

INSPECTION REPORT

MANOR HIGH SCHOOL

Sale, Trafford

LEA area: Trafford

Unique reference number: 130943

Headteacher: Neil Eltringham

Lead inspector: Michael McDowell
Dates of inspection: 19th - 22nd January 2004

Inspection number: 258939
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community special
Age range of pupils:	11 to 18 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	174
School address:	Manor Avenue Sale Cheshire
Postcode:	M33 5JX
Telephone number:	0161 9761553
Fax number:	0161 9765415
Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Brenda Ackroyd
Date of previous inspection:	29th June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Manor High is a community special school for boys and girls aged 11 to 18, who have statements of special educational needs because of moderate learning difficulties. In addition to their learning difficulties, about 40 per cent of pupils have significant emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. The school has 186 places and there are 174 on roll, 129 boys, and 45 girls. A few pupils have average levels of attainment in one or two areas; these are vulnerable pupils who attend the school because teaching groups are small and the atmosphere is less intimidating than it might be in mainstream schools. The great majority enters the school with levels of attainment that are very much below the average for their age. Thirty-four pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Of these, the largest group is of Asian heritage and their home language might not be English. However, there are no pupils at an early stage in acquiring English. Most pupils come from the borough of Trafford and a minority comes from neighbouring boroughs. Most come from economically disadvantaged areas and about a third of them are entitled to free school meals. The school also provides places for 72 pupils from neighbouring schools to be trained in vocational skills alongside its own pupils in its construction skills centre.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1405	Michael McDowell	Lead inspector	Religious education
13746	David Russell	Lay inspector	
31167	Sharon Jefferies	Team inspector	English, art and music
10782	Henry Moreton	Team inspector	Science, geography and history
30142	John Morris	Team inspector	Mathematics, citizenship, physical education, and personal, social and health education
10781	Robert Thompson	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, and design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school that is effective in meeting the educational needs of its pupils and students. Those who attend it, including those from minority ethnic groups, achieve well because teaching is good and very good learning opportunities are provided. Governance and management are good and the headteacher leads the school very well. It gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching is good overall; pupils learn effectively and make good progress, particularly in English, and personal social and health education in which achievement is very good.
- Pupils are happy in school and they enjoy and appreciate its encouraging and warm atmosphere. The school develops the personal qualities of its pupils very well. Pupils' attitudes are very good and they behave very well.
- The school is very well led by its headteacher and has good management and governance.
- There are very good academic and social learning opportunities both in the classroom and outside the school day. Vocational courses prepare students, very well, for life after school.
- The school seeks out and values the opinions and suggestions of pupils and students and takes very good steps to ensure their health, welfare, and safety.
- The school does not yet have sufficient detailed and reliable information about pupils' performance and targets set for pupils are insufficiently precise.
- A minority of pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve less than they can because the qualification requirements of some courses they follow are insufficiently challenging.
- The school has very effective links with parents, the community and with other schools.

Since the last inspection report, the school has become much more effective. It has successfully addressed all the issues that were identified. It has improved progress in mathematics by improving the curriculum and in French by enhancing teaching expertise. In music, there is now continuity in teaching, effective planning and improved resources. Progress in geography and history is more consistent and provision for physical education is now good. Resources for learning in religious education are now satisfactory. Much has been done to improve the school environment including the exterior of the building and play spaces. The school has also made significant positive changes in the provision of opportunities for accreditation in Years 10 and 11.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum	personal and social education
Year 9	Good	Very Good
Year 11	Good	Very Good
Year 13	Good	Very Good

*Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. In a special school such as this, **standards achieved** are judged against individual targets and not national standards.*

Achievement is good. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 make good progress in almost all subjects across the curriculum. In English, personal social and health education, and citizenship, achievement is very good. Pupils with additional special educational needs, for example emotional and behavioural difficulties or visual impairment, make, similarly, good progress and match the achievement of others. Pupils from minority groups, including those who have English as an additional language, also achieve well. The achievement of students in Years 12 and 13 is chiefly good across the range of practical and vocational courses they follow. In the leisure and tourism course, achievement is satisfactory. The achievement of both pupils and students in religious education is satisfactory. The

targets set for pupils and students in their statements and reviews are not sufficiently specific. However, Annual Reviews record, in most cases, that pupils do make good ground towards these general objectives. In mathematics, history, and science, the courses followed by some pupils do not offer enough challenge.

Pupils' attitudes, values, and other personal qualities including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good, overall. Pupils and students respond very positively to the consistent and innovative means that the school employs to ensure discipline and promote good behaviour. They behave very well and their attitudes to school and to learning are very good. Through its curriculum, its ethos and the extensive provision it makes for pupils and students beyond the classroom, the school places great emphasis on the development of the personal qualities of its students and pupils. The school makes use of a wide range of measures to promote and ensure good attendance. While most attend very well and get to school on time a very small minority misses school without good reason. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching is good overall; it enables pupils and students to make good progress over time and to learn effectively. **Learning is, therefore, good.** Teachers have a good understanding of their pupils and students and have very good relationships with them. In most instances they have a thorough understanding of the requirements of their subjects and plan their work well, taking general account of their pupils' or students' needs. Assessment of pupils' and students' work is satisfactory. While teachers have an overall understanding of what their pupils or students know understand and can do, the means by which progress is presently measured is insufficiently sensitive to show up, clearly, the very small gains that are, characteristically, made. The curriculum provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop their academic and social skills. The broad range of subjects taught and courses provided fully meets statutory requirements. Provision of learning opportunities beyond the classroom and outside the school day is very good. Provision for students in Years 12 and 13 is very good and includes vocational courses that prepare them very well for life after school. Accommodation and resources are good. The steps taken by the school to ensure child protection and the health, welfare and safety of pupils are very good. The school gives very high priority to promoting pupils' wellbeing. Systems for monitoring achievement and personal development are in place but the targets set lack precision and are hard to measure. This limits their usefulness and therefore monitoring has still to have the positive impact that it should on support and guidance. Pupils are involved extensively in the work and development of the school and their views are listened to. The school has very effective links with parents, other schools, colleges, and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, Leadership and management are good. The school is led very well by its headteacher. Members of the senior management team and subject leaders contribute well to leadership. The school is effectively managed. The governance of the school is good and statutory requirements are fully met. There are no significant barriers to raising achievement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a positive view of the school; they like most features of the provision it makes but a few have reservations about the amount of homework they are given. A minority was also concerned about the negative impact of bullying even when it was acknowledged that it had been well dealt with by the school. Pupils like the school very much and are pleased to be attending it.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

Systematically, assess the performance and track the progress of each pupil and group of pupils, using a measure that shows up sufficiently clearly the small gains that they make over time, and use the data gained to help in the setting of precise individual and challenging, overall, performance targets.

Ensure that the courses followed by both the highest and lowest attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11, do not put a cap on achievement by being tied to external accreditation schemes that are insufficiently challenging.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is **good** for pupils in Years 7 to 11 and for students in Years 12 and 13. There are no significant differences in achievement between boys and girls or between the majority of pupils and students and those who are members of minority ethnic groups. There has been a notable good improvement since the last inspection when progress across the age range was satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is more successful in National examinations than similar schools elsewhere.
- Pupils and students respond to the chance to gain external certification of their work.
- Very good achievement in literacy underpins learning success.
- Achievement is highest in English, personal, social, and health education (PSHE) and citizenship.
- Subject leadership and the quality of teaching are the keys to improvement in achievement since the last inspection.
- Pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them but these are too broad and weakness in opportunities for accreditation limits the achievement of a minority of pupils to some degree.

