

# INSPECTION REPORT

## STUDLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Studley

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125771

Headteacher: B. Kennaugh

Lead inspector: Mrs. C. Worthington

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> February 2004

Inspection number: 263875

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Modern (non-selective)
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	11 - 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	711
School address:	Crooks Lane Studley
Postcode:	B80 7QX
Telephone number:	01527 852478
Fax number:	01527 854469
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Chairman of governors:	Mr. David Newall
Date of previous inspection:	26 <sup>th</sup> January 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Studley High is a smaller than average secondary school drawing pupils from the local area, which is one of selection, and further afield from an area where the local authority's schools are non-selective. There are slightly more boys than girls. Eighty-eight per cent are white British; others are mostly of Asian origin. All speak English fluently. The percentage known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average (2.9), but the socio-economic circumstances of most families is average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs (21.3) is above the national average; most have specific learning difficulties. The number with statements is average at two per cent. The school takes part in the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme. Attainment on entry to the school is average. Most pupils begin their education in Year 7 and complete it at the end of Year 11.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20609	Carol Worthington	Lead inspector	
11104	Michael Fleming	Lay inspector	
31135	Rachel Hobson	Team inspector	English
4706	Alicia Welsh	Team inspector	Mathematics; ICT
1223	Andrew Piggott	Team inspector	Science
22491	Lorraine Small	Team inspector	Design and technology
23550	Marie Blewitt	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
15576	David Nebesnuick	Team inspector	History; Citizenship
30518	Neil Cowell	Team inspector	Geography
30518	Mike Johnson	Team inspector	Art
31660	Marianne Young	Team inspector	Music
7926	James Bowden	Team inspector	Physical education
4372	Ralph Fordham	Team inspector	Religious education
21855	Dennis Carty	Team inspector	Vocational courses

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA  
Herringston Barn  
Herringston  
Dorchester  
DT2 9PU

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>12</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>37</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Studley High is a good school.** The headteacher has a very clear vision and high aspirations for its development, and is well supported by staff and governors. All pupils' achievement is good because they are well taught and attain above average standards in their work. The school is not well funded, but gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve above average results in GCSE examinations and National Curriculum tests.
- Leadership is good, but management could be more structured.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The curriculum is good with innovative vocational provision, but there is insufficient use of information and communication technology (ICT) in all subjects.
- Provision for modern foreign languages, history, religious education and drama is very good.
- Pastoral care and pupils' personal development are good.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning, but there are a few lapses in behaviour.
- Assessment is satisfactory but is not consistently carried out by all departments to set targets and monitor pupils' progress.
- The school provides well for boys and girls of all abilities and backgrounds.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. There have been good improvements in the standards achieved in public examinations and the high standard of leadership has been maintained. Teaching has improved in the percentage of very good or better lessons taught, and most lessons are now given by specialists. There has been good improvement in the curriculum. Boys' achievement has received attention and most of them are now doing well. Data on individual pupils' performance are now being kept but their use in departments is inconsistent. A new Performing Arts block has been built, but accommodation for drama remains unsatisfactory.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 9.*

**Achievement of all pupils is good** throughout the school. Standards in Years 9 and 11 are above average, both nationally and in comparison with similar schools. The school adds considerable value to pupils' education from their average attainment on entry in Year 7. It sets higher targets each year and usually meets or exceeds them. Pupils achieve above average standards in the National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 9. In 2003, they did particularly well in mathematics where nearly one quarter achieved very high grades. In GCSE, results are consistently above average, and pupils do well in drama, English, food technology, geography, history, modern languages and religious education. Pupils' competence in English and mathematics is above average, but their good skills in ICT are not used well across the curriculum. Many, including those with special educational needs, are doing well on the new vocational courses in Years 10 and 11.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual moral, social and cultural development, are good.** The school places great emphasis on personal and social development and its provision for citizenship is good. Pupils' attitudes are good but there are occasional lapses in behaviour. They like coming to school and attendance is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good** in both key stages. Teachers have good command of their subjects and develop literacy well so pupils steadily acquire knowledge and understanding and express themselves well. There could be a more consistent approach to behaviour management and marking. The curriculum is broad and balanced, enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities and vocational courses. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. The school provides satisfactory care, guidance and support for pupils. Pastoral care is good. The monitoring of pupils' achievement is satisfactory and the monitoring of their personal development is good. The school is beginning to take their views into consideration through the developing school council.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and governance are good; management is satisfactory.** The headteacher is a strong leader; he and the leadership team work well together. Subject leadership, however, is not as incisive in all departments – some is better than others. The dedicated governors are supportive of the school and are well aware of its strengths and weaknesses. They monitor the financial aspects particularly well. Statutory requirements are met with the exception of ICT provision. Management has considerable strengths, reflected in the high standards achieved, but it lacks clarity, especially in defining the structure of line management. This produces inconsistencies in the application of some whole-school policies and makes it difficult for efficient management to continue should there be an absence of a head of department.

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

Parents are very supportive of the school and value the Parents in Partnership group. They praised leadership and management and the good induction procedures. Some thought that behaviour, homework and extra-curricular activities could be improved. Inspectors generally agree with these views, but homework was seen to be given appropriately to extend the taught curriculum. Most pupils are happy with their school. They are appreciative of the good teaching, but some think pupils' behaviour could be better in some classes, and inspectors agree.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- Make clearer the management structure relating to line management, and the application of whole-school policies for behaviour management and assessment

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the specific requirements for ICT are met in all subjects of the curriculum, particularly those for computer-aided design and manufacture in design and technology, and more consistent use of datalogging for science.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Standards are above average and achievement is good. The majority of pupils do well in most areas of the curriculum, except for the development of cross-curricular ICT. There is a small group of disaffected pupils in Year 11 who could do better.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Above average standards in external tests and examinations are being maintained yearly.
- Achievement is good throughout the school, including the vocational programme.
- Literacy develops well.
- ICT skills are not being used enough in all subjects.

#### Commentary

1. The standards achieved in National Curriculum tests and GCSE examinations are above average, showing good improvement since the last inspection. In the 2003 National tests for 14-year-olds, the percentage gaining the expected level 5 or above was average for English, well above average for mathematics and above average for science. The school did particularly well in mathematics, where a higher proportion of pupils achieved levels 6 and 7, and some exceptionally reached level 8. In science, the proportion reaching level 6 increased. The school met its target for level 5 and above in English and science and exceeded it for mathematics. Results are improving at a slightly lower rate than the national rate, but are being maintained at a much higher level. Considering that pupils enter school with average capability, they do well in Years 7 to 9; the school adds palpable value to their education due to good, experienced teaching and through careful examination preparation.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	33.7 (34.7)	33.4 (33.3)
mathematics	38.2 (37.2)	35.4 (34.7)
science	35.3 (34.5)	33.6 (33.3)

*There were 148 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. At GCSE, the school's performance is above average in the percentage of pupils achieving five A\* to C grades and in the average points score per pupil. This has also been above average since 2000 and has improved considerably since the last inspection. The value added to pupils' education in Years 10 and 11 is slightly less than in Years 7 to 9. This is partly to do with the nature of the vocational curriculum as those pupils taking it - although of mixed ability - do not all take the necessary eight subjects by which the average points are judged. Far more significant in 2003 was the group of disaffected pupils who underachieved. The school is having some success in dealing with this on-going problem through the use of mentors, but this is not a complete solution. The small number of these pupils observed in Year 11 do not all have special educational needs, though may have some behavioural difficulty which is better controlled in some lessons than others. Teachers in the science department, for example, who are all long-serving, experienced staff, keep behaviour under control by applying a very firm code of practice, particularly with Year 11 pupils. Learning was adversely affected in mathematics in a number of Year 11 lessons because of disruptive behaviour by some pupils.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	62 (72)	52 (50)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	98 (88)	91 (91)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	99 (97)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	38.4 (38.6)	34.7 (34.7)

*There were 140 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. All pupils achieve well in most subjects, including those with special educational needs who are helped by teachers understanding their needs and planning to meet them. Where pupils are supported in class by teaching assistants or technicians, this usually raises their achievement. In the past, boys of all abilities have been identified as underachieving, but the school's emphasis on rectifying this has been successful, and now there is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
4. Work seen during the inspection confirmed that standards remain above average in the school, particularly in English and mathematics by the end of both key stages, and that the majority of pupils are achieving well throughout the school. They do particularly well in French and German, where they reach above average standards in Year 9 and in GCSE examinations, having entered the school with little experience of learning modern languages. Achievement is, therefore, very good throughout the school in modern languages. Although standards are average, pupils achieve well in physical education in Years 7 to 9 because they widen their experiences from primary school. However, the non-examination classes in Years 10 and 11 do not do as well as the GCSE groups because their access to specialist accommodation and resources is more limited.
5. Achievement in English and mathematics, discrete information and communication technology (ICT) and geography is good throughout the school, and standards are above average. In English, particularly good skills of literacy analysis are developed and these are extended across the curriculum in history and religious education. In science, pupils achieve a good knowledge and understanding of the subject which enables them to do well in written examinations and they gain high results in National Curriculum tests in Year 9, but their skills of scientific enquiry are not developed so well, particularly those evaluative skills which would enable them to achieve higher marks in aspects of their practical assessment for GCSE. Numeracy develops well in mathematics, where higher ability pupils achieve very well, particularly in Year 9 where many attain very high National Curriculum levels and some make exceptional progress. There is little evidence of numeracy being developed through other subjects, however, because a whole-school check is not being kept, but evidence of graphs and charts was seen in science.
6. Skills in ICT develop well during the discrete ICT courses run by the school, but their use is not extended in other subjects. Moreover, in some cases, statutory requirements are not being met. In science, for example, datalogging is insufficiently used, and in design and technology there is little or no provision for the specialist work systems and control, and there is no provision for pupils to learn about computer-aided design and manufacture. Pupils' achievement in design and technology, otherwise, is satisfactory throughout the school; at present there is above average work in food technology but lower standards in resistant materials. In citizenship, standards are average: the course is developing well with good teaching but assessment is not yet used to be able to provide sufficient challenge for higher ability pupils.
7. In vocational courses in Years 10 and 11, achievement is good in the wide range of provision, but this is balanced by pupils' restricted access to ICT, citizenship, religious education and

physical education in the core curriculum, and this slightly depresses the GCSE average points score for the school as a whole.

