use in physical education where pupils use bearings when orienteering; they also handle data well when using information and communication technology to record performance in athletics.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in national tests are well above average.
- Teaching is consistently good and lessons are well matched to pupils' needs, so that most enjoy the subject and work well.
- Practical work is a strong feature in lessons but there is not enough use of data loggers to record and analyse results.
- Teachers mark pupils' work well but assessment results are not used sufficiently to gauge overall progress and set challenging targets for improvement.

Commentary

58. Standards in the 2003 national tests for Year 6 pupils were well above average and above the 2002 results. These results were in line with those in similar schools. Most pupils did better in science than in English and mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was well above average. Standards seen during the inspection are above average in all years.
59. These results have been achieved because teaching and learning are consistently good, with some very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Lessons are well planned to cater for the needs of different pupils. Practical work is given a high priority and teachers are careful to make clear the real-life applications of science so that the work is relevant and interesting. As a result, the pupils have good attitudes to their work, enjoy the subject and learn well. This ensures that achievement is satisfactory, with a high proportion of pupils making the progress that would be expected.
60. Pupils with special educational needs and those with language difficulties achieve well because they get good support from the teachers and learning support assistants. Most pupils are well-behaved and cooperative in lessons because expectations are clear. Teachers deal effectively with pupils whose conduct occasionally fails to meet these standards. Teachers use questioning well to find out how much pupils have learned. However, they sometimes miss opportunities to use more probing questions to get the pupils to explain, predict and think more

deeply about science ideas. Science lessons provide many opportunities for the pupils to develop their skills in English and mathematics and effective work has been done in using information and communication technology to support learning. However, there is not enough use of data loggers to collect and analyse results because teachers have not had enough training in using the equipment. Years 5 and 6 benefit from being able to work in properly equipped laboratories. This, together with good teaching has helped to improve Year 6 test results faster than the national average in recent years. Useful homework is set regularly to reinforce work done in class for all years.

61. A period of difficulty arising from staffing problems followed the last inspection, but there has been good improvement since the appointment of a new curriculum leader for the subject. The science team is well managed, and good leadership has ensured that teachers are well supported and clear about their responsibilities. This has resulted in the increased focus on practical work, pupils' enjoyment and improved staff morale. Ideas from the national Key Stage 3 Strategy are being used to broaden the range of teaching methods and this has helped to secure good learning in all years. Plans for further improvement have been drawn up, but they are not detailed enough to identify specific actions needed to raise standards. Monitoring of teaching and learning is not well enough established to support further improvement. The use of assessment data to gauge overall performance and set challenging targets is not thorough and systematic enough. However, teachers carry out routine assessment and marking well, giving the pupils useful feedback on how to improve their work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology is very **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in all years are very good.
- Teaching in information and communication technology lessons is very good and the use of computer-based resources is a major strength of the information and communication technology department.
- Assessment is very thorough and used very effectively to help pupils improve and to inform teachers' planning.
- The leadership and management of the information and communication technology department are very effective.
- Teachers in some other subjects do not make enough use of pupils' very good information and communication technology skills.

Commentary

62. Standards seen in information and communication technology lessons and in pupils work stored on computer are very good by the end of Year 6 and the end of Year 8. Some excellent work was seen in Years 7 and 8. In a very good Year 6 lesson, pupils used an interactive whiteboard to demonstrate to the rest of the class how they had constructed formulae for addition, multiplication and cumulative totals on their own spreadsheets. In an excellent Year 7 lesson, exceptionally detailed and thoughtful publicity leaflets were being produced using a range of software.
63. Teaching and learning are both very good overall, and some excellent teaching was seen in Years 7 and 8. The curriculum is very good and deals with all of the required aspects of the subject. Work in Years 7 and 8 is based upon the National information and communication technology Strategy for Key Stage 3. The course is very well organised and based upon the skilful use of very good and interesting learning resources. These are designed to provide appropriate challenge across the whole ability range. In addition, pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the department and fully included in lesson activities. In one

lesson, this applied to a pupil at an early stage in learning English and in another class a visually impaired pupil had specially printed resources and was able to demonstrate his computer work to other members of the class. Many of these resources are computer based, and a reliable, well maintained computer network enables teachers to work with confidence. The information and communication technology technician also provides valuable support for teachers and pupils during lessons.