Commentary

1. The school sets overall targets for pupils' performance by the end of Year 9 and the end of Year 11. Those for year 9 have only recently been set and relate to the standards attained by pupils in the National Curriculum measured by teacher assessment and the national tests. They are based on what, historically, has been attained by pupils of the same age in the past. Pupils presently in Year 9 are on course to achieve the levels predicted. Target setting is more established for pupils in Year 11. The school exceeded the target it set in 2003 when 67 per cent of its pupils in Year 11 gained at least one pass at grade A* to G in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations. This level of success is good in comparison to other similar schools, nationally, in which 28 per cent of pupils gain a GCSE pass at grade A* to G.
2. In addition to GCSE certificates pupils gain accreditation for their work by other means. Prominent among these, are the awards made by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) for individual units of work completed in a range of subjects by pupils in Years 10 and 11. All pupils completing Year 11 have gained some certificates. In Years 12 and 13, students also follow courses that lead to appropriate qualifications. They achieve well. In the Construction Skills Centre, for example, students learn through good instruction and practice, joinery, painting and decorating and bricklaying. They gain the foundation level award of the Construction Skills Council on successfully completing these courses.
3. A key to pupils' successful learning across the wide range of subjects in the curriculum is their confident use of literacy skills. While all the pupils have significant learning difficulties, and the standards they attain in speaking, listening, reading and writing are well below those of their age peers, they make very good progress in these areas and they achieve well. By Year 11 almost all read, with understanding, the writing of the teacher on the whiteboard and the texts and worksheets that underpin their learning. They record their work neatly and accurately in exercise books or folders. They listen attentively take part in discussions and answer questions sensibly. They also use their literacy skills very well in the broader context of school life. For example, a

group of older pupils read out to a school assembly the facts they had gleaned from newspapers and the Internet about the earthquake in Iran and its human consequences.

4. Achievement in English is very good for pupils in Years 7 to 11 and for students in Years 12 and 13. This very marked improvement since the last inspection has been brought about by the clear sense of purpose and high aspirations of the subject leader and key staff and by the very high quality of teaching. Across the age range, pupils and students also achieve very well in personal and social education and citizenship. Achievement in these areas is heightened by the emphasis the school places on teaching social co-operation, giving personal respect to all, caring for others and providing sensitive guidance and support.
5. There is good achievement in mathematics, science, information and communication technology, art, design and technology, music and physical education both by pupils in Years 7 to 11 and students in Years 12 and 13. In each case, these subjects are effectively led and teaching is good. Pupils are encouraged to believe that they can be successful learners and this fuels their determination to try as hard as they can. They develop a positive attitude to learning in most subjects. For this reason a substantial number of pupils return as students in Years 12 and 13 when some continue with music, as part of a performing arts option, while others develop the skills that they learned in design and technology, in craft based vocational courses. A number of students, chiefly girls, take further their earlier work in personal, social and health education, (PSHE), and food technology, in studying for an AQA award in child-care. In French, history and geography, that are taught, solely, to pupils in Years 7 to 9, achievement is good. Once again effective subject leadership and good teaching underlie this success. There is good subject leadership in religious education and an appropriate curriculum has now been developed. However, because teaching is, overall, satisfactory rather than good pupils achieve at no more than the level that is expected. They make satisfactory progress as they did at the time of the last inspection.
6. Achievement has improved markedly since the last inspection. The most prominent improvement is in achievement in English. In mathematics, standards of achievement have shown very good improvement, while, in science, the good achievement then reported has been maintained. Achievement in art, design and technology, history, geography and physical education is also much improved. The school is aware of this improvement chiefly through the evidence provided by external accreditation of learning. The number of pupils gaining grades in the GCSE examinations has risen and is projected to rise further, and the school knows that through the broader range of externally examined courses it now provides, all pupils will leave with some certificates.
7. Pupils have targets set for them when their statements of special educational needs are reviewed each year. In many instances, these targets are couched in very broad terms. Pupils' progress towards these, therefore, becomes difficult to measure with any precision. This is especially true of targets that address behavioural tendencies and attitudes but is also the case in targets that address key learning skills in numeracy, oracy, or literacy. This weakness in target setting arises because the school has not adopted a suitable scale for measuring the small steps made by pupils in their learning in each subject. Subsequent reviews can, therefore, only estimate progress towards the targets that were previously set rather than stating it precisely. With this caveat it is, nevertheless, clear that year on year the great majority of pupils and students make good progress towards the objectives that are set for them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The attitudes, values, and other personal qualities of pupils and students are **very good**. Their behaviour and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are also **very good**. Attendance is **satisfactory**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Strong commitment to meeting pupils' and students' personal needs improves attitudes.
- Behaviour is very good and oppressive racist or sexist incidents are very rare.
- Consistent high expectation and innovative provision helps even pupils with major difficulties to profit from education.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is very well promoted.

Commentary

8. The school works hard and effectively to encourage pupils and students to value and enjoy all that it offers. It opens its doors early each morning and frequently does not close them until well after the formal teaching day has ended. In this way, it signifies its readiness to meet the many physical, social and emotional needs of its pupils that cannot be fully resolved within the classroom. A breakfast club operates each morning. It is well attended and gives those pupils who arrive early, sometimes after lengthy journeys, a chance to meet friends, to have something nourishing to eat and to use computers. At morning break a hot snack or breakfast food is also available and the café tables in the canteen fill up with chattering groups of friends. After school, there are clubs. For some this provides the chance to continue work towards examinations, for others it provides a leisure opportunity in safe and familiar surroundings. A youth club meets every week. The adults who supervise and facilitate all of this provision do so with full commitment to the pupils' welfare and with very positive attitudes. They are open and friendly as they organise and manage the provision. Their exchanges with pupils are positive and encouraging, rather than being overly directing and formal. The pupils and students respond to these efforts made by the school very well. In the context of their clubs and activities they are cheerful and polite to guests, including inspectors, readily talking about their strong feeling of appreciation for what is offered. Very many more than is usual come forward spontaneously to say that they enjoy coming to school. The fabric of the building and the school's resources are clearly respected. There is very little litter and no evidence of wilful damage.
9. The positive attitudes of pupils and students, seen in the less formal aspects of the school's work, carry over into the classroom. In most lessons pupils behave very well and try their best to understand and complete the work they are given. They are helpful to one another, join in team games with the right spirit and accept personal responsibility for their work. They are ready to take on greater responsibility at need, for example in representing others as a delegate to the school council. Within the school day the vast majority of pupils gets to their lessons on time and prepared to work. Movement about the school is orderly. This is more remarkable because about four out of every ten pupils has significant emotional and behavioural difficulties in addition to their learning difficulties. There is no evidence of racially motivated oppressive behaviour or sexist behaviour.
10. The school has developed very effective means for promoting discipline and good behaviour and, in particular meeting the special needs of those whose emotional, behavioural and social difficulties are significant. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, and commitment are closely monitored and every opportunity is taken to reward, with *Smart Vouchers*, evidence of consistent effort or improvement. The communal celebration of individual success is a very important part of each school week. The *Smart Centre*, the name given by the school to its behaviour support base, has been developed within the last year to provide for those pupils who need extra emotional and behavioural support. It is proving to be a vital resource. The concept is clear and meets the known needs of pupils extremely well. It complements the well-established pastoral system already in place and goes beyond it. The staff members are effectively led and have suitable

expertise and great commitment to their work. Pupils may be withdrawn to the centre when they are not able to cope in classes or, on occasions, present themselves at the centre for help and guidance. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the *Smart Centre* has already had a positive impact. Exclusions involving those who attend it are said to be reduced and incidents of noteworthy misbehaviour have decreased. In its totality, the school's provision has significantly lessened the incidence of serious misbehaviour, including bullying. It has set high expectations of pupils' conduct and has given vulnerable and difficult pupils a real opportunity to form positive relationships and all pupils and students have the chance to experience success as learners. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are high as a result.

11. Both through its curriculum and through its ethos the school encourages pupils and students to understand the feelings of others, to respect their values and beliefs and reflect upon their own values. This is done overtly in assemblies or through teaching in religious education but also less directly through the ambience that the school seeks to create. The effect on pupils and students of being and working within a building which shows within its fabric that they are respected and cared for is very positive. They respond well to a level of provision that is beyond expectation. The many opportunities the school provides for social gathering and for taking social responsibility enable pupils to develop a very positive sense of community and the feeling that they should contribute to the wellbeing of others when they can. Pupils and students are strongly encouraged to make the right choice. They develop a very good sense of what is right and what is wrong. After any serious incident, they are required to think carefully about their actions and what they might have done differently. Pupils are exposed to many opportunities to consider their own culture and that of others. These, range from the very good use the school makes of music, to the work that is done in several subjects on the life, products and beliefs of societies beyond their own. In these aspects of its work, the school has built on the considerable strengths identified in the last inspection.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	12.20%	School data	0.89%
National data	8.20%	National data	2.10%

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

Attendance and punctuality are **satisfactory**.

