

INSPECTION REPORT

MOSSLEY HOLLINS HIGH SCHOOL

Mossley

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106266

Headteacher: Mr D Duncan

Lead inspector: Mr J Ashton

Dates of inspection: 10 – 13 May 2004

Inspection number: 264774

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 - 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	704
School address:	Huddersfield Road Mossley Ashton-under-Lyne Tameside
Postcode:	OL5 9DJ
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Denton
Date of previous inspection:	18 January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Mossley Hollins is a smaller than average 11-16 community comprehensive school, with 704 pupils on role, compared to the national average for secondary schools of 1013 pupils. The school site is very small and working conditions are very cramped. There are almost equal numbers of boys and girls overall. The relatively small proportion (six per cent) of minority ethnic pupils is of Asian British, Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage. Only two pupils are at an early stage of English Language acquisition. Overall standards of attainment on entry to the school are below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average. The proportion with statements of special educational need is broadly average. Most pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning or behavioural difficulties. A broadly average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. There are no traveller children in the school, but it does have a small number of 'looked after' children. The school aspires to Arts College status.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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9843	Sarah Drake	Lay inspector	
5910	Peter Fletcher	Team Inspector	Mathematics
10361	Frank Evans	Team Inspector	English English as an additional language
33187	Paul Barker	Team Inspector	Science
31129	Jeff Pickering	Team inspector	Art and design Design technology
31008	Pauline Rourke	Team inspector	Special educational needs Geography
32122	Judith Straw	Team inspector	History Citizenship
33179	Brian Beal	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Mossley Hollins is a **good school**. It has many strengths and fewer weaknesses, one of which is a building at the end of its useful life on too small and restricted a site. The school is much improved in recent years. It is well managed and very well led and governed. The leadership of its headteacher is excellent. Overall GCSE examination results in 2003, although below average, were much improved on those from the previous year, and represented a good achievement for the pupils concerned. The quality of teaching and learning is generally good and some is very good, occasionally excellent. The school gives **good value for money**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses:

- National test results at the end of Year 9 in 2003, continued their rise of recent years, and now match the national average.
- Pupils' achievement is good overall in most subjects.
- Teaching and learning are good, and there is a very positive, welcoming and increasingly rigorous climate for improving learning even further.
- Teaching, learning, achievement and standards are all unsatisfactory in art and design.
- Leadership is a significant strength, especially the leadership of the headteacher and governing body.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, attendance and punctuality, along with their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are all very good.
- Too little of pupils' learning is through their use of information and communication technology (ICT).
- The accommodation is poor and there are staffing problems, both of which affect standards and the quality of education.
- The assessment and reporting of pupils' work, though satisfactory overall, has some areas for development.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good, particularly in terms of standards, quality of teaching, learning, pupil achievement, and staff morale. The most significant factors in bringing this about are the work of the headteacher and the increased effectiveness of the school's senior leadership. Support for pupils with special educational needs has improved, as also have the library and ICT facilities. Teachers are now much more confident in their use of ICT but there is further work to be done to increase pupils' use of it in many subjects.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Current academic standards remain below the national average in Year 11 but they match the national average in Year 9. Pupils' achievement is good overall in most subjects, including in all three of the core subjects English, mathematics and science. The school in 2003 fell short of its targets for GCSE A* to C grades but exceeded its target for A* to G grades. Boys achieve similarly to girls overall. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to other pupils in the school.

Performance in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11, compared with:	All schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
	E	E	D	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.*

Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and learning, and they behave very well. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, even though pupils do not experience collective worship on every single day. Pupils' attendance is also very good, as is their punctuality.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good overall, including in all three of the core subjects English, mathematics and science, but unsatisfactory in art and design. The assessment of pupils' learning is satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Extra-curricular and enrichment activities are good. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are unsatisfactory overall, since the accommodation is poor. The school provides very good quality care, support and guidance for its pupils and involves them very well in its work. The school has a good partnership with parents and very good links with other schools, colleges and the wider community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership of the school is very good and that of the headteacher is excellent. Management is good overall and the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. The work of the governors is very good. They show an exceptional level of commitment to the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very pleased with the school and have very few concerns about it. Pupils are very proud of their school. They particularly like the friendliness and helpfulness of their teachers and the positive atmosphere in the school. They are less appreciative of the school's poor accommodation and restricted facilities, which are long overdue for complete replacement.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should improve are:

- Provision for art and design.
- The use by pupils of ICT across the curriculum.
- The staffing issues in some subjects.
- Inconsistencies across the school in the assessment, and reporting of pupils' work.

And to meet statutory requirements the school should:

- Ensure that all pupils experience an act of collective worship every day and are guaranteed their full National Curriculum allowance of ICT.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Current academic standards are **below the national average** in Year 11. They **match the national average** in Year 9. Pupils' achievement is **good** in most subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- National test results at the end of Year 9 in 2003, continued their rise of recent years, and now match the national average.
- GCSE results in 2003 are below average but above average when compared to those of similar schools.
- Pupils' achievements are good in most subjects throughout the school, including in all three of the core subjects English, mathematics and science.
- Achievement is unsatisfactory in art and design throughout the school and for some pupils in ICT in Years 10 and 11.
- ICT skills are not being developed sufficiently in other subjects.

Commentary

1. Results in the National Tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003 matched the national average in science, were below average in mathematics, and above average in English. Overall, across all three subjects, having moved steadily closer to average for the past five years, they matched the results of pupils in all schools nationally. At this stage, the trend in results is above the national trend for the five years leading up to 2003. All three subjects have improving trends. Girls outperform boys in English, and the reverse in mathematics and science. Higher attaining pupils attain less well in mathematics than in English and science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	34.2 (31.8)	33.4 (33.3)
Mathematics	34.4 (33.8)	35.4 (34.7)
Science	34.3 (31.6)	33.6 (33.3)

There were 150 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Overall GCSE results were below the national average in 2003, but much improved on those of previous years, especially 2002. They were above average for similar schools in 2003. The trend in overall GCSE results was below the national trend over the past five years due to the severe dip in results in 2002, which was the end result of poor morale amongst teachers in the few years leading up to then. Boys and girls have had similar results recently.