64. The use of assessment is very good and enables teachers to plan work appropriately to ensure that pupils make very good progress in relation to their abilities. Progress is carefully plotted from year to year. The interactive whiteboard in the main information and communication technology room is used to very good effect by teachers and pupils in briskly paced lessons. The school does not have enough of this technology elsewhere in the school to facilitate greater use of information and communication technology in some subjects. Although the school has a good overall level of computers, there is some sharing of machines in large classes even in the largest information and communication technology room, which is not ideal in Years 7 and 8. However, there are plans to improve access to computers within the constraints of the accommodation.
65. This is a very good department which is very well led and managed, providing an interesting, supportive environment in which pupils have very good opportunities to develop the information and communication technology skills and knowledge required by the National Curriculum. It has made good improvement since the last inspection and has the capacity to improve further.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. Pupils develop a very good range of skills in information and communication technology lessons which are used to good effect to enhance teaching and learning particularly in mathematics, design and technology, and in the languages department. The use of information and communication technology overall in subjects is satisfactory, although there is more scope for the use of computers and other information and communication technology equipment in several subject departments. The ratio of computers to pupils is good, although access to the largest information and communication technology room is limited for cross-curricular use because of the number of timetabled information and communication technology lessons. During the inspection there was spare capacity in a small information and communication technology room and in the "Information Centre" neither of which are used enough.

HUMANITIES

History

Overall provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching enables pupils to develop their historical and literacy skills well.
- Good assessment procedures enable pupils' progress to be monitored.
- Pupils with special educational needs are provided with suitable work and support, but gifted and talented pupils are not sufficiently challenged in many lessons.
- Insufficient curriculum time in Year 6 slows pupils' progress.

Commentary

67. Achievement is satisfactory in all year groups. From Year 5 onwards pupils can interpret historical sources and arrive at opinions about what has happened. For example, a pair of photographs showing Jewish people being imprisoned by the Nazis helped them to understand

the feelings of the people involved and why they were being ill treated. A medieval church picture led Year 7 pupils to speculate about how the Church controlled people's behaviour by frightening them. Pupils can discuss these issues well, working in pairs and groups, which promotes the development of social skills. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is also satisfactory because they are well known to their teachers; they receive good support and benefit from work that is tailored to their needs. Achievement is also satisfactory for gifted and talented pupils, but there are times when they are not sufficiently well challenged by the work they are set.

68. Standards of work and teachers' records of formal assessments indicate that pupils' attainment is in line with expectations for their age groups. There is no apparent difference between the standards of boys and girls and the few ethnic minority pupils are working at the same level as their peers.
69. Teaching and learning are good overall. In the majority of lessons, good planning and good use of resources developed pupils' interest and led to good learning. Literacy is well developed with every opportunity for pupils to read in lessons, and guidance is given to develop writing skills. Homework is exceptionally well used as an integral part of the learning process. Assessment of learning is good, both through regular assessment assignments and through targeted questioning sessions in lessons. Assessment data is analysed well and used to form the basis of further planning. However, because the National Curriculum level criteria are not at the moment fully understood by the pupils they are not able to assess their own progress. Pupils' attitudes are very good; there is little off-task behaviour and this is never tolerated. Information and communication technology is used well for homework and for research, but not as part of the teaching strategies in lessons.
70. Curricular provision is enriched by a number of visits to historical sites. However, a shortfall in teaching time in Year 6 makes it difficult for the programme of study to be taught in sufficient depth, so these pupils do not progress at the same rate as in other year groups. Pupils' moral development and multi-cultural awareness are well supported in the subject, such as in a series of lessons about the history of black Americans.
71. Satisfactory leadership and management are by a temporary coordinator who has only been in post for a few months and has heavy teaching responsibilities in another department. She is already making changes to the schemes of work and redressing an imbalanced curriculum, so that improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

Geography

Overall provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good assessment procedures enable pupils' progress to be tracked.
- The new coordinator has taken steps to update the curriculum and schemes of work to provide an improved framework for learning.
- Suitable work is not always provided for pupils with special educational needs and the higher-attaining pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour is well managed.
- Many lessons lack appropriate visual stimuli.