Pupils attend school regularly and the majority arrives punctually. However, there is a small core of pupils who do not realise the importance of attending school. These pupils affect annual attendance levels by about 3 to 4 per cent. The school closely monitors these pupils. The Education Welfare Officer makes regular home visits and keeps in touch with parents. Unfortunately, there are no improvements despite the great efforts that the school makes to ensure that pupils' school experience is happy.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	140	51	1
White – any other White background	5	1	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	1	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	7	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	4	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	5	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	7	0	0

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

In the past twelve months, the manner in which exclusions are reported has changed. All instances of pupils being sent home, with parents' consent, during the school day began to be reported as temporary exclusions. Formerly these instances were not recorded in this way. The change in procedure led to a "blip" in the exclusion figures in the last school year. However, new provision in the school, particularly the *Smart Centre*, has had the effect of reducing exclusions this year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** and the curriculum is **very good**. The quality of assessment is **satisfactory**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good for all year groups and for pupils and students with different special educational needs and ethnic backgrounds. As a result they learn effectively and achieve well.

Main Strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and there is a good range of external accreditation available.
- Teaching in English is a strength of the school.
- Assessment is not yet refined enough to be used effectively to inform planning and target setting.
- Good planning leads to effective teaching.
- Behaviour management is very good.

Commentary

12. Since the last inspection teaching and learning has improved. At the last inspection, teaching was satisfactory in nine out of ten lessons, and good or better in four out of ten lessons. Now teaching is good in two out of three lessons. The school has successfully addressed all the issues from the last inspection. In English, teaching is very good overall and sometimes excellent, it is consistently good in mathematics, science, history, geography, art, music,

information and communication technology, (ICT), design and technology, (DT), (including food technology) and French. This is good overall improvement. Teachers promote learning well so that pupils and students are motivated. In the best lessons, the objectives for the lesson are made clear with a clear starter and plenary and teachers have high expectations of pupils and students. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they make very productive use of this in planning and structuring their lessons. Almost all pupils and students have opportunities to follow a good range of national external accreditation including GCSE, Unit awards, Key Skills, and Youth Challenge.

13. A strongly emerging feature of the high quality of teaching is found in English in which highly effective use is made of peer support and coaching. This practice has had a strongly beneficial effect on the work of the unqualified teachers enabling them to gain greater confidence and skill. Questioning is used very well to challenge pupils and to enable them to consolidate their learning. The relationships between staff and pupils are mutually respectful. This helps every pupil and student to do their best and accept both criticism and praise. Pupils and students are highly motivated to achieve.
14. Teachers have a sound grasp of their pupils' and students' capabilities but they do not yet have effective means of measuring precisely the small steps that they make. This leads to lack of precision when targets for improvement are set. Students and pupils have individual education plans, (IEPs), that reflect this imprecision. Goals for learning are set that are quite general and, while it is possible to see that a pupil or student is making gains, the next step to be achieved is not clearly identified. Pupils and students work hard but the benefits that would be gained from sharing with them a precise account of what they can do and what they need to do next in order to succeed are not available. The school recognises the need to improve its practice in assessment. An assessment manager has been appointed. He has worked hard to help teachers to understand the importance of assessing pupils' and students' attainments accurately and tracking their progress. There is general understanding that the school must refine its assessment procedures, especially in relation to pupils and students with lower levels of attainment.
15. The quality of planning is improved when teachers work collaboratively. When this is done it results in clear and concise teaching and learning, and sharp, focussed lessons where the pace is brisk, time is never lost, and pupils make continuous progress. Throughout the school, the best lessons are planned in sufficient detail so that teachers have a sufficient range of activities to offer in order to maintain interest. This helps pupils, including those with more challenging behaviour, to maintain a good level of concentration and effort. Teachers lead their classroom team well so that all adults make a contribution to learning. Overall, teaching is enthusiastic, consistently challenging to pupils, and supported by good and relevant resources that are sensitively matched to pupil needs. Teachers and classroom assistants work in harmony, providing good individual and small-group support and this contributes significantly to the pupils' learning and progress in lessons.
16. Teachers manage the behaviour in their classes very well. At the start of lessons, they make clear what is to be achieved. Relationships are positive. Classroom rules are clear but the teacher's voice is very seldom heard to reprimand. Lots of encouragement is given, however, and pupils and students are helped to understand that they are learners who can succeed. The school backs up its teachers through its behaviour support centre. Those who are unable to fully benefit from lessons in the classroom may be withdrawn until they can. This reduces confrontation in the classroom and helps to create a calm atmosphere in which learning can flourish.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 82 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (1%)	14 (17%)	43 (52.5%)	22 (27.5%)	2 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

The curriculum

The curriculum is very good. It is relevant to the needs of pupils and students. Enrichment through extra curricular provision is very good, in particular there are many opportunities for participation in sporting activities. Accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement since the last inspection and the school provides a very good range of courses and learning opportunities that enable pupils to develop their academic, vocational and social skills very well.
- Extra curricular activities, educational visits, and support from a range of agencies enrich the curriculum.
- The accommodation to support and extend learning opportunities is very good.
- The provision for students in Years 12 and 13 is very good.
- Progress and achievement in PSHE and Citizenship is very good.

Commentary

17. The school provides many very good learning opportunities for pupils of all age groups. The curriculum fully meets statutory requirements. It is broader than at the time of the last inspection and more relevant to the needs of pupils and students. Pupils have access to a wide range of accredited courses, which promote self-esteem and self-awareness very well. The range of options is increased by opportunities to study at local colleges. The Youth Achievement Award and the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, local business and enterprise projects, and work-related activities prepare pupils and students for the next stage. Support for pupils with additional needs, such as visual impairment, is good, enabling them to successfully participate in the full range of activities. The wide range of learning opportunities offered and the positive support of staff encourages pupils to be actively engaged in their learning. There is a wide choice of vocational courses, both within the school-based Construction Centre and also at local colleges. The "Succeeding Together" evening at which awards for effort and attainment were presented by the Mayor of Trafford illustrated the success of senior pupils.
18. Through the hard work of staff, extra curricular activities and support for learning outside of the school day have become important aspects of the life of the school. The breakfast club encourages pupils to attend on time, and gives access to a computer and play stations. The teaching assistant on duty supports pupils very well. The range of lunchtime and after school activities includes football, use of the fitness room, woodwork and computer clubs and the youth club for senior and former pupils on a Wednesday evening. Pupils of all ages are involved in residential experiences. Year 7 pupils go on a residential trip to the YMCA Hawkshead Youth Centre. Pupils up to 14 go to the Lake District for a two-day experience of outdoor and adventurous activities, and pupils between 14 and 16 go on a trip to France linking their studies in history and French. There are very good links with other institutions to widen the pupils' experiences, including Manchester United football club and Ashton on Mersey sports college who both provide coaches for lunchtime and after school activities.

19. The school has very good accommodation that supports learning well. There are two well equipped IT suites, a large sports hall, a construction skills centre, and a range of spacious classrooms. There has been a good improvement in the accommodation since the previous inspection. The interior environment of the school is now very good. It is free of vandalism and graffiti, probably because the quality of displays in all areas and the celebration of success enable the pupils to appreciate what is on offer. During discussion, one Year 11 pupil said, "I am very proud of the school. Some of my friends say they wish they came here because of all the things we can do. I think it's a great school and we all try to look after it".
20. The overarching aim of the provision for students in Years 12 and 13 is to enable pupils to develop skills for independent living. A wide range of academic and vocational courses is on offer. Very good links to other providers enable pupils to access courses in engineering and furniture making. Some students follow the National Vocational Qualification, (NVQ), courses in Key Skills that include options in working with others, problem solving and improving learning. A very successful aspect of the curriculum is the opportunity for pupils to be actively involved in the "Team Enterprise" project. This is very well supported by the Young Enterprise team and by the staff from the nearby offices of the Kellogg's corporation. The students have been able to use the boardroom for their business meetings. The team project has won Trafford Young Enterprise awards for customer care, personnel, and presentation of project. Social programmes, including the school-based youth club, trips to Blackpool, and a residential to Prestatyn all contribute to the pupils' social development.
21. The personal, social and health education programme is very good, enabling pupils to gain in self-esteem and social awareness. The school sees the personal development of its pupils and students as citizens as an important part of its work. Following a classroom-based tutorial on relationships, a Year 7 pupil said, "I really enjoyed that because it was all about caring for each other. We don't need a lot of money to live, we need friendship and care in our family".