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

Overall, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The rate of attendance is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most pupils demonstrate very good attitudes to their work and to each other.
- A minority of pupils do not always meet the school's expectations of behaviour.
- Many pupils are involved in arrangements to support one another.

### **Commentary**

8. The population of pupils at this school presents a complex pattern of attitudes and behaviour. In lessons, pupils' attitudes to their work are usually good or very good, as reported at the last inspection; on some occasions they are excellent. They participate in extra-curricular activities, such as sport or playing musical instruments, with enthusiasm. Many pupils demonstrate positive and, on occasions, exemplary attitudes to learning. They show interest in their lessons and concentrate on the work. Pupils like their teachers and respond well to good teaching. They are good at absorbing knowledge or understanding new ideas, so they enjoy lessons which are stimulating and allow animated discussion. In some lessons however, a minority of pupils do not listen well to their teacher but are self-absorbed or disruptive. Such behaviour and attitudes are most associated with a few boys in Year 11 but are not exclusive to that year group, or to boys, and the pupils involved do not always behave in that way.
9. Relationships in the school are good. Pupils find it to be a friendly community where they feel safe. They get on well together and are mutually supportive. They co-operate effectively in lessons, although boys and girls tend to sit apart. Relationships between older and younger pupils, and between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, are generally good. Instances of bullying are uncommon and are considered by pupils to be handled effectively by the school, though some pupils felt that behaviour management could be improved.
10. The atmosphere in corridors and around the school is comparable to that in lessons, where the majority of pupils are courteous and polite. They willingly help by holding a door open, or offer directions to a visitor unfamiliar with the site, yet other pupils are relatively boisterous and inconsiderate. Throughout the school, behaviour and attitudes reflect pupils' view that teachers differ in what they will tolerate or how they respond to particular actions. The school has extensive strategies for managing behaviour, but pupils say they would value greater consistency in their application. No pupils were permanently excluded in the last year.

**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	625	25	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	64	15	0

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

11. The religious education syllabus and its teaching provide very good opportunities for the spiritual development of pupils. Aspects of English, drama and citizenship enhance this feature of personal development very well. Pupils have a respect for the beliefs of others and a clear understanding of them. They reflect on issues of belief and form judgements that enable them to develop insights. They are well aware of right and wrong actions; they have a clear knowledge of what is expected of them and respond well. Their knowledge and awareness are reflected well in their actions, expressing concern for others in the community. Pupils are keen to be involved in a range of activities, and they relate very well to adults and their peers. They work well together, and many opportunities are provided for them to express their views in paired work, group work and general discussion. They are self-confident and developing well as responsible members of the community. They are aware of their own cultural heritage and that of others. However, their cultural development does not extend sufficiently to develop an awareness and appreciation of the rich variety of different cultures and traditions that exist in this country. The lack of co-ordination of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education across the school prevents provision for a planned and co-ordinated approach to this aspect of pupils' personal development.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.0	School data	0.7
National data	7.2	National data	1.1

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

12. As pupils mostly like school, they attend very well. In the last academic year, the rate of attendance was well above the national average and the rate of unauthorised absence was

broadly in line with the national average. Pupils are generally punctual to lessons, which start on time. Registration is carried out effectively at the beginning and end of the school day and in many lessons. Any absences which cause concern are investigated and appropriate action is taken.

- The supervisory and organisational work of prefects shows that pupils' sense of responsibility is developed effectively. During their time at the school, pupils mature well into young adults, and they feel this is recognised by teachers. Their overall personal development is good.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school; pupils learn well because of the good expertise of their teachers. Assessment is satisfactory. A wide range of data is kept, but not used consistently well in all subjects.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A high proportion of lessons are good or better.
- Teachers have good command of their subjects.
- There are inconsistencies in the use of assessment.
- The implementation of the national Key Stage 3 Strategy is having a good effect on teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 109 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (3%)	27 (25%)	43 (39%)	32 (29%)	4 (4%)	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Two-thirds of the lessons observed were good or better and over one quarter was very good or better. In Years 7 to 9, approximately one-third of all teaching was very good or better; the school has invested heavily in training for the implementation of the national initiatives for the development of teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9 and this is having a good effect. In mathematics, teaching and learning are better in Years 7 to 9 than Years 10 and 11 because some teachers are less able to motivate the small but significant number of disaffected pupils, particularly in Year 11.
- Teachers' expertise is a strength throughout the school and, in most areas, teachers present their subject in ways which motivate pupils and enable them to learn well. This is particularly apparent in English, humanities and modern languages, where pupils make good gains in knowledge, and develop their linguistic and analytical skills. In science, pupils acquire knowledge and understanding of biology, physics and chemistry from Year 7 to Year 11, but practical analytical and evaluative skills are not developed enough, nor is there sufficient understanding of the application of science in society.
- Teachers' expectations are particularly high in modern languages, religious education and English, which lead to pupils being challenged to achieve high standards, though usually through methods involving didactic teaching rather than pupils being directed to work independently. Teachers' planning is satisfactory and in the best lessons is matched very well to the abilities of pupils present in the class. In English, mathematics, science and modern

languages, pupils are taught in sets of similar ability, and this enables work to be matched more precisely to ability. In both sets and mixed ability classes, however, there is not always enough planning to challenge the range of abilities present; in science, for example, work is not always tailored to build on prior knowledge, and, in geography, teachers do not plan enough work for potential A\* candidates at GCSE.

17. In subjects where teaching and learning are satisfactory overall – namely science, art in Years 7 to 9, music and resistant materials in design and technology - the main areas for development lie in planning. In music, lesson plans do not ensure that all groups of pupils are given work that matches their abilities and often there is no summing up at the end of the lesson. In science, too, work is not always pitched to meet the needs of all pupils in practical investigations in particular; higher ability pupils may not reach their potential.
18. Assessment is satisfactory throughout the school, and is good in some departments. However, its use is inconsistent across the curriculum, and it is not used at all in music or citizenship at present. Nevertheless, pupils achieve well and gain above average standards. In many subjects, pupils are not aware of the National Curriculum levels at which they are working; this is especially true in lower years and in science, where even the Year 9 reports do not contain this information. The quality of marking varies between subjects; although there is a clear marking policy, it is not universally applied in all departments. It is weak in history, for example, and not informative enough in mathematics or science to enable pupils to know how to improve. In English, modern languages and religious education, marking is very good and gives pupils a very good idea of how they can progress.
19. Assessment of progress through the school also varies in quality and particularly in the use to which it is put. The school keeps assessment data, including National Curriculum tests, from pupils' point of entry and through the school, and departments all have access to these as well as their own subject testing. Not enough consistent use is made of these data to set targets for individuals and monitor their progress up the school, though some departments – English, religious education and modern languages – are doing this well. Others have unsatisfactory assessment procedures, for example music and citizenship, and design and technology resistant materials. The presence of GCSE and vocational subjects' assessment criteria result in some subjects having better assessment in Years 10 and 11 than they have lower down the school, for example geography and art.
20. Although most teachers have high expectations of behaviour, some find it difficult to deal with the very small number of pupils who are disaffected by school and are not co-operative in learning. These are most commonly boys in Year 11 who are not motivated in some lessons and disrupt learning, usually by low-level and irritating means such as talking or humming when the teacher is addressing the class. In mathematics and music, learning in two lessons was seen to be unsatisfactory because behaviour problems were not dealt with effectively.
21. The school sets great store by inclusion and promotes equality of opportunity for all, irrespective of gender or capability. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers know and address these pupils' needs well because good individual education plans make needs, targets and strategies clear. Where well-briefed learning support assistants are available, pupils' achievement improves. Where pupils are taught in small classes, they benefit from teachers skilled in both the subject and in understanding to cater for their special educational needs; this aids their learning and personal development. They make particularly good progress in specialist literacy classes, including those taught by trained teaching assistants following the national programme.
22. Homework set is appropriate and effectively extends the taught curriculum. Teachers willingly give up their time after school to run revision and booster classes in the run-up to public examinations, and the librarian runs a homework club; this all helps pupils to improve their performance.