Commentary

72. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in all year groups. From Year 5 they begin to ask appropriate geographical questions and develop the skills of observation and recording of data. They work well in pairs and small groups, which extends their social skills well. The

achievement of pupils with special educational needs is not always satisfactory because appropriate work is not supplied to them on a regular basis, although on occasions they do receive extra help from their teacher and from support assistants. Similarly, gifted and talented pupils are not given challenging work and so do not make the progress of which they are capable.

73. Standards of work seen during the inspection and teachers' records of the assessments that take place, indicate that standards are below expectations for their age group by the end of Year 6 and in line with expectations at the end of Year 8. In Year 6 their progress is limited by a reduction in curriculum time, which makes it difficult to sustain continuity of development. There is no apparent difference between the standards of boys and girls and the few ethnic minority pupils are working at the same standard as their peers.
74. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall; some good teaching was seen and no lessons were unsatisfactory. Lessons were well managed and pupils worked well, but on occasions slow pacing and lack of visual resources limited the scope of their learning. Where more varied resources and activities were used, as in a Year 6 lesson testing the porosity of different types of rocks, pupils' improved interest and rate of achievement were immediately apparent. Homework is set regularly and successfully extends the learning taking place in the lessons. Assessment procedures are good and detailed records are kept of each pupil's progress. However, at present this data is not effectively used to raise standards by directing further planning of the curriculum.
75. Curriculum provision is enriched by a good programme of visits and investigations that teaches the skills of data collection and processing. Opportunities for developing multi-cultural understanding are put to good use, as in a Year 8 study of African countries. Information and communication technology is used for homework, for presentation of material and for research, but is not generally part of the lesson provision.
76. The management and leadership by the newly-appointed coordinator are satisfactory, but are limited by the lack of time provided to do the job. In the short time she has been in post, the coordinator has produced a development plan and re-written the departmental policy and curriculum plans. This is bringing about improvement by achieving a better balance between human and physical geography. Given further time there is good capacity for further improvements to be implemented.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Inconsistent teaching is affecting the learning of pupils in Years 7 and 8.
- Work is often left unmarked and so pupils are unaware of how well they are doing.
- The department now has a new focus and new schemes of work are being produced.

Commentary

77. The school meets the statutory requirements of the Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Pupils join the school with knowledge, skills and understanding that are in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The work completed in Years 5 and 6 shows that by the age of 11, pupils standards are in line with those expected by the Agreed Syllabus. The standards of work achieved by the end of Year 8 are below the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus. Achievement in Years 5 to 6 is satisfactory but in Years 7 and 8 it is variable and unsatisfactory overall.

78. Teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 are satisfactory, but they are unsatisfactory in Years 7 and 8. From the pupils' books and lessons seen, the teaching varies greatly from teacher to teacher. In some lessons the work engages the interest of the pupils, but in other cases the work does not meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils who are self-motivated and above average in ability achieve well, but those of average and below average ability do not do as well as is expected. The limited resources also limit the variety in lessons. The work given to pupils is the same for all ability pupils in the class; this is resulting in much incomplete work in folders and insecure understanding of the topics. The marking of the pupils' books is also variable as is the use of constructive comments. Marking does not give pupils regular guidance on what needs to be improved and how to do it; a large proportion of work is unmarked in Years 7 and 8. This leads to pupils not always being clear about what is needed to raise their attainment level, and errors are not identified. The assessment levels have recently been given to staff, but most pupils are unclear about their levels of attainment. The lack of a centralised area for religious education means that the subject is not seen to have the status of other subjects, and it is being taught in a large number of classrooms. This means that pupils do not have access to display materials to enhance learning. There have been no recent visits to places of worship or speakers of world religions visiting the school.
79. Leadership and management are satisfactory with some good aspects. There is a clear vision for improvement and a structure to reverse the impact on students of the difficult staffing situation over recent years. New schemes of work have been written but the monitoring of teaching is not having an effective impact. Despite the work undertaken by the school, a lack of continuity of staff and a lack of monitoring of teaching and learning mean that many of the issues raised in the last inspection report are still outstanding, and so improvement is unsatisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology

Provision for design and technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective assessment strategies promoting pupil-friendly targets that raise attainment.
- Well-prepared accessible resources that support high quality products and independent learning.
- Very good specialist teaching that challenges the pupils' creative problem-solving.
- Limitations on computer development through the incompatibility of the school network system and computer-aided design software.