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	40 (24)	52 (50)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	90 (73)	91 (91)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	97 (92)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	31.3 (25.4)	34.7 (34.8)

There were 146 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. The school in 2003 fell short of its targets for GCSE A* to C grades but exceeded its target for A* to G grades. Standards found during this inspection are better than the national test and GCSE results indicate. This is because teaching and learning have significantly improved in the last two years. Achievement is now good throughout the school and pupils are now making faster progress. The excellent leadership of the present headteacher, the leadership of other key staff and their combined effect upon the morale and determination of all who work in the school are the most significant factors in this improvement.
4. Achievement is good overall and in most subjects throughout the school. Achievement, however, is unsatisfactory for pupils studying art and design throughout the school and for those pupils who may not receive their full entitlement to ICT.
5. There is little difference overall in the relative achievements of boys and girls. In English in Years 7 to 9, however, girls are doing better than boys, although the boys' results are improving. Boys are outperforming girls in mathematics and science. At GCSE, both boys' and girls' results were below average overall in 2003. There are particular subjects where girls traditionally outperform boys, in history and geography, for instance, and they did so also at Mossley Hollins.
6. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is as good as that of other pupils. In 2003, all pupils with special educational needs attained at least one GCSE pass. In some subjects, art and design and geography, for instance, pupils with special educational needs do not achieve as well as they could, largely due to staffing difficulties, absence and the need to employ temporary staff in these subjects. Higher attaining pupils achieve well on the whole. At GCSE, in 2003, as expected, they achieved a high proportion of the highest grades, A* and A, in some subjects. The achievement of able and talented pupils is now carefully monitored and they are beginning to make good progress in their particular areas of talent and expertise.
7. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress as a result of the combined efforts of the local education authority's ethnic minority support team and a suitably trained member of the school's learning support department. Presently only two pupils are at an early stage of learning English and are both well monitored and supported.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **very positive** attitudes to school and learning, and they behave **very well**. Pupils' attendance is also **very good**, as is their punctuality. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Pupils enjoy being at school and take enthusiastic part in its activities.
- Very good relationships create a friendly atmosphere and very good environment for learning.
- Despite the cramped accommodation, the school operates as a very orderly community.
- High levels of attendance help pupils to make good, regular progress in their learning.

Commentary

8. Pupils were fully involved in developing the school's motto, *We succeed because we learn together*, and they bring it to life on a daily basis through their very positive attitudes towards education, life and other people. They understand that communities work best for everyone when individuals consider others' needs as well as their own, and this understanding leads

them to play their full part in creating a vibrant and happy environment in which to work and relax. Their most frequently mentioned positive feature of the school is that teachers are friendly, helpful and fair. On a day-to-day basis, it is obvious that staff like the pupils and that this feeling is reciprocated. The resulting balance of good humour and respect brings out the best in everyone.

9. Pupils settle very quickly at the start of lessons, listen well to directions, swiftly get down to work and sustain their concentration well. They are, mostly, keen to contribute their thoughts and are also prepared to debate their own and others' views, respecting others' opinions even when not agreeing with them. They collaborate well when working in pairs or groups and many take part in sporting and other activities outside lessons. Even those pupils, who in other circumstances might 'switch off' from learning, keep their attention focussed here and, supported by good quality teaching, work well.
10. Exclusions for a fixed period are relatively high compared to similar schools but their number has greatly reduced over the past two years. For most of those involved, one day's exclusion is sufficient to ensure that they improve their behaviour and do not cross 'the red line' again. The school has very high expectations of behaviour and a clear system of rewards, sanctions and support, which staff apply consistently. Movement around the building is difficult but pupils do so in a good-natured and mature manner, waiting for congestion to ease rather than worsening it by pushing. Pupils are unfailingly polite and helpful, and readily apologise if they make a mistake. Bullying or other unpleasantness rarely happens and, according to parents and pupils, it is dealt with very swiftly and effectively.

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	660	89	1
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	1	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	2	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	16	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	13	3	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

11. Senior leaders give pupils' all-round development a high priority. Pupils' personal development is now very good and has improved since the last inspection. As a result, there are very high standards in pupils' behaviour.

12. Spiritual provision has improved significantly and is now good. Well-planned assemblies routinely give pupils time to reflect or pray. They use music well, provide thoughtful spiritual and moral messages and foster the corporate identity of the school. There is an apt thought for the day for some days when there is not an assembly. Collective worship is not fully in place but what is provided is of good quality. Pupils are generous to charities, part of the encouragement to consider the non-material dimension of life. In English, drama, and religious education in particular, there are very good opportunities to be creative, imaginative and reflective. The school ethos is one that inspires achievement and the school environment has been made aesthetically pleasing with stimulating displays, flowers, and music.
13. Moral and social provision is very good. Staff example and classroom expectations set the tone for this very well. There is a fair system of rewards and sanctions, well understood by the pupils. Both parents and pupils have been consulted for the new behaviour and anti-bullying policies to ensure they are accepted and effective. There is a strong moral dimension to some lessons in many subjects on topics such as the environment, genetics, global fair trade and the eighteenth century slave trade. The personal, social, health and citizenship programmes are of good quality. There are very good opportunities for taking responsibility in the school council, as prefects, head students, peer counsellors, and in many informal ways that allow 'active citizenship'. Nearly half the pupils take part in the extensive extra-curricular programme in some way. Where appropriate, there are elections, or applications, interviews and training for the formal positions.
14. Culturally, the provision is very good overall. Pupils have a very good awareness of cultural diversity, and education for this is strong in subjects such as English, religious education, design and technology, and modern foreign languages. Positive projects to include the school's own minority communities contribute well to this. The Asian girls' group is notably supportive. Drama productions, joint community arts ventures and the brass band reflect a more local heritage very effectively. Modern foreign languages education includes good opportunities for international visits as well as regular classroom encounters with native speakers.
15. At the time of the previous inspection attendance levels were in line with the national average, but in the most recent reporting year they were well above the average. This year they have improved again with every year group, and over 75 per cent of pupils, having attendance above 92 per cent, which is unusually good. Pupils' regular attendance is partly brought about by their liking for school but also by the persistence of administrative staff and their very effective teamwork with pastoral staff and the education welfare officer. All the school's staff understand the importance of good quality education for each individual pupil, and they work hard to help this, in partnership with parents, by ensuring that pupils attend school regularly.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6.6
National data	7.2