## The curriculum

Overall, curricular provision is good. The programme of enrichment in some subject areas enhances the taught curriculum and contributes well to pupils' personal development. Accommodation and learning resources are sufficient; staffing is good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of provision for vocational education and work-related learning is good.
- The inclusion of pupils with special educational needs in lessons and in the full life of the school is good.
- ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory and is therefore limiting independent learning.
- Extensive curriculum links with local schools, colleges and employers offer enhanced learning opportunities.

### Commentary

23. The curriculum provides good opportunities for girls and boys of all abilities, aptitudes and backgrounds. Learning opportunities are well planned to ensure progression and support pupils' good achievement throughout the school.
24. In Years 7 to 9, the contribution of most subjects to a broad and balanced curriculum is good, though provision for music is unsatisfactory, where planning is weak and does not reflect the needs of different groups of pupils. The provision of modern foreign languages is good with the opportunity for the majority of pupils to take a second foreign language in Years 8 and 9.
25. Curricular provision is good in Years 10 and 11. English provision is good, enhanced by a GCSE in drama. However, in design and technology, the range of specialist subjects is too limited. Provision for cross-curricular ICT is unsatisfactory and is limiting independent learning. The school has recently introduced a successful 'Key Skills Passport' in Year 10 in which these skills are assessed and recorded by staff.
26. An innovative feature of the curriculum is the gradual introduction of a range of vocational courses at different levels, largely delivered by local colleges as part of county-wide 14 -19 initiatives. The school has actively embraced the national 'Increased Flexibility Programme' and thus ensures that a significant majority (96 per cent) of pupils continue into full time education, employment or training with only a small number not progressing. Very effective use is made of the resources of local colleges, employers, the Education Business Partnership and Connexions, which shows how committed the school is to partnership curricular developments. This does, however, result in some timetabling issues.
27. Opportunities for enrichment are good. In English and drama a good range of theatre visits, competitions, drama festival, public speaking, and school productions is offered that is much appreciated by both pupils and parents. After-school support is offered by art for borderline C/D GCSE pupils and the identified gifted and talented group. Design and technology equally offers after-school support for examination pupils in each of the specialisms. History offers a very comprehensive range of fieldwork and very effective speakers are invited in to school. Modern foreign languages provides trips abroad and a French exchange programme. There are other residential trips in this country; Year 7 pupils go to Malvern whilst Year 10 pupils go to Marle Hall, for example. Physical education has good extra-curricular provision with 52 per cent of boys and 40 per cent of girls regularly participating. Seven boys and four girls have attained representative honours at county level in a range of activities. Music provides very good after-school opportunities for enrichment, again much appreciated by pupils, parents, and governors. Support for learning outside the school day is much impaired by the inadequacy of ICT and the lack of opportunities for pupils to gain access to sources of on-line advice and help with their

studies. Pupils go on residential trips in this country and abroad, which help to widen their experience of life outside school.

28. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, and, in Years 10 and 11, the vocational courses are proving very successful for many of them. Gifted and talented pupils are now identified and their particular strengths are beginning to be catered for. Good inclusion of all pupils is a very positive feature of the school. However, since the previous inspection not enough action has been taken to give specific ICT provision for pupils with special educational needs, and this remains unsatisfactory.
29. Subject departments integrate provision for pupils with special educational needs in their work and make effective use of learning support assistants. Resources are suitable and accessible to these pupils, who are all taught in class.
30. The match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is good. In modern foreign languages teachers are well-qualified linguists, some of whom offer two languages. In mathematics four of the six teachers are specialists, which is a good improvement upon previous years. Although the provision of teachers for citizenship is satisfactory, the 11 non-specialist teachers have not received any specific training, but all had lesson plans, schemes of works and books, showing adequate support by the head of department. In design and technology, provision of staff is unsatisfactory with no teacher for electronics, graphics or textiles.
31. The match of support staff to the curriculum is satisfactory with good technician support in design and technology and good use of foreign language assistants in French and German. In science, there are too few technician hours, though since the last inspection, one more technician has been employed. Learning resources are sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum. Whilst the provision of resources is generally satisfactory or better, limitations of provision, efficiency and effectiveness of ICT impact upon standards in nearly half of the subject areas. Accommodation is satisfactory overall, with good accommodation in music and physical education. Provision is unsatisfactory in quality or quantity in drama, history, design and technology and modern foreign languages. In drama, for example, pupils cannot learn the skill of stage lighting. Teachers working in adverse conditions still manage to do well by their pupils.

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

The school succeeds in providing satisfactory care, guidance and support for pupils. The monitoring of their achievement is satisfactory and the monitoring of their personal development is good. The systematic consultation with pupils is at an early stage of development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Mentoring systems provide good support for pupils.
- Induction arrangements are good.
- There are inconsistencies in pupils' knowledge of their learning and how to improve.
- Pupils in Years 8 to 11 are being prepared to participate in a school council.

### **Commentary**

32. The pastoral supervision of pupils is thorough. Good links with local primary schools enable many pupils to meet their future contemporaries and experience lessons and activities in the school before starting. This, and the efficient exchange of information by staff, facilitates their move to the next phase of their education. Form tutors keep their groups for several years and get to know them well. Good relationships are usual, so most pupils are comfortable asking their form tutors or other staff for advice. Many pupils have been trained to support others through mentoring relationships which take place both in groups and on an individual basis.

Year 7 pupils, for example, appreciate the advice of their older peers, and Year 11 pupils benefit from the experience of listening to other people and helping to address their problems.

33. Pupils are given information to help them know how well they are doing but the nature and value of this information vary considerably between subjects. The marking of pupils' work in languages and religious education, for example, gives them good guidance about what they should do in order to improve, but in music and in design and technology neither National Curriculum levels nor their implications are widely known or understood by pupils. Pupils need clearer guidance in several subjects about the standards they should aim for and how they should reach them.
34. There are good links with the Connexions service, and careers education prepares pupils well for the next stages of their life. Information about careers and post-school options is offered during personal, social and health education lessons, supplemented by events involving the Connexions service, although pupils receive little such information before Year 9. A wide variety of options is available and pupils are successfully guided to suitable courses in which they are able to achieve well. Pupils in Year 11 can have individual consultations and many benefit from practice interviews arranged with the help of local businesses.
35. Pupils were consulted before changes were made to the school uniform and school meals, but now the developing school council is a more formal channel ready to provide an effective means through which staff can hear pupils' views and through which pupils can play an active part in the school community. Good discussions on the role of participants and the functions of a school council have taken place in citizenship lessons this year.
36. Suitable systems for dealing with illness or accidents are in place. The school has sufficient appropriately qualified staff to manage child protection issues effectively. Risk assessment is fully considered when activities are planned. The lack of such assessments for physical education noted in the last inspection report has been remedied very effectively.

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

The school maintains an effective partnership with parents. Relationships with other schools and colleges are good. There are beneficial partnerships with the wider community.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents play a very active part in supporting the school.
- The majority of parents are satisfied with most aspects of the school.
- The quality of information given in reports on pupils' progress is inconsistent.
- Pupils benefit from a range of links with the broader community.

### **Commentary**

37. Most parents express wide-ranging satisfaction with the school's work to care for and educate their children. They are pleased with the arrangements for new pupils. They believe their children receive appropriate care and guidance and that they are happy at school. Parents are confident that high demands are made of pupils, that they are taught well and that this results in good standards. A minority of parents say they would like to be given better information about their children's progress, but the majority are happy to approach the school for further information or for other reasons. Parents disagree about the general standard of behaviour but report that bullying and other incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with well. Inspection evidence supports most of the parents' views of the school.
38. As well as a conventional Parent Teacher Association which organises useful fund-raising events, the school has another organisation, Parents in Partnership, which provides a well-developed opportunity for parents to play a part in their children's education. Parents are invited

to comment on proposed changes such as the bid for Engineering College status or they can submit suggestions or raise issues for discussion. Following the expression of their views, parents were involved in redesigning reports. Attendance is good at parent consultation evenings and at evening meetings where speakers discuss children's development and the curriculum they follow; this helps parents to understand and help their children.

39. The information published for parents that informs them about the school is generally satisfactory but there are inconsistencies in the reports they have received about their children's progress. Some teachers report clearly the knowledge or skill pupils have acquired and give useful ideas for how to make further progress but others give generalised congratulations or commiseration. However, the new format, which has been developed in consultation with parents, should improve the consistency and usefulness of the reports, which will be issued this year.
40. The school has maintained the good links, noted in the last inspection report, with local institutions, including primary schools and those that provide vocational and post-16 education courses. These links enable pupils' transitions between phases of their education to be managed effectively and help to ensure they meet pupils' needs well. Support from the wider community, including visits and visitors, also continues to enrich the curriculum in some subjects, for example citizenship and religious education. Good links with a range of agencies boost the school's efforts to promote pupils' personal development. The school contributes to the local community as a useful venue for clubs and adult education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and governance are good; management is satisfactory. The school gives good value for money, despite being hampered by low funding. The statutory requirement for the teaching of ICT across the curriculum is not fully met.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has very clear vision and high aspirations.
- There is a constant drive to improve standards.
- Leadership and governance are good but there is some lack of clarity in management.
- Financial management is very good, but the school has a large deficit.