Commentary

80. By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards of work are in line with expectations. Use of specialist equipment and specialist teachers ensures achievement is good. At the end of Year 8 when pupils transfer to the high school, their accelerated work is well above expectation and records in their 'technofile' confirm very good achievement.
81. Confident work with a range of materials, ingredients, techniques and tools refines as pupils move from Year 5 to Year 8. Pupils express delight in the quality of work they produced. They are very proud of the professional display of their design and technology around the school. Pupils explained the interest parents take in their design and technology, which raises their personal aspirations. At present, schemes of work are being updated to embed the national strategies for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Some excellent work goes on in these areas across the department. However, information and communication technology is still struggling with the networking of computer-aided design and

computer-assisted manufacturing software to raise standards of appropriate computer use. Pupil tracking has been a major success in improving attainment because pupils readily discuss what has gone wrong in their design and realise that modification and change are part of the design process.

82. Teaching is good across the department from Years 5 to 8 with excellent teaching observed in resistant materials and systems and control. Teachers are very good role models. All teachers plan well and share a clear understanding of quality products – fit for purpose. Very good relationships, high expectations of behaviour and work ethic ensure that pupils set their sights high. Recently, work with a design and technology consultant has helped teachers develop a very good system of pupil-friendly target setting, alongside revised schemes of work. Pupils are engaged in purposeful learning; they take responsibility for their problem-solving and sharpen their understanding of the importance of research and development before making. Behaviour is consistently very good, which allows teachers to teach and all pupils to learn. Teachers are very sensitive to pupils with different needs. One-to-one discussion with teachers helps all pupils to meet their potential. Extension work is available for pupils who move quickly through their targets. Some teachers are missing the opportunity for effective consolidation of learning at the end of a lesson.
83. Very good dynamic and challenging leadership motivates the design and technology team. Management is good because the principles that guide the department's risk assessment, multicultural development, citizenship, teaching and teacher observation are in place but applied inconsistently. Good improvement from the previous inspection has tackled the few issues that were raised, but information and communication technology is moving slowly.

Art and design

Overall provision for art and design is **excellent**.

Main Strengths and weaknesses

- Stimulating teaching that inspires creative thinking.
- Effective technical support that maintains good access to materials, and supports independent learning.
- High profile display of pupils' artwork that raises self-esteem.
- Inspirational assessment strategies ensure that pupils know their strengths and how to improve their research and techniques.
- There is a lack of appropriate information and communication technology to develop pupils' art.

Commentary

84. Standards seen at the end of Year 6 are above expectations because non-specialist teachers in Years 5 and 6 are well supported by the curriculum leader and technician. Achievement is good and tracked effectively through the well-developed sketchbooks. By Year 8, pupils' standards are well above expectation and match those normally expected by pupils in Year 9. Very good liaison with the local upper school demonstrates that pupils go on to reach very high standards in Year 9, making achievement very good.
85. Good achievement in Years 5 and 6 is characterised by pupils' growing interest and analysis of work of other artists. In a Year 6 lesson drawing the eye from imagination, pupils moved to interpretation using Picasso's work as a guide, which led to very good observational drawings of their own eye using a mirror. Pupils excitedly shared their results and realised that drawing can interpret visual experiences in many ways. Pupils use a wide range of resources and techniques. However, these are constrained by the lack of storage in the Year 5 base, which has an impact on independent learning.