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.3
National data	1.1

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

16. The attitudes and values of most pupils with special educational needs are similar to those of other pupils. The recently developed learning support unit, known as the On Board Centre, caters very well for pupils with behavioural difficulties. Pupils' placement in the Centre, which can be either full or part time, is very carefully considered and planned. There are high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils are given much practical support in improving their behaviour through such helpful strategies as the anger management programme. Relationships within the Centre, between pupils and with adults, are good and many pupils maintain contact with staff after their successful re-integration into mainstream education.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** overall. The assessment of pupils' learning is **satisfactory**. The curriculum is **satisfactory overall**. Extra-curricular and enrichment activities are **good**. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are **unsatisfactory** overall, since the accommodation is **poor**. The school provides **very good** quality care, support and guidance for its pupils and involves them **very well** in its work. The school has a **good** partnership with parents and **very good** links with other schools, colleges and the wider community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall. Assessment of pupils' learning is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is generally good and brings about good learning and good achievement across the school.
- Very good teaching and learning were seen in some lessons in English, mathematics, science, ICT, design and technology, drama, history, Spanish, physical education, religious education and PSHE.
- A small amount of unsatisfactory teaching and learning took place in art and design and to a lesser extent in music.
- Teaching though pupils' use of ICT in other subjects across the curriculum is improving but still unsatisfactory overall.
- The assessment of pupils' learning is satisfactory, but there are inconsistencies both within and between subject departments, and room for improvement in marking and in how the data collected is used to raise standards further.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 120 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (2%)	20 (16%)	61 (51%)	34 (28%)	3 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

17. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is strongest in Year 10 where the largest proportion of good and very good teaching was seen. Teaching is particularly good, with a significant proportion of very good teaching, in English, mathematics, science, ICT, Spanish, physical education, religious education, design and technology and PSHE, and achievement in most of these subjects is, in consequence, also good. The more successful teaching is notable, for example:

- In English and drama, for the teachers' thorough preparation, very good relationships, active involvement of their pupils in learning, and consistent drive to raise standards.
- In mathematics, for the teachers involving pupils in their own learning through effective discussion and interesting activities, setting a good pace and using resources well,

- In science, for the teachers' energy and challenge, the way they plan to include all pupils, their high expectations and the very good relationships between pupils and staff.
 - In French and Spanish, for the teachers' consistent use of the foreign language in lessons containing different activities and skills to engage and challenge pupils.
 - In physical education, for the way the department has established a good climate for learning which promotes pupils' good progress and success, despite the poor facilities and accommodation.
 - In religious education, for the way the large team of non-specialist teachers is ably supported with well-devised lesson plans, for the effective use of images through interactive whiteboards and for the effective use of drama and role play.
 - In design and technology, for clear explanations of tasks which generate interest in pupils, for marking which gives pupils a clear view of standards and how they might improve, and for the promotion of increasingly independent learning and good behaviour and attitudes.
 - In PSHE, for very well planned schemes of work, for involving the majority of staff in school, including senior staff, and for utilising the skills and expertise of a wide range of outside agencies to complement the work in lessons.
18. The result of this stronger teaching is better learning and better achievement, lessons in which productivity is high, gains in knowledge, skills or understanding are noticeable, and pupils make good progress.
19. Some teaching was less than good, without being completely unsatisfactory. There was a lack of pace in some science lessons; too much of a concentration upon efficient teaching rather than effective learning in geography, gaps in pupils' work not being followed up in some history books; command of the subject not being as good as it could be and starter activities taking too long in some religious education lessons; teachers occasionally spending too long talking and pupils spending too long listening such that their concentration wandered in some design and technology lessons. There was just a small amount of completely unsatisfactory teaching which led to unsatisfactory learning, poor productivity, unsatisfactory achievement and insufficient progress. This was primarily in art and design and was due largely to basic art skills not having been taught well enough because of long standing staff illness, and to a lack of lack of challenge in lessons.
20. The teaching of ICT in specialist ICT lessons is generally good, but there is insufficient application of ICT in other areas of the curriculum. Although this is improved since the last inspection, it is not yet good enough. Teachers themselves are making more use of ICT to enrich their lessons, for example in English and drama, modern foreign languages, design and technology and history. But there is still insufficient use of ICT by the pupils themselves. Too little of their learning takes place yet through the medium of ICT. The application of pupils' ICT skills is unsatisfactory in mathematics, art, geography and music. Too little use is made of ICT to support the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils use the Internet to support their research for projects in a range of subjects, but with greater impact in citizenship and physical education. In design and technology, pupils use ICT to design products and to present ideas, but its use for manufacture needs further development.
21. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good and satisfactory respectively in most subject areas. As a result of this, standards of writing are better than average by the end of Year 9, and pupils generally cope satisfactorily with the mathematical demands of other subjects, such as measurement and scaling in art, design and technology and physical education, and coordinates and graphical work in geography and science.
22. Pupils with special educational needs are taught by subject specialists and experience the same generally good teaching and learning as other pupils, alongside whom most of them are taught. In a number of subjects, pupils are taught in smaller ability-related groups so that they can receive more individual assistance and work of an appropriate level of difficulty. In some lessons, capable teaching assistants make an effective contribution to pupils' learning. In many lessons, where tasks and materials are modified to meet pupils' needs, they learn well.

Teaching assistants help to modify materials. Most teachers know which pupils are on the register for able and talented pupils and prepare for them well, on the whole.