### **Commentary**

41. Leadership of the school is good. The headteacher runs the school with very clear vision and high aspirations. The improvement of standards in all areas is a constant focus and one in which there is consistent support from all staff and governors. The headteacher and his leadership team work well together, sharing a sense of purpose and good supportive relationships. School evaluation is particularly good: all subjects are reviewed and targets for improvements set. The good process of school development planning follows on from evaluation. All staff make an effective contribution to the common goal of raising standards. Performance management is satisfactory and all staff are involved. The school follows up individual, department and whole-school needs in a very full training programme, which makes a good contribution to the effectiveness of teaching. Staff all take on a variety of roles as this is a relatively small school with insufficient funding to appoint staff to single responsibility posts and reward them adequately. This can lead to some staff, for example the head of science, having so much to do that they cannot fulfil all tasks satisfactorily.
42. Management, although satisfactory, has areas which lack clarity, particularly in lines of responsibility. There is no obvious line management system, for example, which makes it difficult for some heads of department to understand to whom they report in more senior management. This stems from the confusion over performance management and line support, and results in a lack of effective monitoring of teaching and learning in some departments. The

present monitoring system started purposefully and has been effective in identifying inconsistencies in marking through regular book trawls. However, criteria for lesson observations are not rigorous enough to pick up progress and achievement in all lessons; some are affected by weaker behaviour management and others need to make better use of planning and assessment. Despite this, teaching and learning are good overall, and some departments such as English are very good at sharing their expertise. The lack of distinction between line support and performance management also makes it difficult to allocate responsibility for managing a department such as design and technology, where there is at present no head of department, little consistency and a lack of co-ordination of the work across the department. Not enough time is allocated to allow for the monitoring of whole-school policies for assessment and checking cross-curricular skills in all departments.

43. The management of special educational needs ensures good provision in lessons for such pupils. There is good use of visiting local education authority teachers for assessment and behaviour counselling as there are too few qualified teachers with the skills necessary to address needs other than literacy and numeracy. The co-ordinator's leadership results in good support across the school, delivered by a dedicated and able team of learning support assistants. Governors monitor special educational needs provision through their annual report to parents. One governor has particular responsibility for special educational needs. Funding is managed well. All statutory requirements are fully met.
44. The governance of the school is good. Governors have a good understanding of the school's priorities and, under the strong leadership of the chairman, play an effective role in its strategic management. They have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, are fully involved in longer-term development planning, and contribute effectively to determining its future direction and the setting of priorities. They are very supportive of the headteacher. They carry out their responsibilities with determination and enthusiasm. They know that ICT is a major area in which the school needs to improve. Their monitoring role continues to improve in holding the school to account for its performance, in particular the examination results.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,925,118
Total expenditure	2,089,656
Expenditure per pupil	2,858

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	- 218,871
Balance carried forward to the next	- 226,696

45. Financial management is very good, despite the large budget deficit stemming from the previous grant-maintained status. The repayment plan has been agreed with the local education authority. Current funding is used economically and effectively. The principles of best value are applied well and funding is very well directed to the educational priorities identified in the school development plan. The school has to make difficult decisions about the recruitment and retention of staff, since it cannot attract them with salaries that are as high as those offered by larger schools.
46. The school is poorly funded; it receives less money than similar schools nationally. Money has had to be spent on the school environment and accommodation, and the headteacher and governing body use funds creatively to obtain the best for the school. The local authority has recently put in extra funding to allow ICT provision to improve to what is now expected in most schools.
47. The school is now bidding for Engineering College status and has received good financial support from local businesses, since light and agricultural engineering are important to the community served by the school.

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

### **SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4**

#### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

##### **English**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Pupils achieve well compared with their prior attainment.
- Teachers' very good subject knowledge enables them to explain and challenge pupils effectively.
- Computers are insufficiently used to enhance learning.
- Teachers mark work very helpfully, indicating development targets.

##### **Commentary**

48. The Year 9 National Curriculum test results in 2003 were average when compared with all schools nationally as well as with similar schools. These pupils achieved satisfactorily, when compared with their standards on entry. In 2002 results were above average. The GCSE results in English in 2003 were average, and above average in English literature. These results represent satisfactory achievement. There was a small decline from 2002 in English, but a rise in literature. The 2003 results were negatively affected by staffing difficulties.
49. Current standards are above average in Year 9 and pupils are achieving well. All pupils acquire the skills to analyse literature and language well. Those of higher ability write detailed, extended pieces in different styles. They comment on why writers choose to use particular techniques, such as similes and metaphors, and use technical language well. The majority of pupils of all attainment levels enjoy reading and writing, although those of lower ability tend to write short, undeveloped pieces. Current standards in Year 11 are also above average and achievement is good. Pupils cover a wide range of appropriately challenging literature. One Year 10 pupil, for example, wrote a detailed, analytical essay on Maya Angelou's 'I know why the caged bird sings'. She quoted very well from the novel to support her views, and her written style was fluent and assured. Pupils across the school with special educational needs have good support with improving their writing. They make good progress both in understanding how to analyse literature, and in the accuracy of their writing. The great majority of pupils talk confidently and contribute to discussions well.
50. Pupils learn well as a consequence of the consistently good teaching. Teachers are skilled and some very good and excellent lessons were seen. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and they ask targeted questions effectively to extend understanding. They also plan plenty of opportunities for group work and ways for pupils to be actively involved in their learning, for example through discussions. Many lessons are conducted at a very brisk pace, so no time is wasted. Occasionally, the pace is so rapid that there are few opportunities for silent work and independent reflection, and if more were created, learning might be even better. Pupils respond well in lessons. Most have mature, positive attitudes and work well with one another. There are times, however, when a group of pupils in a lesson do not learn as well as they could because they behave in a casual, indifferent fashion. This happens despite good behaviour management and attention from the teacher.
51. Teachers mark work very helpfully. They make it clear how well pupils are doing and show them how they can improve. English makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development by engaging them to think hard about ethical issues and to empathise with people

in critical situations, such as victims of racism. There is scope to develop the use of technology in a number of ways, for example, in giving presentations.

52. The department is very effectively led and well managed. The teaching team is new, and they work very well together and support one another. The head of department has a clear vision for continuing development and she holds the raising standards and achievement as a priority. The subject has made good improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has risen, as have standards and achievement, and the department has responded well to curriculum developments that have been part of a national strategy.

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

53. Literacy and spoken English are above average across the school. Most departments make a good contribution to developing reading, writing and speaking. In religious education, for example, teachers plan numerous opportunities for pupils to write in different styles for different purposes, and also to discuss issues. In history lessons, pupils write extended pieces from Year 7 onwards; by Year 11 their writing is detailed, accurate and assured. In other subjects, practice is not so consistent. In physical education, for example, pupils' oral ability develops well through questions and discussion, but spelling mistakes are sometimes left uncorrected. Year 7 pupils with weak literacy attend additional classes taken by teaching assistants. These provide good opportunities for them to improve. These sessions are well co-ordinated, and there are good plans in place to develop literacy support further through reading and writing programmes.

### **Modern Foreign Languages**

Provision in modern foreign languages is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very good, as is the use of the foreign language to teach it.
- Leadership and management are very good, providing a most useful role model for a committed team.
- Regular assessments are used well.
- The French exchange and trips abroad enrich language learning.
- There is a need to incorporate the use of ICT more into lessons.

### **Commentary**

54. Results at GCSE in French and German are consistently very good. In 2002, the proportion of pupils gaining A\* to C grades in French and German was well above the national average. Many pupils gained A\* and A grades, well above the national average. In 2003, results in GCSE French were again above national averages, despite a dip in the proportion of A\* to C grades. A considerable number of pupils gained grade D and strategies are in place to target borderline pupils throughout the course. German results were well above average. The highest A\* and A grades were achieved in both languages. Girls perform better than boys, but the gap is not as big as that seen nationally.
55. French is taught from Year 7 as the main foreign language. Pupils in Years 8 and 9 also learn German. Spanish has been introduced for the lower ability Year 9 pupils. Standards in all three languages in Years 7 to 9 are above average and achievement overall is very good. Pupils are using the foreign languages spontaneously as a result of confidence-building activities and the fact that teachers use the languages throughout lessons. This also strengthens listening skills. Grammar is taught in context so that literacy is a strength. Pupils produce imaginative extended pieces of writing, including poetry. Pupils of all abilities are reaching their potential as a result of very good teaching. There is support where needed for all pupils as well as opportunities for

gifted and talented and higher ability pupils to extend learning through carefully chosen resources and extended activities. A thirst for learning was obvious in a lower ability Year 9 Spanish group. From start to finish the lesson engrossed every pupil, responses were brisk and the lesson contained some excellent features.