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good measures to ensure the safety, welfare, and care of all its pupils. Monitoring of pupils' achievements and personal development is satisfactory. There is very good involvement of pupils in the work and development of the school. The high standard of provision noted at the last inspection has been maintained.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers strive hard to improve pupils' confidence and self-esteem by providing a safe and secure environment within the school.
- The school uses external resources very well to support the pupils.
- Staff listen to the views of all pupils and involve them in the work and development of the school.

Commentary

22. *"I may not be the brightest, I may not be the fastest, I may not be the strongest, BUT what I can do better than anyone else is be me!"* This quotation from the school's prospectus effectively portrays the philosophy of the school and its pupils and students. Pupils interact very well with teaching staff and visitors to the school and put visitors at ease. They are confident in their sense of self-worth. This is a tribute to the success the school has in helping with this. It has done this by striving to be inclusive, removing barriers to learning that have, in the past, prevented pupils and students from working alongside of their peers from mainstream schools. Staff ensure that the school is a safe and secure place for all who attend it. Child protection arrangements are good. All staff are trained in identifying signs of child abuse. Twelve members

of staff have requested further training in counselling skills so that they may become more proficient in offering support to pupils at risk. Strong, trusting relationships prevail between staff and pupils.

23. The school is very effective in using valuable external resources to support pupils' learning. For example, there is very good liaison with the catering services provider when implementing strategies for the healthy eating initiative and caterers discuss with pupils the value of choosing healthy options. Pupils are given an opportunity to say what type of food they would like to eat. Language therapists make a valuable contribution supporting pupils' language development in Years 7 to 9. External agencies support pupils who have visual impairment as well as moderate learning difficulties. A personal adviser from the careers service Connexions is available for pupils and students and there is a full programme of work placements. Several governors are actively involved in providing work experience opportunities.
24. The school is very good at listening to the views and ideas of pupils and students. This helps to develop their involvement in their own education. There is always an adult to whom they can turn in times of need. This gives pupils additional confidence when dealing with problems. The school council enables pupils to share their views on how they can improve school life and time and effort are put into making sure that their ideas for improvement are implemented.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community is, as it was in the last inspection, very good, overall. The school has good links with parents. Community links are very good and very effective. They enrich the curriculum, pupils' learning, and self-esteem. The school's links with other schools and colleges are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school takes full advantage of the expertise and resources available in the community.
- The very effective links with other schools and colleges enable the school to bring a new dimension to the pupils' learning and understanding of the outside world.
- Parents are kept well informed about school events, activities, and children's progress.
- A few parents reported that their children had been harassed by other pupils and others were concerned about arrangements for pupils' transport.

Commentary

25. The school is very progressive in the way it uses external resources. The school forms strong and lasting partnerships with organisations within the local community. Within the borough, the school is viewed in a very positive light. Pupils come from a wide catchment area because of the school's very good reputation for achievement and innovation. The school sees community links as a two-way process and makes its sports hall available for the Trafford Basketball team. Pupils from other schools have access to Manor High School's well-established construction skills centre. This gives pupils and students the opportunity to work alongside mainstream pupils on an equal footing. The youth club is attended by young people from the neighbourhood as well as those from the school.
26. The school is very keen to promote modern foreign languages and has very firm links with a language college in Altrincham. Four girls from the college's sixth form regularly visit the school and work with some of the school's pupils on a one-to-one basis to further develop their knowledge of French. They also assist on the residential visit to France each year. The Key Stage 4 options within the Youth Achievement Award include work with large-scale art, involving the charity "Groundwork Trust", and pupils from two other schools. The link with a specialist school helps the pupils to become more involved in the performing arts. These, and other initiatives, actively develop and encourage pupils' character and confidence-building skills.

27. Good communication links keep parents fully informed of events happening at the school. Parents support the school and involve themselves in their children's learning as far as they are able.
28. There are some minor concerns about children being harassed. Staff deal effectively with any reported incidents of bullying, and parents' anxieties about behaviour are unfounded. Behaviour is very good and oppressive behaviour is very rare. Recently some parents have expressed concern about transport arrangements for pupils. These are reviewed annually and the school puts forward a strong case for the majority of pupils to retain existing travel arrangements when there is an identified need. When pupils are drawn from a wide catchment area and their special educational needs are acknowledged, the transport requirements should normally be written into their statements.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is very good.
- The headteacher has created an effective senior management team, and middle management is good.
- Staff recruitment and deployment is good.
- The governors contribute well to the direction of the school.
- Self-evaluation and monitoring of performance is less well developed.

Commentary

29. Overall, the quality of leadership and management praised in the last report has been maintained and developed. The headteacher has only been in post for two terms. In this short time, he has shown that he is totally committed to moving the school forward to achieve higher standards. He has a clear vision for the school, inspires staff, and carries them forward with him. There is a new senior management team that shares his vision and determination that all pupils and students will make as much progress as they can; both in their academic studies and in their personal and social achievements. This vision has led to very good development of learning opportunities. An example of this is to be found in the vocational courses run by the school in conjunction with North and South Trafford Colleges. These allow pupils from Years 10 and 11 from many different secondary schools to have access to City and Guilds qualifications. A further example is the development of the Smart Centre as part of school's behaviour management, which is an innovative attempt to improve pupil behaviour.
30. All members of the senior management team have a clear understanding of their roles and what they must do to carry these out effectively. The assistant headteachers have been given charge of setting up and developing key aspects of the provision. These include the school assessment and progress tracking system, and the Smart Centre for behaviour support. Together with the deputy headteacher and the headteacher, they act as team leaders for a group of teachers as part of the school's performance management strategy. They understand this role and its significance in ensuring that the school continues to improve and to move forward.
31. Subject leaders are effective in promoting learning and higher standards in their subjects. There is good planning of what is to be taught and the teachers within each subject are given guidance and support in most instances.
32. The school has been innovative in identifying four experienced support assistants and training them to teach. They are consistently monitored and supported. The school has also identified a

route by which these unqualified teachers can pursue a 'foundation degree' that will give them qualified status. In the previous inspection, French was deemed to be unsatisfactory because of the lack of subject knowledge. The school has remedied this by appointing a well-qualified linguist and a French support assistant. The outcome is that French has improved, is now well taught and pupils make good progress.