23. The assessment of pupils' learning is satisfactory overall, but there are inconsistencies both within and between departments. In some subjects, mathematics, modern foreign languages and physical education, for example, assessment procedures are good. The information is used effectively to set and to monitor target grades and pupils have a good awareness of how they are progressing. In some other subjects, science and design and technology, for instance, assessment methods raise standards and identify and set targets for pupils. However, in science, marking in pupils' books is inconsistent, often lacking guiding comments. In design and technology, spelling errors occasionally go uncorrected in pupils' folio work. In English, assessment is not as thorough as it needs to be if standards are to continue to rise. Pupils in general are praised for their work but are not always told precisely how they might improve it. In citizenship, assessment is thorough but inconsistent because teachers are using two different methods. In history, assessment is good and is used well but incomplete work is not followed up and the department, just as in religious education, does not yet analyse data sufficiently to inform future planning. In geography, pupils' learning is not sufficiently assessed during lessons or through assessment of their written work. In art and design, assessment procedures do not follow the school's preferred methods and pupils do not know how well they are doing relative to national standards.
24. The school assessment policy includes key principles but lacks the detail needed to ensure consistent practice, for example in terms of grading work. Pupils' work is marked regularly in most subjects, with much supportive comment and sometimes with advice to pupils about how to improve the standard of their work. Work is sometimes graded too highly and levels of the National Curriculum awarded are not always clearly based on evidence. Pupils do not always have a good awareness of how well they are progressing through the curriculum. Since the last inspection, much work has been done on collecting performance data in order to measure progress, agree targets and to identify under-achievement, and there is now a wealth of relevant data. Senior managers have yet to solve how best to analyse this information to compare performance in the different departments and to promote improvements in teaching and learning, through better matching of work to individual needs.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory** overall. Extra-curricular and enrichment activities are **good**. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are **unsatisfactory**, since the accommodation is **poor**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is a strength of the school.
- The brass band and other extra-curricular activities are strong features of the school.
- The On Board Centre makes very good provision for pupils with behavioural difficulties.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are not always guaranteed their full ICT entitlement.
- The accommodation is poor and there are ongoing staffing weaknesses which hinder learning in some subjects.

Commentary

25. Curricular provision is satisfactory overall, but with one main area for improvement. The curriculum is inclusive, responsive to diversity and soundly planned to make learning worthwhile in the majority of subjects, but there is still insufficient use of ICT by pupils in subjects other than timetabled ICT lessons. There is a smooth transition from Year 6 into Year 7 with a bridging project in English. All pupils now study drama and ICT in Years 7-9. Opportunities to study three-dimensional work in art are very limited in Years 7-9. Higher-

attaining pupils in modern foreign languages study a second language from Year 8. Statutory requirements for collective worship are almost but not completely met. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have access to an adequate range of courses, which prepares them for employment or further study. Drama and media studies are very popular options.

26. The curriculum is reviewed regularly and updated to take account of new developments. For example, innovative plans are in place to extend further the scope of vocational educational in Year 10 for the next academic year. The school provides GNVQ courses in ICT and leisure and tourism. Effective use is made of external resources and of links with local colleges to provide vocational courses, which are monitored regularly, by staff from the school.
27. Personal, social and health education provision has a high profile within the school and occupies a prime position on the timetable, when all pupils study it at the same time. This enables effective use to be made of outside speakers. It is taught to all year groups for one lesson each fortnight and utilises well the skills and expertise of a wide range of outside agencies to complement the work in lessons. All the staff involved are well informed and enthusiastic and the delivery of PHSE represents very good teamwork. All the necessary policies are in place regarding sex and drugs education as well as a wealth of other valuable and interesting topics.
28. Pupils with special educational needs experience the full curriculum. They have a small amount of additional provision. Pupils with statements of special educational needs in literacy are withdrawn from lessons once a week for effective individual tuition in literacy skills. They, and other pupils with special educational needs in their class, are supported in English lessons in Years 7 and 8 by a teacher with particular expertise in meeting such needs.
29. The learning support unit known as the On Board Centre makes very good provision for pupils with behavioural difficulties. A well developed and well thought out philosophy underpins the provision. There is a well-structured process for determining which pupils need support. All policies and procedures are effectively implemented. Staff in the Centre ensure that pupils maintain contact with the mainstream curriculum so that their carefully managed re-integration has a high success rate.
30. The school has made useful contact with a local Excellence Cluster group of schools to help develop its approach to providing for able and talented pupils. It has identified pupils and developed a register, organised a number of enrichment activities that have helped to raise aspirations and helped the development of appropriately challenging work in many subjects. However, these developments are all at an early stage.
31. There are sufficient suitably qualified teachers available to staff the curriculum, but ongoing illness and recruitment issues continue to hinder the development of some subjects, art and design, geography and religious education in particular. The provision and deployment of teaching support staff is adequate.
32. The standard of accommodation is poor and is a barrier to learning in a number of subjects, as it was at the time of the previous two inspections. The poorly designed building is tired, worn and showing major signs of decay. The very cramped site allows little room for manoeuvre. The school has tried to overcome dangerous bottlenecks on the top of steep outdoor steps and extremely narrow corridors by introducing a one-way system. Although the overall fabric of the school is in a poor condition, a significant and partially successful effort to improve the appearance of the environment has been made over the last four years. Many windows and broken paving stones have been replaced and some refurbishing has taken place. However, the path leading to the playing fields and the uneven hard play areas remain potential hazards. There is restricted access to the rear of the building and disabled access is limited to a few areas of the school. The site manager, caretaking, catering and cleaning staff work hard to keep the building clean and attractive. The pupils, who respect their building, have no social areas and insufficient dining space.