56. In Years 10 and 11, standards are above average. Achievement is very good and pupils are working to capacity. A very good working ethos is the key to the high standards, with constant challenge and high expectation. Important examination techniques are being taught, and pupils are made aware of marking criteria. Effective questioning results in full answers in oral and written tasks. Some pupils are still lacking in confidence, though group and pair activities help remove self consciousness. Examples of written work and drafting and re-drafting are evidence of the high standards. Listening activities at this level are a challenge. In a Year 11 German lesson, pupils were visibly pleased with their success, following very good teaching which broke the activity into achievable steps.
57. No lessons were seen using ICT, but there were many examples of work on display. Plans are in place to integrate new technology into language lessons. Attitudes and behaviour overall are very good and play a very important role in the success of this department. Lessons are very well planned with a variety of stimulating activities. There are high expectations and challenges. Emphasis is on achievement, though on occasion lessons are too didactic in a desire to ensure success for all pupils. Lessons are well paced overall, though at times the starter activities are lengthy, when each pupil answers the register using a new word or phrase. Homework is regularly set and marked, with encouraging and diagnostic comments. Pupils know how to improve. Regular assessments are a further strength and pupils know what standard they are working towards. The long established French exchange adds to the enrichment of language learning. The department benefits from the expertise of two foreign language assistants.
58. A committed team of linguists benefits from very good leadership. The department is led by example, by someone who motivates staff and pupils. Beginner Spanish introduced in Year 9 is proving a success, providing motivation to pupils who hitherto would have no incentive to learn. Management of the department is very good. There is a commitment to staff development. Lessons are formally monitored and there is support for new staff and teachers in training. Very good use is made of limited finances. Since the last inspection, good progress has been continued and sustained.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards of attainment are above average, and at the end of Year 9 well above.
- Teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9 are good.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and expect high standards of attainment from the pupils.
- The good assessment data is not used regularly to inform pupils on how to improve their performance.
- A minority of pupils, particularly in Years 10 and 11, lack a positive attitude to learning.
- There is insufficient use of ICT as a tool for teaching and learning.

### **Commentary**

59. Standards of attainment by the end of Year 9 are well above average with over one-third of the pupils reaching at least level 7 in the National Curriculum tests. Pupils' achievement in Year 9 compared to prior attainment is very good. Mathematics GCSE results in 2003 were above

national averages. A small group of pupils in Year 11 are taking statistics GCSE with standards of attainment in line with national expectations. Several of these pupils are covering the syllabus in their own time, with informal teacher support. Current achievement in Years 7 to 9 is good; most pupils in Years 10 and 11 are making at least satisfactory progress. Pupils in Year 9 demonstrate an understanding of trigonometric functions while pupils in Year 11 can apply trigonometric functions and the Pythagoras theorem to three-dimensional shapes. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are well supported.

60. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall but only satisfactory in Years 10 and 11 because of difficulty with behaviour management. In the best lessons, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and articulate the principles clearly so that pupils know what they are learning and why. There is a good balance between the consolidation of prior knowledge and the development of new skills and understanding. Effective questioning is used to challenge and extend pupils' learning. There is a positive work ethic, brisk pace and a sense of urgency. Teachers have high expectations of both work and behaviour and demonstrate effective pupil management skills. Pupils sustain high levels of concentration; they answer questions confidently and respond well to opportunities to work together.
61. Occasionally pupils' behaviour and attitudes are not effectively managed and disruptive behaviour limits the amount of learning taking place. Some lessons finish abruptly and do not use the opportunity for pupils and teachers to assess learning and progress. Teachers' lesson planning is clear and precise. However planning does not always describe how the needs of the most able pupils or those with special educational needs are going to be met. While books are regularly marked and comments made, there is no consistent approach that informs pupils about their learning and identifies weaknesses.
62. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is effective teamwork and a shared commitment to raise standards. The department has bonded well after recent significant staff turnover. The departmental improvement plan provides clear priorities for improving provision. The use of ICT to support teaching and learning has been identified as a priority but too few opportunities have been identified in schemes of work. Pupil profiles contain good assessment and progress data. This information is not used regularly to inform pupils of how they are doing, what progress they are making, and for setting specific targets towards reaching expected levels of performance. The detailed schemes of work are revised annually to meet pupil needs. There is regular monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning and there are opportunities to observe and share good practice within the department.
63. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. Standards of attainment have improved in both Years 9 and 11. Pupils' progress has improved, particularly in Years 7 to 9. Pupils with special educational needs now make good progress. Schemes of work are better structured with clear learning objectives and progression in skills and knowledge. Pupil profiles are now regularly updated with assessment data that is used to predict attainment levels for pupils in Year 9 and 11. The previous inspection highlighted the need to develop positive strategies to keep all pupils on task. While improvement was observed in Years 7 to 9 there is still a minority of pupils with a poor learning attitude, particularly in Years 10 and 11.

### **Numeracy across the curriculum**

64. The school has produced a numeracy policy and has organised whole-school training but practice across departments is variable. Numeracy week enabled departments to specify how they would develop mathematical and numeracy skills. Some departments have identified, within development plans, opportunities to develop pupils' numeracy skills. However there is no overall co-ordinated approach, nor a whole-school approach to teaching numeracy.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment in Year 9 tests is consistently above the national average.
- Knowledge and understanding are good but skills of scientific enquiry are not developed well enough.
- The standard of technician work is good, but working hours are too few to guarantee a good level of curriculum support and resource maintenance.
- Funding is low.

## Commentary

65. The Year 9 National Curriculum test results in 2003 were above average. In recent years, results have been consistently above or well above average. The GCSE results in 2003, however, were lower than those of recent years, having been consistently above average, and exceptionally well above average in 2002. Several pupils failed to gain high enough grades in some aspects of coursework. There were also several disaffected pupils in 2003 who failed to achieve as well as they were predicted. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.
66. Standards in the current Year 9 are above average and pupils achieve well, having entered the school with average attainment in science. This is because of the good grounding in scientific knowledge that pupils receive as a result of their experienced teachers' subject expertise. They also behave well and have a strong work ethic.
67. In Years 10 and 11, standards are currently average overall and achievement is sound; pupils consolidate their above average knowledge of physics, chemistry and biology from their work in Years 7 to 9, but the skills of scientific enquiry lag behind, and pupils' understanding of the contribution of science to society is also less well developed. Both of these are below average. The use of computers is starting to develop. Pupils in Year 10 classes have been researching through the Internet and using the results to create slide presentations to accompany talks given to the rest of the class. However, the use of data-loggers and their sensors to carry out experiments is still weak. Literacy and numeracy develop satisfactorily through science.
68. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with some good features. Science teachers are experienced, many of them holding senior posts in the school. Their subject knowledge is good and they manage behaviour very well. Teachers use a wide range of teaching styles in their lessons but do not consistently provide graded work based on the prior assessment of all pupils in their classes. In investigations and in research work, pupils are encouraged to take their own decisions and contribute their own ideas; pupils respond well to this trust and encouragement. The teaching of the skills of scientific enquiry is less well developed. Marking of exercise books is regularly and consistently done, but lacks specific information for pupils on what they need to do to improve.
69. The leadership and management of the department are satisfactory overall. The head of science is a member of the senior management team and, in addition to his teaching commitment, holds many managerial responsibilities in the school. This leaves little time to devote to development of the science department. Most science teachers and technicians have been working at the school for some years, so day-to-day organisation is satisfactory and the atmosphere and conditions in the new science block are good. The split between biology, chemistry and physics throughout Years 7 to 11 enables pairs of teachers to support each other, but does not encourage the transfer of experience, skills and ideas across science.
70. Beyond lessons, one group of pupils entered and won the national competition 'Who Done It?' run by Planet Science on the Internet. There has also been an excellent liaison project with primary schools, where silk worms were grown by pupils in the upper primary years, with

support and resources provided by biology staff from Studley High. This was then followed up in Year 7 science lessons after pupils had transferred to the secondary school.

71. Improvement has been good since the last inspection, since when the new science block has been built, providing good accommodation. Although an additional technician has been employed, there are still too few technician hours for the demands of the modern science curriculum. Current funding levels remain low and impede the provision of adequate ICT in the department, particularly for the requirement of datalogging.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Statutory ICT requirements within some subjects are not adequately met.
- Inadequate ICT resources have limited the availability of ICT to other departments.
- Cross-curricular ICT is not adequately co-ordinated or monitored.
- Pupils have a positive attitude and use their ICT skills independently.
- Good ICT curriculum design and lesson planning provide pupils with a clear view of what they will learn and how.
- Good teaching and learning in ICT lessons ensure pupils make good progress.
- The department is well led and managed effectively.