33. The governors make an effective contribution to the direction of the school and have a good understanding of its work. They fulfil all statutory requirements and are effective in guiding and supporting developments. The chairperson spends a lot of time in school and has good knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. Individual governors accept responsibility for the monitoring of specific aspects or subjects. This good practice enhances governors' knowledge of the staff and the school. All staff and governors attend a weekend conference annually to develop the school improvement plan from draft form to its final version. This gives all staff and particularly, the governors, a clearer understanding of the priorities, aims and objectives of the school and ensures the development plan is clearly linked to school targets and financial planning. Governors are a well-organised body and use their committees effectively to monitor and help manage the school.
34. Budget monitoring is good and there are sound systems in place to ensure money is spent wisely. The school's finance manager keeps governors informed about what has been spent at regular intervals throughout the school year. Governors have a good understanding of the concept of best value. They are proud of the way in which they attract parents to their Annual General Meeting and of the way that they consult them about their views of the school. Appointed governors review the headteacher's performance rigorously. Through the rigour of their oversight, governors help the school to continue to improve. They know that teaching and the outcomes of learning are good because they can point to increasing examination success. They are right to believe that the school gives good value for money.
35. School self-evaluation and performance monitoring are in the early stages of development. The school has acknowledged this and has put this as a priority in its development plan and the local authority is helping. Comparing itself with other schools is more difficult because the school lacks data about pupils' performance. Such comparisons would be possible if the school made use of a frequently used scale such as the "P" scales, against which to record pupils' progress. The headteacher has contact with three similar schools in the area. These have similar populations and age ranges. He hopes to compare the performance of his pupils with that of the pupils in these schools.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,159,279	Balance from previous year	172,818
Total expenditure	1,268,838	Balance carried forward to the next year	63,259

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

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 3 TO 4 AND POST-16

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English

Provision is **very good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is of very high quality, promotes very good learning and pupils achieve very well.
- Lessons are planned very thoroughly and this leads to good achievement.
- Subject leadership is very good and the Key Stage 3 Strategy has been well developed.
- Assessment for pupils performing below level one is underdeveloped.
- The library is unsatisfactory

Commentary

36. Pupils across the age range, including those for whom English is an additional language, achieve very well. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when pupils' progress was satisfactory. This is largely due to very good teaching. Pupils and students know and understand what is expected of them, work hard and respond well to teachers. Confident and competent teachers, including an unqualified teacher, are implementing the Key Stage 3 strategy and deliver English well. The high quality peer support in place enables the unqualified teacher to work alongside the two subject leaders to good effect; this makes for consistent teaching and thus benefits learning.
37. Teachers plan their lessons together so that they are sharply focussed, brisk in pace and make full use of time. Because of this, pupils make continuous progress. The emphasis in lessons is appropriate to the pupils' age and stage of learning. Thus, in Year 7, pupils work to extend their vocabulary and to learn the names of parts of speech. They confidently suggest adjectives such as "excited", "nervous", "frightened" and "shocked" when asked to describe how the boy might feel in an illustration entitled "Beyond the Bookcase". They understand that nouns are names like "spider", "bookshelf", "step", "web", and "boy". By Year 9 pupils study "Macbeth" by William Shakespeare. They read the text of the play in both Shakespearean English and a modern translation with clarity and enthusiasm. By Year 11 pupils take greater responsibility for their own work and its correctness. They proof-read text and identify paragraph breaks, punctuation, and spelling errors well. They use this as a model for proof-reading their own work to good effect. By Year 13 students write for an audience with confidence and create posters to encourage their fellow students to raise money to support the Iran earthquake appeal. They adapt their writing using powerful downloaded images from the Internet to get their message across in a planned assembly.
38. A strongly emerging feature of the teaching in English is the good adaptation of the Key Stage 3 strategy. Subject leadership is very good. Two subject leaders work well together and complement each other. Between them, they have a very good range of specialist skills, knowledge, and understanding. They recognise the strengths and developmental areas for their subject and have clear plans to address these. They clearly have the capacity and enthusiasm to improve subject provision further.

39. While there is a good range of opportunities for pupils to gain recognition for their work through GCSE, AQA unit awards, and Key Skills awards, assessment of pupils' continuing development is insufficiently sharp. Individual education plans for those pupils who perform below Level 1 or who are between Levels 1 and 2 of the National Curriculum have imprecise targets. The subject leaders along with the assessment manager recognise this and have clear plans to address the issue.
40. Teachers make many inspiring and highly motivational resources but the library is unsatisfactory and does not enable the teachers to teach library skills, how to use books effectively for research to promote private study. The small number of books in the library means that pupils and students have restricted choice of books to borrow to read at home. It is wholly inadequate for the number of pupils and students and limits pupils' development of independent learning skills in English.

Example of outstanding practice.

A GCSE/Certificate of Achievement lesson inspires and motivates pupils with moderate learning difficulties to make relevant oral contributions and link colloquial to technical language

The stimulating, enthusiastic, consistently challenging skills of the teachers enabled every pupil, even those who found oral and written contributions difficult, to be highly motivated and to contribute to a discussion of the homeless character called Link in "Stone Cold" by Robert Swindells. Excellent use of quiet personalised praise enthused pupils to discuss common misconceptions of homeless people as "scruffy, crims or nutters". The pupils discussed the protagonist's attributes with maturity and understanding, seeing him as intelligent and forced by circumstances to live on the streets. The classroom "packed" with Year 10's was buzzing with energy as they completed "thought showers" and discussed the characters and, in particular, the adjectives used to describe them. Excellent questioning using the pupils' colloquial street language elicited mature responses and easy usage of technical English which in turn had them using and understanding the meanings of "misconception", "protagonist" and "society". The teacher ensured that group and individual support along with humour exploited every opportunity to get the best from her pupils who were eager learners. Together, the pupils delighted in each other's success.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

41. Progress towards meeting the school's literacy targets has been good. Pupils and students are encouraged to use their literacy skills in other subjects. They listen well in all lessons and there are identified literacy targets for the class. There is good use of information and communication technology; for example, pupils word process finished work and research material for lessons such as English, art, and history. In food technology pupils and students when making fruit salad listened well to instructions, reading and following the recipe. In art and design there is good use of literacy targets in the plenary when the class plays hangman to name artists and techniques studied. Worksheets and writing frames are used throughout school and although they are of good quality, they are often the same for all. It has been recognised that for some pupils who perform below Level 1 of the National Curriculum these need to be modified to address individual needs and sufficiently challenging for those who are higher attainers.

Modern foreign language

French

Provision for French is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching has improved and pupils achieve well.
- Learning support for the subject is very good.
- Learning resources are of a high quality.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

42. At the time of the previous inspection, French was unsatisfactory mainly due to lack of staff subject knowledge. This has been rectified by the appointment of a highly qualified linguist. She has very good knowledge of the target language and is relating very well to pupils, showing a good understanding of their special educational needs. As a result, pupils of all abilities, including those with additional special need, are now making good progress. This is good improvement since the last inspection.
43. The combination of a highly qualified teacher together with a French learning support assistant results in pupils being given very good role models and high quality teaching. Because of this, pupils achieve well. Relationships in class are very good, this enables staff to challenge pupils and extend their knowledge. Communication, speaking, and listening are a focus in lessons. Learning is fun and pupils enjoy coming to lessons. They try their best and try to imitate staff and improve their accents and pronunciation of words and phrases. They are confident speakers in class. French contributes well to pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, as well as their personal, social and cultural development and there is an annual residential trip to Normandy.
44. Many of the learning resources are made by staff. The phonic French alphabet is on display in the classroom and it is particularly useful; pupils refer to this continually in lesson. Good use is made of computers to produce worksheets that match the differing attainment levels of the pupils. Visually impaired pupils are well supported by a visiting teacher for the visually impaired and by suitable resources. Good use is made of an overhead projector to focus the attention of pupils on their work.
45. The subject leader teaches all the French in school and the subject is well led and managed. Detailed records are kept which informs planning. This ensures continuation and progression as pupils progress through the school from Year 7 to Year 11. Assessment is thorough culminating in external accreditation in French at Year 11.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The progress and achievement of pupils in applying numeracy skills is good.
- Accreditation of progress in Year 11 is good for higher attainers.
- Assessment procedures and use of assessment lack consistency.
- Most teaching stimulates pupils' interest.
- The accreditation for lower achievers lacks challenge.
- Numeracy skills are not consistently taught across the curriculum.