33. Significant accommodation deficiencies remain in a number of subjects which ultimately affect progress and attainment in those subjects. Accommodation in art and physical education remains poor. In music and design and technology, the situation is unsatisfactory. Despite some good accommodation in mathematics and ICT, which benefit from clusters of rooms, all departments have some small and badly designed rooms.
34. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall. English, mathematics, and, modern foreign languages are well resourced to deliver the National Curriculum. The introduction of interactive whiteboards and data projectors into most classrooms is further enhancing teaching and learning across the broader range of subjects, as teachers increasingly integrate this technology into their routine practices. The ratio of computers to pupils is above the national average and the school is extending access to the computer network further. The provision of wire-less laptop computers to provide access to ICT at the point of need is a creative solution to the limitations that the accommodation imposes. Since the last inspection, the library has improved and now provides a good learning environment for pupils. The quality of library based resources is good but the quantity of books is still limited and is only just satisfactory. More recently the kiln has been taken out of commission in art and the gas supply cut off in two science laboratories.
35. The traditional opportunities provided by sport, music and drama make an important contribution to pupils' wider education. All major sports have teams and a large number of pupils take part. This is all the more creditable given the very limited facilities for sporting activities. In recent times there have been some notable achievements in cricket, chess and athletics. The school brass band continues to perform at a very high standard and many of the performances take place in the community. External funding has allowed the introduction of a wide range of new extra-curricular opportunities. Some of these include the Internet Cafe, the Dance Club and the Talk Shop, where pupils are able to discuss contemporary issues. Some subjects such as ICT give help with revision and the production of course work. Subjects where a greater contribution could be made include art, mathematics and religious education. Overall this provision is a strength of the school and an important feature of its mission.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides **very good** quality care, support and guidance for its pupils and involves them **very well** in its work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every child matters in this school where staff know them very well as individuals.
- Very good systems for recording and tracking pupils' development underpin the support that staff members offer to them.
- There are very good procedures to ensure health and safety but some problems still exist.
- The school actively seeks pupils' opinions and uses them to guide its development.

Commentary

36. Every pupil who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that there is at least one adult in school to whom they could turn for help. All those spoken with during the inspection confirmed this positive opinion. Staff take an interest in pupils' lives and want them to achieve their best, and this leads them to work tirelessly on their behalf. Over the past two years the school's pastoral systems, which were already good at the time of the previous inspection, have been strengthened. Increasingly focussed emphasis has been placed on welding together support for pupils' personal development with that for their academic progress, with form tutors acting as the linch-pin, strongly backed by middle and senior managers. Very good record keeping ensures that staff have ready access to information relating to individuals, such as rewards received and parental contact.

37. Pupils record their targets in their well-designed planners, which are regularly checked by form tutors. Twice-yearly review meetings have been introduced this year at which each pupil, almost always accompanied by their parents, meets their form tutor to review their progress and set new goals for the coming months. These have proved to be very popular and helpful in concentrating individuals' attention on what needs to be done. The On Board Centre helps pupils who are wavering, for a variety of reasons, to refocus their efforts in a positive way. Extra lessons and mentoring from governors or senior staff have proved very effective in helping older pupils to achieve their potential. Peer mentoring between pupils in Year 11 and those in Year 7 helps to increase both groups' confidence and is highly valued by those involved. The provision of groups such as that for young Asian women takes account of differing pupils' needs. Pupils who, after staff guidance, have elected to spend part of their week pursuing practical courses at college are very positive about how this has helped them with both their personal organisation and their work in school.
38. The procedures to ensure child protection are very good. All staff who were asked about this know what to do and who to go to should they have concerns in this area. Their very good knowledge of individuals makes them alert to changes in attitude, and the school works closely with social services staff in the best interest of the pupils. The arrangements to ensure health and safety are very good, with the site manager taking a leading role, well supported by other staff and governors. Where possible, the school has remedied the problems highlighted at the time of the previous inspection. However, alone it cannot remove the significant hazards which are posed by the poor quality internal and external accommodation. The school's necessary action to reduce the risks to its users has had a negative effect on the quality of pupils' education, particularly in art and physical education.
39. It is the quality of the accommodation that elicits the most negative opinions from pupils. In response to these views, the school has greatly improved the toilet areas. This action, all those involved with the school agree, has had a big impact on pupils' attitudes and the way in which they respect the accommodation. The school council has an important input to the development of the school, from leading year-group discussions about the anti-bullying policy to taking part in staff interviews, with very positive effect.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **good** partnership with parents and **very good** links with other schools, colleges and the wider community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive of the school and are becoming increasingly involved in their children's education.
- Staff are very open with parents but could provide more detailed information about what pupils are learning and how well they are achieving.
- The school has a high profile in the community and makes very good use of what it has to offer.
- Strong partnerships with other schools and colleges enhance the provision for pupils.

Commentary

40. Parents are very appreciative of the way that the school combines a warm, friendly atmosphere with clear expectations that pupils should work hard. There have been increasing opportunities over recent years for them to learn more about, for instance, their children's progress through review day meetings, or the importance of coursework for Year 11. These events, combined with the excellent celebratory pupil award meetings and close communication about pupils' attitudes, mean that parents feel an important part of their child's education. Parents' attendance at events is very good and they make better use of pupils' planners as a form of communication than at the time of the previous inspection. Newsletters, and the school's

interesting website, keep parents well up-to-date with wider whole school activities. However, the school does not yet provide parents with information about what their child will be learning in the coming months or give hints about how they might help. While pupils' progress reports comply with requirements, many entries say more about what has been covered and the individual's attitudes to work than they do about where their specific strengths lie and what they should concentrate on in order to improve.

41. The Friends of Mossley Hollins, which comprises half parents and half members of the local community, is a very lively organisation, dedicated to helping the school improve its facilities. Its members extend the school's strong community spirit into the surrounding area and are helping to improve public perception of what it has to offer. The school's involvement with such projects as a radio station, housed in school but using the expertise provided through Mossley Community Arts, and the youth forum, broadens pupils' experience as well as their skills.
42. Close working with other schools in Tameside and other local authorities is helping to strengthen the school's curriculum, leadership and the quality of its teaching and learning. Mossley Hollins staff also provide examples of good practice to other schools. There is very good liaison with the local college and the training agency that some older pupils attend, which helps to make such placements run successfully. Long established links with the teacher training department of a local university have brought new ideas to the school and also very good practical training for future teachers. The English department works closely with the nearest primary schools on both a paired reading project and a transition exercise which pupils start in Year 6 and complete in Year 7. The school is very open to partnership working and puts its motto of learning together into very effective practice to the benefit of all its pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership of the school is **very good**, that of the headteacher is **excellent**. Management is **good** and the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. The work of the governors is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and he is very well supported by the senior leadership team.
- Governors provide an exceptional level of support to the school.
- There is a successful on-going strong determination to improve pupils' achievement by improving teaching and learning.
- Pastoral and subject leadership are both good overall.
- The school's financial management is very good.
- The systems for the induction of new staff and for the organisation and management of the initial teacher training of students from a local university are particularly effective.