86. Pupils' grasp of the importance of research preparation promoted very good achievement in Year 8. Sketchbooks used for art homework show very good use of computers for research and manipulation of images to raise standards. Pupils are aware of the influence of historical, social and cultural contexts on art. High quality display across the school showed creative thinking in links to citizenship. Pupils are aware of the traumas of world poverty reflected through papier-mâché sculpture. They go on to communicate their ideas and emotions through lively discussions.
87. Passionate teaching, especially in Years 7 and 8, portrayed through excellent demonstrations and enthusiastic feedback on pupils' efforts, triggers very good learning. Teachers' planning is exemplary. National strategies promote very good links to literacy, for example when pupils learn to describe famous artists' life and work. Numeracy is applied well through activities such as working to scale and using nets, but information and communication technology is impeded through lack of appropriate equipment. Teachers' expectations of behaviour are consistent in all art lessons. Teachers use the school systems well to deal with the immaturity of a minority of boys in Year 8. Assessment is a very effective tool to raise standards. One-to-one support, excellent marking and engagement of pupils in their assessment, builds a total picture of pupils' successes and areas they need to improve. In a few lessons, non-specialist teachers missed the opportunity to develop pupils' skills of critical analysis.
88. Leadership is outstanding and has dealt effectively with the minor issues from the previous report. The curriculum leader has directed the department's energies into innovative curricular developments working with the community, for example The Henry Moore Centre, galleries and museums. Management is very good because of the development of non-specialist teachers in Year 5 and 6. The lack of structure of the development plan makes it difficult to monitor its implementation effectively.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Members of staff have very good subject knowledge and skills.
- Students have many opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities.
- The leadership and management of music are good.
- In less successful lessons, pupils with higher levels of musical skills are not challenged to achieve as much as they can.

Commentary

89. Standards observed during the inspection, in lessons and on audio tapes, are in line with the national average at the end of Year 6, and above national expectations at the end of Year 8, particularly the standards of those pupils who are receiving instrumental tuition in addition to class teaching. For example, in a Year 7 lesson, higher-attaining pupils were able to add chords to their melodies, both in root position and in inversions, to suit their hand position on the piano. The achievement of pupils throughout the school in this subject is good, but, in the less successful lessons, some pupils did not achieve as much as they could because the task set was not demanding enough and did not challenge them to develop their practical skills. Pupils with special educational needs and lower-attaining pupils achieve well because of the targeted support from the teacher.
90. Overall, teaching and learning are good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and skills which encourage pupils to try hard at the required task and develop their understanding and knowledge. Through the structure of the lessons and good questioning, pupils' previous skills are consolidated and built upon. The support offered to pupils with special educational needs or

those for whom music is not an easy subject is very good, and gives the opportunity for most pupils to achieve according to their ability most of the time. Learning objectives are made clear at the beginning of each lesson and pupils focus on what they will be learning. They collaborate well in every lesson. The positive relationships they enjoy with the staff, combined with good behaviour, provides an environment which is conducive to learning. Sometimes pupils do not achieve as much as they can because the pace of the lesson slows down so that they spend too long on the same task and do not move forward in their learning.

91. Leadership and management of music are good. The department is in a transition period after the appointment of a new team leader, but the team is led well and is focused on raising achievement. Setting up assessment procedures and re-focusing the planning and schemes of work have been the recent priorities, and these are now helping to drive the department forward. A major strength of each lesson is the plenary session where pupils are asked what they have learnt and sometimes perform their compositions to the rest of the class. This gives both staff and pupils the opportunity to assess the progress that each pupil is making according to National Curriculum criteria. Pupils have their targets written in the front of their folders, and they know which level they are aiming for. Good role models are provided for pupils through the enthusiasm of the staff. Because of this transition period, the department development plan is not yet focused enough on the improvement strategies that would raise achievement. The use of information and communication technology in lessons is satisfactory, and pupils are frequently made aware of links with literacy, such as in a Year 5 lesson where pupils were required to compose a rap using alliteration.
92. This subject also makes a good contribution to the spiritual, social and multi-cultural development of pupils through studying the music of other countries such as India (as evidenced in a Year 8 lesson), China and South America. An example of teamwork across the school is the current focus on Tudor music and dance, where pupils in Year 6 are learning to dance a 'pavane' in physical education while studying the structure and style of music from this period. Termly meetings take place between staff from lower school, The Greneway, and the upper schools to plan the curriculum so that continuity is maintained.
93. A very good feature of music is its contribution to the extra-curricular activities of the school, with many ensembles and groups (three of which were sampled during the inspection), and the opportunities given to pupils to develop their musical talents through instrumental lessons. Ten peripatetic teachers provide support. Approximately one-quarter of the school are involved in the life of the department beyond the classroom. Concerts both in school and in the local community are given on a regular basis. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, but the issues of challenge in lessons and the few opportunities for developing singing skills have yet to be addressed.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The high standards achieved by the pupils.
- Very good teaching provides a good learning environment for all levels of ability.
- The range and quality of extra-curricular activities available enhances the experience on offer to the pupils.
- The strong assessment system is shared with the pupils and this means that they clearly know what is needed to raise their work to the next level.