Commentary

46. The attainment of pupils entering the school is very low. It ranges from National Curriculum Level 3 for a few, to working towards Level 1. Emphasis is placed on following the National Numeracy Strategy in applying concepts of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division in practical situations. There is evidence that the pupils currently in Years 10 and 11 have gained from the teaching and learning styles of the National Numeracy strategy. These pupils confidently apply their knowledge of multiplication and division to problems related to ratio. There is a high level of interest and most make effective use of their numeracy skills in practical situations. Achievement is higher than at the last inspection. There has been a good improvement.
47. In Year 11 higher attaining pupils are following the AQA (Accredited Qualifications Alliance) modular GCSE course in mathematics. Middle ability pupils follow the Entry Level Award and the lower attainers follow the AQA Unit Award Scheme. Pupils respond well to the high expectations of staff. In 2003, thirteen pupils were entered for the GCSE course and all gained a grade. Progress in developing accreditation has been good. The recently appointed subject leader has introduced a broader range of courses. These promote numeracy skills, even for pupils with literacy difficulties. There is evidence of good progress at all levels of attainment. For example, pupils who are amongst the highest attainers set up and conduct statistical investigations, testing out their hypotheses and making good use of a computer to display their findings.
48. The use of assessment to inform lesson planning by the recently appointed subject leader is very good. The progress made by pupils and students over time is clearly noted and objectives for future learning are set. However, the use of assessment to inform lesson planning lacks consistency across the school. The subject leader is keen to develop assessment by monitoring teaching and by scrutinising work samples from other groups, but this process is not yet fully underway.
49. Teaching overall is good. In most cases, lessons are well planned. Teaching is enthusiastic and challenging. In response, the pupils show confidence. They develop mental arithmetic skills to work out problems. Questioning is used well to include all pupils in the lesson and to link new learning to previous lessons and experience. As a result of the good oral sessions, they develop mathematical language very well. Higher attainers, for example, know that an acute angle is an angle of less than ninety degrees. Teachers and learning support assistants work well together, motivating and supporting groups of pupils as they apply techniques of measuring and calculating angles. Tasks are set that challenge pupils of all ability levels. On a few occasions, teaching is less effective; the opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills are limited. On one occasion, the teacher failed to capture the interest of pupils and this resulted in their behaviour deteriorating as their attention waned. Overall, however, the quality of teaching and learning has improved notably since the last inspection.
50. Lower attaining pupils in Year 11 and beyond, for whom the GCSE is not a suitable test of their learning, are on occasions, insufficiently challenged. At least one of the teachers is unaware of

the existence of resources that would develop mathematical understanding. Because of this, the lowest attainers make slower progress than they might do. An accredited course that meets their needs fully and challenges them to achieve as well as they can is not yet in place. In most cases, the pupils and students should be expected to attain a higher standard in their mathematical work and should be given a suitable opportunity to have their work accredited by an examining body.

Mathematics across the curriculum

51. The promotion and development of opportunities for pupils to apply and reinforce numeracy skills in lessons in other subjects is underdeveloped. There are examples of informal planning. In Year 7 pupils have been working on data handling in a project on "myself". This has included work in science and information and communication technology, (ICT). However, positive development of numeracy skills is not yet consistent across all age groups and opportunities to develop pupils' numeracy are not routinely featured in the plans and lessons of all subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

The main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good, with most pupils achieving well.
- Opportunities for older pupils to gain accreditation are good but need to be extended.
- Provision has improved since the last inspection.

Commentary

52. The overall quality of teaching is good. The teacher responsible for the subject is a science specialist. Her teaching is usually very good, with command of the subject. There is a rigorous approach to letting pupils conduct experiments. These form the cornerstone of every lesson, with the result that pupils learn from doing things for themselves. They respond well to this. The teaching assistants provide able support, occasionally taking a lead when it is appropriate. The lead teacher's planning is detailed, and clearly sets out learning objectives for the week. Support planning is also good. The quality of presentation in pupils' books, particularly in Year 7, shows that there is good coverage of science over time. More now needs to be done to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities, particularly through accurate assessment of pupils' work so that the more able are identified. The science teaching observed in the lessons that took place in classrooms rather than the laboratory was satisfactory. Pupils are not challenged enough in these lessons.

53. Older pupils benefit from being able to take a GCSE in environmental science. This complements other forms of accreditation, which are based on their achievement in different units of study covering biology, chemistry, and physics. Students in Years 12 and 13, who do not show the aptitude for formal qualifications may still enjoy some science that helps them to deal with situations that may face them in everyday life. These include basic first aid, as well as learning how to change a fuse and to wire a plug. While these "science is fun" experiences are beneficial to students, an overarching programme of study is yet to be put in place. This will complement the GCSE in science to be introduced this year.

54. No significant weaknesses were identified at the last inspection, and there has been a step change in provision. The teacher responsible for the subject, who is new to post this year, brings very strong expertise in the subject. Allied to good accommodation in the form of a specialist science laboratory, this means that pupils benefit from comprehensive coverage of the science

curriculum. Better use of time and resources would be possible with some technician support.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement in the quality and quantity of hardware and software to enhance pupil progress.
- Teachers have very good knowledge of the subject.
- Staff training has been carried out well.
- A good range of external accreditation is available for all pupils.

Commentary

55. The school has improved the quality and quantity of learning resources since the last inspection. There are now two well equipped ICT suites. All teaching rooms have ICT stations networked across the school. All pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with additional special needs, achieve well. As pupils progress through the school, they increase their ability to use ICT effectively. They use commercial applications that include databases well and access the Internet confidently to carry out additional research.
56. The quality of teaching and learning are consistently good across all year groups. Staff have very good subject knowledge as well as knowing the pupils and their special needs well. They are patient and encouraging and use humour well, which pupils appreciate as it makes learning enjoyable and fun. Pupils are challenged and respond positively showing pride in their work and obvious enjoyment of their work.
57. The school has ensured all teaching staff have completed their NOF, (New Opportunities Fund), training. Learning support assistants have received extra in-service training and some have pursued the CLAIT, (Computer Literacy and Information Technology), qualification. As a result, high quality support ensures all pupils receive good help and advice that enhances their achievement.
58. All pupils have opportunities to pursue CLAIT, Entry Level Certificate, and GCSE qualifications during their time in Years 10 and 11. The school achieves good success in these examinations. At the time of the previous inspection, there were no passes in external examinations. Over the last three years the number of success has continuously risen. This is good improvement. Because pupils follow external courses, built in assessment is used effectively.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

59. The use of ICT skills in other subjects is good. Pupils use the skills they have learned in ICT in most subjects. In English they word process stories and poems and draft and redraft their work. In mathematics, they use ICT for data handling and students in Post 16 enhance the presentation of their work through good use of ICT. In religious education, pupils use ICT to create 'celebration' cards. In French, pupils access the Internet to use a French program. In design and technology, digital photographs are used well to record pupils' work. In art, pupils use ICT to create an impressive animated story that they presented to the whole school in assembly. However, in science ICT is less well used. Although ICT appears in the planning, there is too little use made of the opportunities it provides for data handling, remote sensing and modelling.

HUMANITIES

History

Provision in history is **good**.

The main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good and pupils make good progress, achieving well.
- There are insufficient opportunities for the most able pupils.
- There are useful opportunities for accreditation for students in Years 12 and 13.
- Good leadership and management have improved provision since the last inspection.

Commentary

60. Good teaching was seen in all of the lessons observed. The work in pupils' exercise books shows that good progress is being made over time. Pupils try hard and take pride in their work. Relationships in lessons are very good. The methods used by the history teacher are suitable for purpose, carefully guiding pupils through each step. Appropriate attention is given to writing and presentation. Greater attention needs to be given to ensuring that all pupils are fully involved throughout lessons.
61. Although there are opportunities for pupils in Years 10 and 11 to achieve some accreditation as they achieve pass grades in different units of work, the time available makes it difficult for the more able pupils to achieve a pass grade in a GCSE. Creditably, one girl did achieve a grade in 2003 because the teacher taught her individually in her own time, showing her good commitment. However, the two forty-minute periods each week presently set aside for history provide insufficient time for pupils to complete the GCSE course, even if they are strongly motivated.
62. Students in Years 12 and 13 benefit from being able to follow history courses that lead to accreditation. At the moment, this is based on the study of 'medicine' but there are opportunities for the areas of work to be extended.
63. At the last inspection the curriculum and the resources used to teach history were both unsatisfactory. This is no longer the case because the subject manager, who is a history specialist, has worked hard to plan a curriculum that addresses the key historical skills, particularly chronology. These are then assessed on a termly basis in Years 7, 8, and 9. There is now access to computers in the history classroom and there are sufficient texts and other resources such as videos. Trips to museums such as to the Maritime Museum in Liverpool and the Imperial War Museum in Bradford contribute to pupils' learning.