Commentary

43. Leadership is very good overall. The outstanding leadership of the new headteacher is the most significant factor in the school's notable improvement in the last 18 months. He is very well supported by experienced and effective senior leaders whose complementary strengths make them a very effective team which has brought about the necessary boost in staff and student morale, needed to improve teaching, learning and pupil achievement. A number of successful strategies have been used so far. These include: a determination to win the hearts and minds of all people connected with the school; persuading everyone within school of the mutual benefit of everyone pulling in the same direction; involving a large proportion of the staff in a back-to-first principles look at teaching and learning; and, above all, making very good use of key outside expertise, including skilled consultancy from the local education authority and wider afield, including leading teachers from other schools.

44. This is a thoroughly inclusive school where all staff, teaching and non-teaching, feel completely valued, and the vast majority of pupils achieve well during their time at the school. The current improvement plans clearly identify the right priorities for development such as, raising attainment, maximising the contribution of staff, pupils and governors, and exploring new opportunities for the school. These are reviewed regularly, but strengthening teaching and learning is certainly out in front as the most important on-going objective of the school. A great deal of fruitful discussion has been devoted to this end during the past two years, to very good effect.
45. Governance is very good overall. Governors, particularly the chair and vice-chair, continue to show an exceptional level of commitment to the school. They are very actively involved as 'critical friends' and well aware of the distinction between strategic overview and day-to-day management of the school. Governors play a key role in issues such as policy development, risk assessment, inclusion and staff recruitment. They are fully involved in school development planning and review. Strong links are in place with particular subject areas. The governing body tries harder than most to ensure that the school fulfils its statutory requirements and is doing as much towards this end as can reasonably be expected. Governors are aware that ICT requirements fall short of being fully guaranteed for some pupils but also know, and are proud, that the school comes much closer to achieving this than at the time of the last inspection.
46. Subject leadership is generally good overall. Both leadership and management are generally good in modern foreign languages, design and technology and physical education. They are generally unsatisfactory only in art and design. In some other subjects (English, science, history, citizenship and ICT) leadership is good whilst management is but satisfactory. In English, this because assessment is not as thorough as it needs to be, in science there is insufficient monitoring of pupils' work books in order to improve standards. The history department does not yet analyse data sufficiently to inform future planning and, in citizenship, assessment has yet to be securely developed in the units taught in tutor time. In ICT it is the insecure co-ordination of Year 10 and Year 11 pupils' ICT experience across the curriculum as a whole which is the sticking point.
47. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis, the result of effective teamwork from dedicated non-teaching as well as teaching staff. The problems of the small and restricted school site and worn out buildings are not allowed to impinge more than they absolutely have to on the work of the school.
48. A cohesive system of performance management, supported by governors and monitored by the headteacher, is operational and is closely linked to a very effective scheme of professional development. Staff have access to development opportunities in areas identified through performance management or as priorities in the school's development plan and partnerships have been forged with many training institutions, to the benefit of the school. A very effective system of induction of all new staff operates and is much appreciated by those who have experienced it. The organisation and management of the initial teacher training of students from Manchester Metropolitan University is especially good and students spoke of benefiting enormously from their time at this school.
49. Pastoral leadership and management are good. Pupils are well known and very well cared for. The coordination of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is improved since the previous inspection and is now good overall but with two areas for improvement. The school meets the requirements of pupils' statements of special educational need. The requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice are met, although more pupils would benefit from having education plans of their own. Overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed well by the head of the learning support faculty with responsibility for pupils with statements of special educational need delegated to the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). There is too little first-hand monitoring of the

teaching of pupils with special educational needs by either the head of faculty or the SENCO. The head of learning support has specific responsibility for pupils in the learning support unit and for those who are able and talented, as well as oversight of the whole school provision. This represents very good practice in educational and social inclusion and helps pupils with learning difficulties gain esteem by their association with able and talented pupils.

50. The school's financial management is very good. The business manager and vice chair of governors work very closely with senior staff and governors when drawing up the budget, which is firmly aligned to the school development plan, and when discussing its implementation throughout the year. The business manager also works closely with departmental staff during the year, helping to monitor their spending and, with her assistant, ensuring that the school gets good value when placing orders.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	2,416,189
Total expenditure	2,417,647
Expenditure per pupil	3,348

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	18,048
Balance carried forward to the next	16,589

51. The most recent audit report was very positive and the school has responded effectively to the few points for improvement that were raised. Governors are kept very well informed about the finances and have a strong input when deciding on priorities. They have a sound grasp of the principles of best value. Over two years, and with relatively average levels of funding per pupil compared with the national average, the school has reversed a deficit budget. Taking into account the good quality of education provided, together with pupils' good achievement and very good attitudes, the school provides good value for money.

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

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have significantly improved by the end of Year 9.
- Results at GCSE have improved for higher attainers and at grades A*-G. Results at grades A*-C are still below average.
- Consistently good teaching is raising standards.
- Pupils enjoy the subject, work hard and are beginning to achieve better results.
- Leadership is good but management is satisfactory since assessment is not as consistent and as thorough as it needs to be.