### **Commentary**

72. Standards of attainment at the end of Years 9 and 11 are above average, but ICT is not used across the curriculum. The GCSE short course results in 2003 were above national standards. By the end of both Year 9 and 11 pupils have made good progress, and they demonstrate competent ICT skills. There are opportunities for pupils to work at their own level. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress; the more able pupils work at enhanced levels and in Year 11 will be able to take the full ICT GCSE.
73. Pupils in both key stages have a good grasp of facilities in Microsoft Office® applications. They create PowerPoint® presentations for a targeted audience, using images from the Internet, digital cameras and scanners. They create websites with linked pages and apply a consistent style. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 competently use Approach® and Excel® to create a database for a real life application and create validation techniques to check data.
74. The quality of teaching and learning in ICT lessons is good. Teachers' good subject knowledge and effective planning ensure that pupils maintain good levels of progress. Their good pupil management skills and timely interventions sustain pupils' involvement and contribute to their learning. Almost all pupils quickly become engaged in activities and concentrate well. They talk confidently and enthusiastically about their work. The assessment and tracking system is effective. It provides a clear, progressive outline of ICT skills, which is linked to National Curriculum Levels for pupils in Years 7 to 9 and GCSE levels for pupils in Years 10 and 11. Lessons occasionally finish too abruptly with no opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning and consolidate the progress made.
75. The ICT department is well led and managed. There is an effective team and strong links with the leadership group. The development plan has clearly identified priorities and a clear vision. Provision for ICT has recently been improved through the introduction of a revised curriculum, new schemes of work and a pupil assessment and tracking system. The lack of ICT resources continues to be a concern, but the school has recently purchased equipment that will bring the ratio of computers to pupils to within nationally specified levels. The good technical support provided ensures that ICT systems and resources are well maintained.

76. Satisfactory improvements have been made since the last inspection. The improved curriculum, schemes of work and pupil tracking systems have contributed to better quality teaching, learning and standards in ICT lessons. Unsatisfactory progress has been made in the provision of cross-curricular ICT.

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

77. Provision for using ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. The provision for CAD/CAM and control technology in design technology and data logging in science is unsatisfactory. Statutory ICT requirements in these subjects are, therefore, not being met. The use of ICT within departments is variable and hampered by limited access to the ICT suites. The school has a website which is well used by some departments. An audit of staff ICT has been undertaken and some responding training provided. However, there has been no effective audit of cross-curricular ICT and consequently no clear views of the strengths and weaknesses of cross-curricular provision.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography**

Provision for geography is **good**.

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

- Teachers are experienced and knowledgeable.
- Teaching and learning styles are very varied and afford pupils very good opportunities to take responsibility.
- Well-planned curriculum materials raise achievement, particularly of average and lower ability pupils.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to use ICT to improve their learning.

#### **Commentary**

78. Standards in GCSE examinations have been consistently well above average in recent years, though no pupil has attained the A\* grade. Standards are above national expectations in all years and all pupils achieve well. On entry to the school most pupils have lower than expected standards in geography. Good methods to promote geographical understanding, skills and knowledge ensure that most pupils reach nationally expected levels by the end of Year 7. By Year 9 all pupils show good understanding and answer questions well, using geographical vocabulary accurately. In Years 10 and 11, pupils work hard with care and effort and achieve a good basis for GCSE examination. Fieldwork in all years is a very good feature.
79. Teaching and learning are very good. Varied styles ensure motivation, pace and challenge, thus raising standards. Teaching is strongly focused on examination criteria, and this greatly improves attainment. Marking is sound where it tells pupils how to improve their work, but often lacks detail. Assessment and progress monitoring are good but do not ensure sufficiently clear targets for improvement. Teachers understand the special educational needs of some pupils and give them good support. However, tasks and resources do not always take sufficient account of the different learning needs of the brightest pupils. Pupils have very good opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and engage in interactive activities that enhance key skills. Insufficient use is made of modern technologies to meet the ICT requirements of the National Curriculum in this subject.
80. Leadership and management are good. Literacy and numeracy development is now well integrated in all topics. Citizenship opportunities are identified, but there are too few opportunities for pupils to use ICT. Since the previous report provision for lower ability pupils

and those with special educational needs has been improved. In Years 7 to 9 work is now much more challenging. High standards continue to be attained in GCSE examinations. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

## History

Provision in history is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average by Year 11 and this indicates very good achievement.
- Excellent questioning skills are rigorously challenging and stretching pupils' understanding.
- Good teaching throughout the department leads to good learning.
- The assessment strategy is developing well. However marking needs to inform pupils more effectively of their progress.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their learning and history is a very popular subject.

### Commentary

81. Standards are above average by Year 9 and well above by Year 11. Achievement is good in Years 7 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11. GCSE results in 2003 were well above the national average and the pupils achieved much higher than their target grades. Boys significantly outperformed girls and secured almost a grade higher than their expected grades. The department was very successful in reaching the highest grades with 19 per cent achieving an A\*, the highest in the school. This was excellent achievement for the higher ability pupils.
82. By Year 9, pupils develop a good range of historical skills including the understanding of chronology and the significance of primary and secondary sources. The interpretation of contemporary cartoons is a strength in the department. By Year 11, pupils have a very good understanding of the impact on the League of Nations by the Japanese invasion of Manchuria. They show very good oral ability which is strongly developed through excellent questioning by the teachers. There is a wide and varied range of written work that provides good opportunities for developing reasoning and evaluative skills. Pupils from Year 7 are given very good opportunities to express their ideas through extended writing. There are good opportunities for using ICT in every year.
83. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school, with many very good features. All lessons seen were at least satisfactory. In the most effective, there was very good teacher knowledge and enthusiasm that is readily shared with the pupils. Much of the learning is in pairs or small groups, with challenging pace and highly effective contributions from the teachers. In these lessons, pupils are very enthusiastic and have very positive attitudes to their learning and as a result achieve very well. Overall history is an increasingly popular subject with the numbers studying GCSE doubling in four years. There is good literacy support for learning and all pupils make good progress. Homework is set regularly. Although the marking is encouraging, it does not always give clear enough guidance and support for improving pupils' work. The assessment strategy is improving rapidly and most pupils have at least two assessments each term. These are given National Curriculum levels and have clear targets for improvement.
84. Very good leadership provides clear vision and direction in the department and recent changes such as the development of questioning skills, the introduction of pupil self-review and the improvement of the curriculum have all contributed to the high achievement of many of the pupils. Management is good because the departmental development plan is comprehensive and makes a good contribution to further developments. In recent years a comprehensive range of fieldwork has provided a strong basis for developing pupils' research and investigative

skills. Progress since the last inspection is very good. Standards, achievement and teaching quality have all strengthened.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in examinations are well above average by Year 11.
- Teaching is very good and contributes very well to pupils' achievement.
- The subject makes a very good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- The monitoring of teachers' and pupils' work is well developed.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- Excellent pupil management makes an outstanding contribution to their achievement.

### **Commentary**

85. Standards in Years 7 to 9 are above average in relation to the Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus. Given pupils' average standards on entry to the school, this represents good achievement. There are many good examples of pupils achieving well in developing their knowledge and understanding of religious language, principles and concepts. They are able to link their knowledge of religion with their everyday experiences. The use of key words, technical language and good discussion work enables pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills.
86. Standards in Years 10 and 11 in the work seen are well above average. Standards in the GCSE short course were high in 2003 where 95 per cent achieved A\* - C and this compared very favourably with similar schools. Pupils achieve very well in extending their knowledge and understanding of how they can learn from religion and apply it in their lives. Their skills of investigation, interpretation and analysis are very well developed.
87. Teachers' excellent use of discussion and questioning enables pupils to express their opinions and form clear judgements about religious and moral issues. Their outstanding knowledge of the subject enables pupils to make very good progress in the GCSE course. Homework is very well used to allow pupils to reflect on the information they have gained in class. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and challenge them to succeed, and these are very effective in contributing to good pupil achievement. The assessment procedures provide a clear basis for assessing what pupils know and understand and pupils are clear from the detailed comments in their books about what they need to do to improve.
88. Curriculum leadership is very good, with a clear sense of purpose and direction. The head of the department approaches the task with enthusiasm and commitment. He has been very successful in developing a strong team approach, and is very well supported by two other teachers, one of whom is a specialist. The monitoring of the work of teachers and pupils is well developed. The subject is managed very well and this is reflected in the quality of religious education provided for the pupils.
89. Pupils' spiritual and moral awareness is very strong. They demonstrate a deep respect for the views, faiths and traditions of each other.
90. Since the last inspection, improvement overall has been good.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

## Design and technology

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good relationships between staff and pupils create a good environment for learning.
- There is good achievement in the catering course.
- Pupils show good attitudes to their work.
- Assessment data are not used effectively to monitor pupils' progress.
- Computer control technology and computer-aided design and manufacturing are inadequate.
- Standards in resistant materials, particularly in Years 7 to 9, need to be raised.