Commentary

94. Standards at the end of Year 6 are well above average when compared with national expectations. Standards at the end of Year 8 are also well above the standards expected at this level. All pupils understand the effects that the exercise has on the body and the reason for a general warm-up. Pupils freely evaluate the work of their peers. The standard of activity skills in extra-curricular activities is very high. Pupils enter the school with physical skills broadly in line with the national expectations and show very good achievement through Years 5 and 6. This progress continues steadily through Years 7 and 8 where all groups of pupils also show very good achievement.
95. The teaching of physical education is very good, resulting in very good learning. There is no significant difference in the teaching in Years 5 and 6 to Years 7 and 8. Strengths are the teachers' management of the pupils and the teacher-pupil relationships, both of which complement the challenge in the lessons and the high expectations made of the pupils. Pupils arrive ready to participate and bring appropriate kit for lessons. They are enthusiastic and levels of participation are high. In all lessons, pupils work very well in pairs and groups, being able to sort the positional play in teams that ensure challenging competitive games being played. There is a positive environment in which learning can take place and in which pupils of all abilities feel confident in trying out new ideas, leading to a high level of skill development. Learning is enhanced by the very good assessment structure in place and the excellent provision of extra-curricular activities that are on offer.
96. Leadership and management of the department are very good. The head of department instils enthusiasm for the subject in staff and pupils. The very good facilities and the generous time allocation to physical education are well used assist the high standards that are achieved. Since the last inspection the high standards have been maintained. The minor points raised have been rectified and this represents very good improvement. All areas of the departmental work are very good, leading to excellent provision overall.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

97. **Personal, social and health education** is taught in conjunction with Citizenship. Although the themes are kept separate, the time allocated between the two is flexible and are only just adequate to meet all requirements. Sex and relationships education, drug and health education and personal safety have been taught through a combination of whole-school activity days and form assembly time. Good use has been made of visiting speakers and a theatre in education group. Social education is enhanced through group work and an extensive programme of school journeys related to several curriculum areas.
98. Although there was evidence of the topics being taught, mainly in the activity days where pupils produced group projects, no individual work was available for scrutiny and no teaching was seen as this was not scheduled to take place during the week of the inspection.

Citizenship

Overall provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The whole-school activity days are extremely well run and promote good learning.
- The coordinator has successfully engaged the support of the entire school staff for the subject.
- At present there is not enough monitoring and control of the teaching of citizenship through other curriculum subjects.
- Although there is an overall plan for teaching the subject throughout the curriculum, this has not been made explicit in a form that can be monitored and assessed.
- There is no mechanism for the assessment and monitoring of pupils' achievements.

Commentary

99. Because of the way the subject is organised it was not possible to see any lessons or individual pupil's work during the days of the inspection. Evidence is based on displays and photographs of activities, feedback from some pupils, discussions with the coordinator and the documentation that is in place.
100. There is no evidence available at present by which to judge standards of attainment. The citizenship National Curriculum levels have not yet been adopted and although some form tutors keep a record of pupils' work in the subject, this is not universal. Pupils do not take part in their own assessment or keep portfolios of their achievements in the subject.
101. The subject is taught to all year groups in conjunction with personal, social and health education through four whole-school timetable days per year; it is also delivered as part of other subject lessons, through the school and form-time assembly programme and through related extra-curricular activities. The activity days deliver a high-quality experience from which pupils have learned effectively about such issues as environmental pollution and parliamentary representation, and these themes are prepared for and followed up in assembly time. Although there is an overall plan for citizenship across the curriculum, this is not written in a form that can be used to trace all strands of the subject. Therefore it is difficult to assess how the statutory elements of citizenship are being linked, when each strand and each topic is being delivered, and whether enough time is available to complete the full programme of study.
102. Provision in other subjects through schemes of work has been audited and is being developed in a current in-service programme but at present the adequacy of this delivery is not being monitored.
103. The entire school staff is committed to the teaching of the subject, under the innovative leadership of a coordinator who already has other, considerable, responsibilities. With further in-service training, a system for recording and assessing pupils' achievements and a mechanism for monitoring teaching in other subjects, the subject is well set to develop further and take its place as an important part of the curriculum.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
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	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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