Commentary

52. Results in the end of Year 9 national tests in English for 2003 are above the national average and a significant improvement on those of the previous year. Current standards in Year 9 reflect this attainment, the result of good and consistent teaching of the National Literacy Strategy in Years 7 to 9. GCSE results in English in 2003, although well below average in grades A*-C match the national average in grades A*-G. This is an improvement on the 2002 results. It also points to lower and middle attaining pupils and those with special educational needs achieving well, whilst higher attainers achieve only satisfactorily. English GCSE results have been improving steadily over the last three years and current standards in work seen are not significantly different from the national average. Although girls are doing better than boys overall, the boys' results are improving.
53. Pupils' listening skills are very good. In all lessons seen, pupils listen attentively. Their answers to questions show that they are following the teacher's train of thought. They speak equally well. They answer questions clearly and ask them sensibly. This is true of pupils of all levels of attainment and in all years. Reading skills are actively promoted in English. There is a well thought out partnership with the local primary schools and the promotion of reading within the school as part of the national Literacy Strategy is good. Pupils read aloud in class with confidence. Writing skills are good. Pupils improve their writing throughout Years 7 to 9. By Year 9, pupils are able to express themselves clearly in a range of styles and with a sense of purpose and audience. For example, Year 9 pupils compose some very good travel brochures in a popular and informative style. The emphasis on teaching these basic skills well contributes to the pupils' success in the Year 9 national tests and represents good achievement for pupils in Years 7 to 9. This, in turn, gives pupils a more secure base for approaching GCSE work in Years 10 and 11. Here, pupils produce some good and interesting original writing, which shows an understanding of genre and use of language. However, pupils are less secure in other aspects of their writing. For example, when setting out an argument or explanation their writing is often convoluted and so lacks conciseness and sense. This particularly affects middle attaining pupils. Higher attaining pupils write with style and confidence. Overall achievement in Years 10 and 11 is also good overall.
54. Teaching is consistently good in all years. Some lessons are very good. Teaching is notable for its thorough preparation, very good relationships and a consistent drive to raise standards. Teachers know their subject well and actively involve pupils in learning. This motivates pupils

and gives them an enjoyment in learning. Marking of pupils' work is conscientious but inconsistent across the department. Pupils are praised for their work but are not always told precisely how they might improve.

55. Leadership of the department is good. The deputy head of department currently leads an enthusiastic team in the absence of the head of department. He is providing vision, purpose and a growing sense of consistency in approach. The department is characterised by a willingness to embrace new ideas and a determination to improve standards. This has been achieved dramatically in Years 7 to 9 and partially in Years 10 and 11. Management, on the other hand, is satisfactory. Information and communication technology (ICT) is very well embedded in the curriculum and most teachers have good ICT skills, but assessment is not as thorough as it needs to be if standards are to continue to rise.
56. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Standards have risen in Years 7 to 9. Teaching has improved. Pupils are encouraged to be independent learners and resources are much improved. The challenge to the department is to make the GCSE results as good as those achieved by pupils at the end of Year 9.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. Standards of literacy are good overall. The school has worked hard to promote the literacy development of pupils. There has been specific in-service training not only on literacy in general but also on developing pupils' writing skills in various subjects. Consequently there is a good level of awareness in departments about the importance of literacy. The National Literacy Strategy is very well taught in English in Years 7 to 9. The current Year 10 benefited from this approach. Standards of writing are better than average by the end of Year 9. While many departments are striving to develop literacy within their subject area, some departments are not as far ahead as others. In history and religious education, pupils are encouraged to write at length, using appropriate vocabulary. Subject specific vocabulary is used in all subject areas. In mathematics there is a strong emphasis on oral and written communication. However in art and, to a lesser extent in geography, literacy development is unsatisfactory. There is no written evaluation of work in art and no opportunities for pupils to discuss their work. In geography, mis-spellings go uncorrected.

Modern foreign languages (French and Spanish)

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- The department is well led and managed.
- Assessment procedures are good.
- Too few pupils use the foreign language to ask for information or help.
- Pupils do not correct their written work sufficiently.

Commentary

58. The results of the teachers' assessments of pupils' standards of attainment in **French** and **Spanish** at the end of Year 9 have improved over the last two years and indicate that they are above average. Current standards in Year 9 are average. Pupils' understanding of the foreign language, which is used consistently by all teachers in the classroom and which they hear from cassette, is good. Pupils speak and read aloud confidently, competently, willingly and with clarity. Their pronunciation is good. They show a good understanding of the texts that they read, and teachers constantly check this with effective questioning. Pupils write at an appropriate level and with reasonable accuracy. By Year 9, most pupils recognise and use the

past tense, although some pupils are still not always secure in its use. All pupils achieve well, and over time they acquire a wide range of useful vocabulary, verbs and relevant constructions to help them in their work. In most lessons, there are good opportunities for pupils to develop memory skills. Pupils with special needs are well integrated into their classes, are well known to teachers, and they make similar progress.

59. In the GCSE examinations in 2003, results were below average in **French**: boys performed better than girls, particularly at grades A* and A. On the other hand, results in Spanish were significantly below average, particularly for boys. The continuity, progression and motivation of these pupils had been affected by the long-term absence of a teacher in a recent year. Current standards in Year 11 are below average overall, close to average in **Spanish** and below average in **French**. They have improved considerably recently, the result of the concerted efforts of staff within the school aided well by support from expert staff from another school. Pupils' achievement is therefore good overall. Preparation for the forthcoming GCSE examinations has been very thorough. The foreign language assistants have been used effectively to work with small groups in each language to improve oracy. Pupils have revision booklets and CDs to help with the reading and listening elements. Pupils write with reasonable accuracy in **French** and **Spanish**, using three tenses and giving opinions. Teachers have moderated the coursework very closely.
60. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Pupils' attitudes are conducive to good learning. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good, and they use the foreign language consistently and very effectively in every lesson. At present, however, too few pupils reciprocate in the foreign language, for example, by asking routinely for information or help. Teachers plan their lessons well, with a sharp focus on the learning objectives. All lessons have the same format, with a short activity for revision at the beginning, when pupils have the opportunity to recall vocabulary, and an evaluation at the end. Lessons contain different activities and skills to engage and challenge pupils: pupils are productive and work at a good pace. Good use is made of time: in some lessons, for instance, an egg timer ensures that limits for the completion of tasks are never exceeded. The use of ICT to present topics in a visual form injects pace and added interest into some lessons, as in a very good **Spanish** lesson in Year 10 on the weather. Other resources, such as mini whiteboards, are used effectively to help pupils acquire and consolidate vocabulary and constructions. Homework is set and marked regularly, with targets for pupils to improve. Too few pupils, however, redraft or complete corrections to improve the accuracy of their written work.
61. The faculty is well led and managed, and there is a shared determination among the team to achieve high standards. They have worked very hard to implement successfully the new framework strategy, and its ideals pervade most lessons, at all levels. Teachers make a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy. Assessment procedures are good, and the information is used effectively to set and to monitor target grades. Many pupils have had contact with the **French** and **Spanish** assistants over the last two terms, and this has helped to promote pupils' cultural development. Recent improvement has been good overall.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and all pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- Results in Years 7 to 9 have improved steadily over recent years.
- Results in Years 10 and 11 compare well with whole-school performance.
- Assessment data is used well to track progress and to set targets.
- There is insufficient use by pupils of ICT.
- Development planning does not adequately address the needs of the department.