### Commentary

91. Standards at the end of Year 9 are similar to those achieved in most schools. This does not match the well above average teacher assessments of pupils' work. Pupils joining the school in Year 7 have average skills in the subject and their achievement in design and technology by the end of Year 9 is satisfactory. However, in food technology, achievement is now good as a result of good teaching and the approach of the newly appointed subject leader. Pupils develop a good range of practical skills in both food and resistant materials. They use the design process well in food technology, where they show each stage of product development. They test and evaluate the products they make and suggest ways to improve them further. Drawing skills, however, are undeveloped as a result of the limited graphics teaching, which lowers the detail and quality of the presentation of design and development in resistant materials. As a result, standards are lower in this subject. Pupils develop a satisfactory range of skills working only in food and resistant materials. This is a result of the limited number of specialist teachers in the department and the school is unable to offer a broader range of subjects within design and technology at present.
92. Standards by the end of Year 11 are average, similar to those achieved in GCSE in 2003. Girls achieve better than the boys. All pupils progress satisfactorily with the more open design opportunities for their GCSE coursework, and their achievement is satisfactory. In food technology, pupils are now showing improved skills in designing and product development. They show a broader range of development and product evaluation skills. In resistant materials pupils develop a good range of craft skills in both the resistant material and engineering courses. However, the quality and presentation of their design portfolio work is a weaker part of their coursework. There are missed opportunities for pupils to use ICT to raise the quality of their design work and there is insufficient monitoring to ensure pupils work at an even pace throughout their main projects.
93. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall; in food technology it is good. In Years 7 to 9, teaching is focused on establishing a wide range of basic skills in all material areas although there are fewer opportunities for pupils to experience more individual design work in resistant materials at this stage. Lessons are well structured and teachers ensure pupils' learning is underpinned with appropriate knowledge which enables them to work through each task successfully. A good range of activities helps to keep pupils' interest and provides the right level of challenge for them to master the skills they encounter to a satisfactory level. However, a lack of resources prevents pupils from gaining experience of computer-aided design and manufacture.
94. In Years 10 and 11, teachers ensure pupils follow the examination mark criteria. Lessons are well planned to provide pupils with clear guidance for coursework. However, pupils do not always show evidence of each stage of development in their work. There is not enough monitoring and checking of work in resistant materials to ensure completion of each stage of the coursework. There is little analysis of research before the writing of a specification for

design, for example. Teachers have good knowledge of their subject and pupils benefit from the specialist knowledge they provide. Classroom displays are stimulating and provide a good range of examples of work to underpin pupils' learning. Teachers manage the pupils well and they encourage them to test their products at each stage of the making. They include a good variety of industrial processes and techniques. Overall pupils achieve satisfactory outcomes. Although there were good examples of marking and assessment in food, they are inconsistent across the specialist areas. Marking is not yet linked to setting targets for improvement and this is an area for development.

95. Leadership and management of the department are unsatisfactory. There is no head of department and, therefore, no vision and co-ordination of work across the two main specialist areas. Management in food technology has improved but there is little emphasis on monitoring the quality of teaching, marking and assessment. Opportunities for teachers to observe each other and to share good practice are limited. Satisfactory progress has been made since the previous inspection, though material resources are still insufficient. There is very good technician support, which complements the work of the department.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

### **Art and design**

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

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

- The quality of teaching and learning in Years 10 and 11 is good.
- Sketchbooks are used well in Years 10 and 11 for research and development of projects.
- Insufficient use of ICT and the lack of ceramics for three-dimensional study limit pupils' experience of different media in Years 7 to 9.
- There is a lack of rigour of assessment procedures in Years 7 to 9 relating to levels to improve learning.

#### **Commentary**

96. The proportion of pupils gaining higher grades A\* to C in GCSE examinations in 2003 was in line with national average. Upward trends in recent years have been maintained in GCSE examinations.
97. Standards in the current Year 9 are average. This represents satisfactory achievement for many pupils in relation to their knowledge, understanding and skills when they entered the school. Pupils of all abilities observe from direct observation and use line, tone and texture effectively in their drawings. Pupils of lower ability and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. They are supported well and apply themselves purposefully to their work and enjoy it.
98. Standards in the current Year 11 are above average. This represents good achievement over the two years of the course for all pupils. There is no significant variation in the achievement of different groups of pupils. Those with special educational needs achieve well and benefit from personal tuition and guidance. Good matching of tasks to capabilities ensures that pupils of higher ability in Years 10 and 11 are sufficiently challenged. Pupils show some influence of important movements in art and design or of particular artists. They often demonstrate personal interests, ideas and responses to their own and other cultures through the work they produce. Design sheets and the use of sketchbooks for project research are annotated and used effectively.

99. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Where good lessons were observed in Years 10 and 11, pupils were actively engaged in debate about their work and clear about their immediate learning objectives. The teaching of GCSE work has greater pace and clear lesson structure. Pupils are encouraged to take increasing initiative in planning their work so adding to their personal achievement. A strong feature of the most effective teaching is very sharp teacher questioning which ensures the participation of all pupils. Where tasks were less challenging or lacking in pace, some pupils became restless. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 have insufficient knowledge of the learning objectives based on national expectations. Resources are inadequate for teaching and developing ICT effectively and the lack of ceramics for three-dimensional study limited the range of media possibilities. Higher ability pupils in Years 10 and 11 are sufficiently challenged to achieve their full potential.
100. The leadership of art and design is satisfactory. Staff have good subject knowledge and expertise and work well as a team. Taught skills are enhanced by opportunities for pupils to make contact with artists and art work both in and out of school. The management of the department is good and schemes of work and departmental policies provide good guidance for staff so that consistency is ensured throughout the department. The work of the department is adequately monitored through classroom observations and work sampling. The absence of technical support restricts the range of media activities taught and the lack of accommodation for three-dimensional study remains unresolved. Nevertheless, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory, most notably in GCSE results and the use of sketchbooks.

## **Drama**

The provision in drama is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- GCSE pupils achieve very well.
- Teaching is very good, with teachers having high expectations of what pupils can do and how they will behave.
- Poor accommodation is preventing pupils from acquiring technical skills.

## **Commentary**

101. All pupils in Years 7 to 9 have a fortnightly drama lesson. They make good progress in learning different dramatic techniques, such as freeze frames and thought tracking, and they can explain the difference between naturalistic and realistic theatre. Higher ability pupils concentrate well and can sustain a piece of improvisation convincingly. Those of lower ability perform readily, but they are more self-conscious and they lose concentration at times. Pupils achieve well in the first three years and reach standards by the end of Year 9 that are above average. There is a GCSE drama option, and in 2003 results were very high. These pupils achieved very well on the course. Standards of work seen indicate that by the end of Year 11 standards are well above average and that pupils are achieving very well. All convey character and plot convincingly through movement, gesture and dialogue. They also use a good range of dramatic conventions in improvisations.
102. Teaching is very good throughout the school and in most lessons pupils learn very well. There are times when, despite very good teaching, a group of pupils holds back learning a little because of indifferent or immature attitudes. Teachers know their subject very well, and they explain points very effectively and make very helpful comments. Learning, particularly on the GCSE course, is adversely affected because accommodation and resources are poor. Lessons are taught in classrooms, and group work sometimes spills over into a corridor or neighbouring classroom. There is very little technical equipment so pupils do not learn about theatrical techniques like lighting or staging.

103. The subject is very well led and managed. Drama is popular among pupils, and it makes a very good contribution to extra-curricular activities. The subject has made good improvement since the previous inspection. There are now well-qualified subject specialists and the quality of teaching and learning has risen.

## Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 11 are consistently well above average.
- Schemes of work to ensure lessons are planned to meet the needs of all pupils need developing and completing
- New assessment procedures need to be extended and communicated to pupils to be effective.
- Music makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development.
- The number of computers in the department should be increased.

### Commentary

104. Standards of attainment for pupils at the end of Year 9 are average with a minority of pupils attaining higher because of their good instrumental skills. In 2003, pupils in Year 11 attained GCSE results that were well above average, maintaining a consistent trend over the last three years; this is an improvement on the standards reported at the previous inspection. Pupils' compositions reflect a variety of styles with the more competent showing good understanding of chords and textures in a variety of musical structures.
105. The assessments of pupils' work at the end of Year 9 in 2003 are acknowledged by staff to be over-generous. Standards of work in lessons are average, but above average for a significant minority of those pupils who have good instrumental skills. This enables their standards of performance to be high, but their ability to describe and evaluate music is less well developed. On occasion, the behaviour of a minority - mainly boys - adversely affects learning and achievement in lessons. However for the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, achievement is satisfactory.
106. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. A strong feature is teachers' good encouragement of pupils' positive attitudes when working in pairs or groups. The teachers are good musicians, but lesson planning is a weakness, especially in Years 7 to 9. It does not ensure that all groups of pupils are given work that matches their abilities. At times, less competent pupils become daunted by complex activities. Questioning is sometimes not rigorous enough and lessons sometimes end ineffectively. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have little written work in their folders, so they are not building up a bank of reference material for revision. Despite good resources overall, there are insufficient computers and there is not enough suitable software, especially for pupils in Years 7 to 9.
107. Leadership and management are satisfactory but with some significant weaknesses including thoroughness of monitoring and support from the senior leadership team. Schemes of work have not been developed or completed. New systems for assessing pupils' work are being developed, but are not currently being used with sufficient rigour and clarity. As a result, pupils are not clear how well they are doing in their lessons and what they need to do to improve and reach higher standards. Since the previous inspection, there have been staff changes, but overall improvement is satisfactory. The department provides good musical opportunities for all pupils with 21 per cent taking instrumental lessons. Through the various ensembles and concerts, they enjoy the social opportunities of making music together.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality teaching and learning across all years results in good progress for all groups of pupils.
- The proportion of pupils attaining higher grade passes at GCSE is improving and in 2003 was above the national average.
- Pupils achieve well by the end of Year 9.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to support pupils' learning.
- Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour results in a positive atmosphere in lessons and extra-curricular activities.
- Recently improved quality and range of accommodation is helping raise standards.