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

The main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching is good with pupils achieving well.
- Assessment is not used well enough to plan lessons.
- There are opportunities for accreditation in related subjects.

Commentary

64. At the last inspection, many aspects of provision were either unsatisfactory or poor. The teacher responsible for the subject has worked very hard to address each of these issues, and has done so successfully. Teachers' planning and methods used are now good. The curriculum is no longer narrow, and resources are now satisfactory. The teacher responsible has benefited from the support he has received, has developed good knowledge of the subject, and uses good management strategies. As a result the progress made by pupils is no longer unsatisfactory. On the contrary, it is good.
65. The quality of teaching in each of the lessons seen was good and pupils made good progress in them. Their exercise books show that they achieve well over time and cover the curriculum thoroughly. Pupils work hard and take pride in their work because there are clear classroom routines and high expectations of behaviour. As soon as pupils enter the classroom there is work ready to do, and so they are able to settle quickly. Pupils are interested in the subject, displaying good recall of prior learning as a result of effective questioning. Pupils respond well to the regular use of rewards. The learning needs of most pupils are well met.
66. More needs to be done to ensure that all pupils are stretched and challenged. Some of the tasks that are set by the teacher are not demanding enough for the more able pupils, and they are given too few opportunities to work independently. This is because the learning objectives for each lesson do not rigorously address the needs of each pupil as they relate to the development of skills in the subject.
67. There are opportunities for older pupils to follow a course in Leisure and Tourism and/or in environmental science at GCSE. This enables them to build on the geographical knowledge and skills gained lower down the school.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in Year 7 makes good use of pupils' past learning.
- Achievement is strongly linked to the quality of teaching.
- The link between the locally agreed syllabus and RE work in Years 12 and 13 is insufficiently strong.
- Leadership has brought about improvements.

Commentary

68. Pupils in Year 7 get off to a good start in their study of religious education. They are encouraged to recall and reflect on what they have previously learned during their time in primary school and to develop their understanding of this. They put a good deal of effort into making and decorating "book marks" that illustrate their remembrance of the symbols, prayers and artefacts associated with the major world faiths. Teaching is effective and enables the pupils to achieve well.
69. Overall, however, despite the good start made, both achievement and teaching are satisfactory, rather than good, in Years 7 to 9. While relationships between adults and pupils are positive and efforts to introduce variety in approach are made, for example by making use of computers, lessons are sometimes lacking in pace and precision and have a little too much anecdotal content. This is the case in Year 9, when pupils learn about the ceremonies by which religious faiths acknowledge and mark the most significant happenings in the lives of the members of their community, particularly the rites associated with birth and death. In a series of lessons in which they learn about naming ceremonies, including Christian baptism, and eventually take part in role-play to reinforce their learning, too little is made, initially, of the beliefs that underpin these rites.

70. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is also satisfactory. There is some good teaching but most is satisfactory. In those lessons in which teaching is good there is clarity about what should be learned, secure knowledge of the subject and use of a variety of methods. In these cases pupils achieve well. As a result, by Year 10, pupils preparing for the AQA award for a unit of work on marriage and divorce know the similarities and differences in the marriage ceremonies of Christians and Hindus and they are well placed to gain their certificates. However, pupils in Year 11 are less certain of their ground in the work that they do on "Peace and War". In this topic factual knowledge about historical conflicts or about the complex concepts about struggle, that are associated with specific faiths, for example the notion of "Just War" in Christianity or "Jihad" in Islam, needs to be very secure if the moral issues are to profitably explored. The teaching in the topic while it has strengths in areas such as relationships with the class and in the valuing of each pupil's contribution lacks precision.
71. The religious education of students in Years 12 and 13 is incorporated into work in personal, social and health education and citizenship. In this, ethical and moral discussion and decision-making are emphasised and the beliefs of faith communities are considered. This work has merit but at present, its connection to the requirements of the agreed syllabus is too loose.
72. Leadership of religious education is good. A programme of work firmly based on the locally agreed syllabus has been developed and what is to be taught in each term to each group of pupils is made clear. Good use has been made of the AQA unit award scheme to enable pupils to gain externally validated certificates for their work. A start has been made on introducing a process for systematically assessing pupils' work in the subject and this is badly needed if progression in learning is to be assured. Teaching resources are hard pressed and non-specialist, unqualified, staff have had to be used to deliver much of the curriculum. Despite the good efforts of the subject leader to provide support for those who are not qualified RE teachers, there remains a marked difference in standard between the quality of her teaching and that of others. There has been an improvement in provision in terms of subject leadership, curriculum and resources since the last inspection but, probably because of the variation in the quality of teaching, pupils' progress and achievement remains much the same.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have very good knowledge of their subject.
- Learning resources and accommodation are very good.
- Pupils and students in Years 12 and 13 make very good progress.
- A good range of external accreditation and awards are available.

Commentary

73. Teachers in design and technology, food technology and instructors in 'construction' are well qualified and experienced. As a result, pupils and students make very good progress in their work. Staff have very good relationships with pupils and students, this enables them to challenge them and extend their skills and knowledge contributing to their very good achievement. Lessons are very well prepared and taught. Good assessment is made of pupils' and students' progress. Pupils and students are keen to participate in these practical lessons and their success

enhances their confidence and self-esteem. Teaching and learning are much better than at the time of the last inspection.

74. There is very good accommodation for these practical subjects. The food technology room is well equipped. A workshop for design and technology is also well equipped with a wide range of hand and power tools. The construction department has three rooms, which enable five building aspects to be taught. Hygiene and health and safety are a high priority in all lessons and pupils and students are well aware of staff expectations of work and behaviour. As a result, they work very hard and behave very well. In all lessons, teachers are very well supported by learning support assistants. They have very good knowledge of individuals and very good relationships with pupils and students, and this enhances the progress that pupils and students make.
75. In construction skills courses, pupils and students are very well taught by instructors and as a result, they make very good progress. These practical subjects have a very positive effect on pupils' and students' self-esteem and confidence. They see clearly that what they learn is relevant to real life end employment opportunities. They respond very positively and work hard. They do the less pleasant aspects of the courses, such as cleaning up, without complaint. They understand what they have learned. They fill in self-assessment sheets honestly. Their work prepares them very well for the Foundation Certificate in construction skills, but, just as importantly, helps to equip them with the social skills necessary in the workplace. Their personal development is strongly enhanced.
76. Pupils and students are able to pursue a good range of external accreditation as they progress through the school. They achieve Entry Level Certificates of achievement, GCSE certificates, and City and Guild awards. Design and technology has a positive effect on pupils' and students' personal, moral and social development.

Art and Design

Provision for art is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is of a consistently high quality.
- Art makes a good contribution to promoting equal opportunities and cultural appreciation.
- Pupils' knowledge, skills, and understanding of art are good.
- Storage difficulties compromise the development of pottery and ceramics.

Commentary

77. Overall, teaching and learning in art and design are good representing good improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Teaching is characterised by effective lesson planning that mostly takes account of the wide range of abilities. Interesting ways are found to engage pupils and students, and there is thorough preparation. As a result, learning is continuous, behaviour is well managed, and all pupils are included. The best features of teaching were apparent in a Year 13 lesson, on portraiture. The teacher introduced the lesson in a lively and amusing fashion and clearly explained and demonstrated how to apply the rules of portraiture. She challenged the pupils to do the same saying she knew that they could do it better than she could. She was encouraging and positive in style, using language that pupils understood to engage them. Pupils were totally engrossed and with appropriate support, worked with sustained concentration. They were praised for effort and achievement as she found something positive to say about each one, for example, "Look at those eyes - wow they are looking at me!" This raised pupils' self-esteem.
78. Opportunities for pupils to experience and experiment with colour, shape, form, space, texture, and pattern, and to explore different processes and materials, are provided in a quiet non-threatening manner. Pupils and students begin to evaluate their work and respond to the work of

famous artists and craftspeople. Pupils' work is carefully displayed in classrooms and corridors and it reflects the breadth of the curriculum, celebrates achievement, and enhances the school environment. Displays promote the school's anti-bullying policy, equal opportunity and they celebrate different cultures such as the work of native western Australians.