## Commentary

108. Standards in Year 9 are average for all groups of pupils. Most achieve well in relation to their capabilities and their generally below average standards of attainment on entry. By Year 9, in association football and basketball, boys have secure individual skills and techniques and have developed well their knowledge and understanding of tactical awareness and rules application. The more capable apply teamwork skills to good effect. In netball and basketball, girls have secure individual skills and techniques. In the latter they are improving their attacking-play tactics, and in badminton they use a variety of appropriate strokes. The less capable still rely too much on the use of overhead strokes. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because effective teacher planning ensures they are fully involved.
109. Standards in the Year 11 compulsory course are average for all groups of pupils. The majority achieves satisfactorily and has continued to build on the skills and techniques learned in Years 7 to 9. The lack of good accommodation in the past has had a negative effect on the quality of pupils' achievement. In basketball, most boys have secure individual skills and techniques, and are developing well the application of rules. A significant minority, however, still needs to improve their skills and techniques of shooting. In netball, most girls apply individual skills and techniques well in games but the use of signalling and movement off the ball to receive passes could be better. Across all years pupils understand the principles and procedures of warm-up and the importance of practice to improve their skills.
110. The proportion of pupils attaining higher grade passes in the GCSE examination has been improving over the last three years and in 2003 was above the national average. The current standards of Year 11 GCSE pupils are above average; they are achieving well.
111. Teaching and learning are good across all years and pupils make good progress in lessons. Teachers have a very good command of the activities being taught and have a consistent approach to standards of behaviour. Good quality teaching is typified by pace, purpose, progression and challenge. In badminton and netball lessons, for example, well planned and structured activities ensure pupils are all actively involved and improving their skills and techniques well. This was also seen in well-organised association football and basketball lessons where pupils with physical and behavioural difficulties were fully involved. Learning objectives are communicated to pupils so they know what is expected of them. However, support for literacy is not effective enough; there is a lack of focus, for example, on key terminology and use of whiteboards. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good, as are the working relationships between teachers and pupils. This enhances the quality of learning and promotes a good atmosphere in lessons. Teachers circulate well in lessons and their effective use of praise and constructive criticism makes pupils aware of their capabilities. Sometimes, though, there are insufficient structured opportunities for pupils to be involved in peer evaluation and coaching, which inhibits their knowledge and understanding somewhat. There is insufficient use of ICT to support pupils' learning.
112. Leadership is good, with a clear sense of purpose to focus on improving standards and the quality of teaching and learning. Though there is some sharing of good practice within the

department, there are no formal opportunities - other than through performance management - for the evaluation and monitoring of teaching and learning. Management is sound. New schemes of work have been developed to ensure the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met but not all policies are yet operational. Assessment procedures at the end of Year 9 are in place but in reports to parents, it is not made clear how these refer to the four strands of the physical education National Curriculum. Good extra-curricular provision throughout the year extends pupils' learning experience. As a result of the commitment and enthusiasm of staff, 52 per cent of boys and 40 per cent of girls have participated in extra-curricular activities during the last year. Seven boys and four girls have gone on to attain representative honours at county level in a range of activities. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

113. Sporting provision is good overall. The great majority of pupils have access to two hours of quality timetabled sporting provision per week. However, in Years 10 and 11, pupils who follow the vocational courses programme have reduced provision. Further opportunities are provided by good competitive extra-curricular provision throughout the year. The department is not involved in any national sporting initiatives.

## **BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES**

### **Vocational courses**

Provision in vocational education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has a deserved regional and growing national reputation for the quality of this inclusive provision.
- Strong links with local further education colleges exist through vocational provision.
- Leadership is committed, knowledgeable and enthusiastic.
- Discussion and consultation amongst all staff are not broad enough to convince some teachers of the benefits to pupils of the 14-19 innovations.

### **Commentary**

114. Standards of vocational qualifications gained in 2003 are below average when compared with GCSE benchmarks, but pupils' rate of progress, compared to the Connexions Coventry and Warwickshire sub-region, is good. Standards of work seen in Years 10 and 11 are average as the vocational education group now includes pupils of a range of ability. The achievement of pupils is good when compared with similar peer groups, with both girls and boys achieving equally well. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good. A particularly outstanding example of this was in a Year 10 college based catering course where one stated pupil and two on school action plus are on track to attain a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 1. A school teaching assistant supports these pupils in the afternoons when they are working on their NVQ portfolio.
115. Teaching is good and planning demonstrates that teachers have a very good knowledge of the requirements of the subject and current developments. Teachers both support and challenge pupils, as demonstrated by 'contracts' and swift action to remedy any breaches of acceptable behaviour. Very effective use is made of the resources of local colleges, employers, the Education Business Partnership and Connexions, showing how committed the school is to partnership curricular developments. Regular pupil reviews with realistic target-setting related specifically to the courses being followed are a strong feature. Pupil profiles completed by college staff show that these pupils are developing the skills and capacity to work independently and collaboratively, taking more responsibility for their own learning. The engagement of pupils is demonstrated by improved attitudes when following the vocational options. Pupils said that they behaved differently and better when at college. They attributed this to high expectations of

mature conduct and their enjoying being responsible and accountable for how they conducted themselves. They enjoy the realistic workplace environment and particularly the 'absence of bells'. Equality of opportunity is demonstrated by the broadening of provision for gifted and talented pupils and the 'Preparation for Employment ' provision for lower ability pupils.

116. Curriculum leadership is good. The head of department is committed, knowledgeable, and enthusiastic in her belief in the value of vocational education for pupils of all abilities and capacities. She inspires, motivates and influences pupils and provides a good role model for others. She regularly contributes to 14-19 regional conferences and so enhances the reputation of the school as well as ensuring that the school has up-to-date information and benchmarking data. The vocational education development plan ties into the school development plan and the local education authority's 14-19 strategic plan. The head of department monitors performance data (attendance, behaviour, attainment, progression), reviews patterns, and takes appropriate action to improve in terms of curricular development and innovation.
117. The department is seeking to work collaboratively with other schools and colleges to convert the principles of 14-19 policy into practice and close the gap between rhetoric and reality. However, there is a clearly identified need for further school-wide discussion and consultation so that all staff may be convinced of the benefits to pupils of 14-19 innovations. There is some resistance to these developments borne of lack of understanding of the 'big picture' and the contribution that all subjects might have to 14-19 programme development. All staff need to be involved fully in decisions about the pupils' curriculum, and this will be essential in the forthcoming Engineering College bid. This is a fast developing and improving subject area that was not commented upon in the last inspection.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

Citizenship was inspected in full and is reported below. Personal, social and health education was sampled. The curriculum for personal, social and health education is satisfactory with adequate planning and monitoring. The programme is being further developed appropriately, with issues relating to sex and drugs education being covered.

### **Citizenship**

The provision in citizenship is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- An innovative curriculum offers good opportunities for developing pupils' understanding and interest in citizenship.
- The subject is developing well as a result of effective leadership.
- Good teaching is enabling pupils to learn well.
- The absence of an assessment strategy hinders the effective monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress.
- Pupils respond well and have good discussions on a range of environmental, social and political issues.
- Staff development opportunities to develop citizenship skills are too few.

### **Commentary**

118. Standards are average in Year 9 and Year 11; achievement is satisfactory. There are many curriculum opportunities for pupils to discuss the full range of citizenship issues. By Year 9 pupils have a sound understanding of fair trade in Africa and of young people and the law. By Year 11 they have a good understanding of human rights and the impact this has upon their own community. Teachers are skilled at encouraging debate and reflection and as a result, pupils' oral and thinking skills are good. Group work and oral communication to the whole class

are encouraged and work well. There are, however, only limited opportunities for pupils to develop their written skills systematically. Pupils are not making satisfactory progress in this respect. Homework is not regularly set and does not form an effective element in developing pupils' understanding.

119. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Lessons are well planned with effective starters and good group activities. Expectations of pupils are good and pupils think carefully about citizenship issues. Teachers skilfully encourage pupils to develop their ideas and to share them with others. The level of debate is good. Overall, pupils' response is good. Many say that they enjoy the lessons and that they are better prepared for the adult world. Learning is primarily through work sheets and discussion. The sheets are effectively designed to develop pupils' understanding and to take them through a series of classroom tasks. Lessons generally have good pace and sufficient challenge. An assessment strategy has yet to be developed and without this, teachers have significant difficulty in monitoring individuals' progress and ensuring that all the work is appropriate to the full ability range.
120. The subject is energetically led by a recently appointed co-ordinator who has improved subject planning, developed a comprehensive and well balanced curriculum and built up a sound range of resources. He provides clear guidance for the 11 staff teaching the subject. He is well supported by the senior managers. Citizenship is identified for further development in the school improvement plan. A comprehensive programme of monitoring and recording of pupils' achievement and progress has yet to be developed and this is keeping standards at a lower level at present than pupils' ability suggests. The current team of teachers have yet to receive sufficient staff development opportunities and there are operational difficulties preventing staff from meeting regularly. Nevertheless the subject is improving rapidly with good teaching and good leadership.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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