79. Clear displays of masks demonstrate pupils and students know how to build up face and hand casts using plaster of Paris cardboard, gauze, brushes, and glue. All pupils become familiar with the key words of the materials and tools, share and take turns, work alongside and communicate with one another. In Year 7 pupils are introduced to colour wheels, hot and cold colours, primary and secondary colours and apply these in work on landscapes. By year 9 they know that white light is made up of the colours of the spectrum and begin to understand perspective, they study the imagery and graphic art of war and sketch skeletons in the style of Chris Offili. By Year 11, many use the work of David Hamilton, Andy Warhol, and Roy Lichtenstein to inspire their own pop art and they show skills in design, perspective and dimension. The range of accreditation opportunities is good including for example GCSE and Unit Awards GCSE in Art and Design and all achieve passes ranging from C to G. However assessment is underdeveloped in terms of individual education plans for those pupils who perform below level 1 or who are between levels 1 and 2 of the National Curriculum.
80. The subject leader has secured pupils' entitlement to a breadth of experience, assists teachers in their planning and ensures that the subject is properly and appropriately resourced. The art room is well resourced but there is poor storage for the necessary consumables required to deliver a successful art curriculum. This means that the opportunities for pupils and students to experiment and learn skills in pottery and ceramics are compromised because the kiln, which is housed where inflammable materials are kept, cannot be used.

Music

Provision for music and drama is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Music now benefits from a specialist teacher and an enthusiastic unqualified teacher.
- Good teaching and learning promote achievement.
- Music contributes to pupils' and students' personal qualities.

Commentary

81. Since the last inspection a subject specialist has been appointed and she has worked hard to establish a curriculum policy, and schemes of work, build up resources and improve accommodation. In the temporary absence of the subject leader, lessons are being delivered by an unqualified teacher who plans using the medium term plans written and overseen by the subject leader. This partnership is good and results from the trust developed between the teacher and the teaching assistant who have worked together effectively. The subject leader has ensured that their joint enthusiasm, imagination and belief that all pupils and students can achieve ensures that they do.
82. Achievement is good because well-planned lessons identify clear music targets. The relationships between pupils, students and their teacher are very positive and this promotes confidence and stimulates pupils' and students' desire to try even in tasks they find difficult. In Year 7 pupils identify musical instruments used in "Peter and the Wolf" by Sergey Prokofiev, listening well. They also begin to compose their own musical stories. In Year 9 pupils learn stagecraft and speaking skills. In Year 13 students can read simplified musical notation, identify brass, woodwind, percussive, and stringed instruments and perform two pieces for a unit award.

83. The subject leader has worked hard to establish links with Live Music North and bring in African drummers and woodwind trios. She is establishing a choir. This coupled with good teaching and learning has boosted the confidence and participation in music and drama of pupils and students. In turn, this contributes to moral, social and cultural development.

Physical education

The provision for physical education is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many opportunities for pupils to participate in physical activities.
- The subject is well led and it encourages the enjoyment of physical activity.
- Teaching, learning and achievement are good for all age groups.
- The use of assessment has shortcomings.

Commentary

84. The physical education programme and the extended extra curricular activities at lunch time and specialist courses make a significant contribution to the learning and achievements of pupils and students at the school. Within the taught curriculum, pupils and students have the use of a very good sports hall to develop skills in football, basketball, badminton, gymnastics, dance, trampolining, cricket and athletics. Year 10 pupils are involved in outdoor and adventurous activities for the Youth Challenge Awards. These activities include rock climbing, archery, ice skating, canoeing, raft building, wind surfing and swimming. The school uses the local swimming pool for swimming and water safety skills. Achievement in swimming is very good with over ninety per cent of Year 7 pupils achieving 25 metres. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 follow either the GCSE short course or the Entry Level course in physical education. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection when the key issue was to provide a broad, balanced and well-planned curriculum.

85. The subject leader is very enthusiastic and is a good role model for pupils. He has developed very good links with local schools, colleges, and additional providers for lunchtime and after school activities. These activities promote enthusiasm for sport. There are sports teams in football, basketball, and athletics that help to build personal and team skills. The highlight for the pupils during the inspection was the visit of coaches from the Manchester United FC Academy to coach football skills. Some pupils are actively involved in the Manchester United "Ability Counts" football league which supports activities for pupils with additional needs.

86. Extensive records kept by the subject leader show the progress made by pupils in participating and making the effort to improve. Their achievement is good across the age range. This is because teaching is, overall, good, although there is a minority of lessons where teaching has shortcomings and is satisfactory rather than good. While records of pupils' progress are full, the best use is not yet made of these to identify and note down what pupils have achieved or to inform planning of their next stage in learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

Provision in personal, social, and health education, (PSHE), is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils develop their personal skills very well.
- There is very good development of pupils' social skills and social awareness.
- Leadership is effective.

Commentary

87. Up to the end of Year 8, pupils are taught PSHE in their form groups. Emphasis is placed on developing personal skills and awareness of their own needs and those of others. Topics include relationships, diet, exercise, respect for, and knowledge of drugs, personal hygiene, dealing with conflict and safety on roads. The school has successfully achieved the "Silver Award" of the Salford and Trafford Healthy Schools Scheme. PSHE is strongly linked to the Careers programme. The curriculum is well planned to develop the skills of working independently or being part of a team. Pupils understand and discuss how attitude and behaviour create an impression on employers and customers. Their firm understanding of these points was exemplified by a Year 11 pupil who had been for an interview for a work experience placement with a large supermarket chain. He confidently answered questions about his experiences. Students in years 12 and 13 continue to develop their personal skills. The subject leader for Years 12 and 13 keeps personal profiles all students.
88. Social skills and awareness are developed in a range of activities ranging from the residential visit for Year 7 pupils to the youth club for Year 11 and post 16 students. Each term an aspect of PSHE is looked at by the whole school as a theme for "topic week". In the past, this has led to profitable work on bullying, crime, safety awareness, and life in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural society. Presentations during these weeks involve a range of outside agencies, music and drama, and art workshops. For the multi cultural week an African group visited to tell stories and there were workshops in cookery, painting, music, and dance.
89. The subject leader is the driving force behind the topic weeks which result in very good learning experiences for the pupils highlighted in very good display work. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

Citizenship

Provision in Citizenship is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils and students are very well informed about obligations and rights of citizenship.
- Citizenship is supported by work across the curriculum.
- The subject is led very well.

Commentary

90. Pupils and students of all ages are given the opportunity to become informed citizens through a wide range of activities. Pupils and students are encouraged to participate in the life of the school, neighbourhood, and wider society. All pupils are involved in a number of activities to help others. Year 9 pupils are working with the local Rotary club to fill "aqua boxes" with toothbrushes, soaps and nappies for people in need. Senior pupils and students have been involved in the "Greenbank Project" to support homeless young people in Trafford. Opportunities to become aware of and experience of democratic processes such as voting and debating have been introduced and are very good. The school council gives pupils a voice and it has had an impact in bringing about changes beneficial to pupils. The active participation of pupils and students in the process of electing candidates for the Trafford Youth Parliament enables them to

experience citizenship in action. Pupils and students experience looking at candidates' manifestos, and actually voting at the Youth Service caravan on the school site.

91. Pupils follow a scheme of work devised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, (QCA). There are very good planned cross-curricular links to PSHE, careers, assemblies, and whole school theme weeks. The very good presentation of work and the good teaching indicate that pupils and students are developing the social skills and confidence to actively participate as informed citizens. This was illustrated in a Year 8 lesson on developing the school grounds in which the teacher encouraged the pupils to put forward their ideas on improving the areas around the building. The contribution to the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills was very good as they were given the opportunity to express opinions and feelings.
92. The contribution of the subject leader has resulted in good progress since the last inspection. She is very enthusiastic and has ensured that all staff are aware of short term planning. Resources to develop learning and experience are good. There are very good links to the community and outside agencies.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