Commentary

62. National test results at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were below the national average but performance has improved steadily since 1999. The latest average point score was the highest since 1999. Current standards are average in Year 9, and the achievement of all groups of pupils is good in Years 7 to 9. Pupils enter the school with attainment a little below average and progress is above the national trend, with a good proportion of pupils gaining level 7 or better.
63. GCSE results in 2003 were broadly in line with the national average. All pupils achieve well in Years 10 and 11. GCSE results show good progress from Year 9. They have varied over recent years but have usually compared well with overall performance in the school. However, the department's policy of entering the top set for GCSE in Year 10 has not been successful in raising the proportion of the highest grades gained. The percentage of pupils gaining any GCSE grade was above the national average and pupils in the lowest sets also receive external accreditation through a Certificate of Achievement. Current standards in Year 11 are average. Work is well matched to prior attainment in lessons. Work in books is generally at a challenging level and shows good coverage of number and algebra, shape and space, and data handling. There are some opportunities for pupils to apply mathematics in practical and real-life contexts. There is insufficient use by pupils of ICT in their learning. Pupils have some experience of spreadsheets but difficulty in gaining access to the ICT rooms has limited their opportunities, and graphic calculators are not available. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Lower sets are smaller so that pupils receive more attention from the teachers, and there is valued help from teaching assistants.
64. Teaching is good in all year groups and teaching styles have developed well since the last inspection. Teachers now involve pupils much more in their own learning through effective discussion and interesting activities, although wider questioning to the whole class would help to involve all pupils. The developments promoted in school and through the National Numeracy Strategy in terms of lesson planning and structure are clearly apparent in the work of the department. Teachers work hard, set a good pace and use resources well. Relationships are very good. Pupils respond well, are cooperative, and behaviour is very good. Pupils willingly demonstrate at the board, work in pairs and take part in mathematical games. Assessment of learning is good. Work is generally marked well with supportive comment and some grading. Assessment data is used effectively to track pupils' progress through the curriculum and to set targets. Pupils have a very good awareness of how they are progressing.
65. Management of the department is good. Day-to-day administration is effective and teaching and learning are well monitored through lesson observation and informal scrutiny of pupils' work. Leadership, however, is satisfactory. The Head of Faculty is a good role model and has been effective in developing teaching, but there is insufficient sense of vision for the department. Improvement since the last inspection is good overall. For, instance, the quality of teaching is now a strength of the department, there is more practice of mental skills, and pupils are much more involved in their own learning through discussion and more interesting learning activities.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. Standards of mathematics across the school are satisfactory overall. Most pupils have a good recall of number facts and some are able to discuss how to do calculations. Pupils have some mathematical experience in other subjects, such as measurement and scaling in art, design and technology and physical education, and coordinates and graphical work in geography and science. They generally cope well with the mathematical demands of such work, although some graphical work is not of a good standard. The mathematics department is implementing ideas from the National Numeracy Strategy and has prepared a whole-school numeracy policy. This explains the nature of numeracy but does not help other departments to look for

opportunities to contribute to numeracy development, and there is, in consequence, limited evidence of this.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are broadly average in all years.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very good.
- Leadership of the subject is good.
- Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and the monitoring of pupils' work books in order to improve standards needs improving.
- Some accommodation is unsatisfactory but due for refurbishment soon.

Commentary

67. Test results at the end of Year 9 were close to the national average and in line with expected performance based on individual pupils' performance in previous national tests. The 2003 results showed improvement on the previous four years and the trend was above the national trend. Current standards in Year 9 are also broadly average. All groups of pupils achieve well in Years 7 to 9.
68. Results obtained by Year 11 pupils in double award science in 2003 were in line with national averages for both boys and girls. The results have improved in the past three years. Some pupils sat the single award science examination and all were awarded a grade. Current standards at the end of Year 11 are average. The achievement of all groups of pupils in Years 10 and 11 is good. Most pupils have a sound knowledge of scientific concepts and have regard for moral and social implications of science, particularly genetic engineering. Pupils are adept in practical lessons and interpret observations well.
69. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In some lessons in Years 10 and 11 it is very good. Teaching is often energetic and challenging but a few lessons, particularly in Years 7 to 9, lack sufficient pace. Lessons are well planned to include all pupils and delivery increasingly involves the use of ICT by teachers but pupils do not currently have ready access to computers in science. Pupils respond well to the high expectations of teachers and in such circumstances make good progress. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good. Targets are set for all pupils and regular testing allows progress to be monitored and targets reviewed. However, marking in pupils' books is inconsistent, often lacking guiding comments. Literacy skills are promoted by extended writing tasks in some groups and by encouraging pupils to read out aloud. Pupils' learning is better in Years 10 and 11 where they respond particularly well to challenging concepts. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of atomic structure and natural selection was very good.
70. Leadership of the subject is good and staff work closely as a team. Management, on the other hand, is satisfactory, the main area for improvement being the monitoring of pupils' work books in order to improve standards. Despite partial refurbishment, accommodation remains unsatisfactory but further upgrading work is planned. The department is well resourced and is ably serviced by two laboratory technicians who give good support to the pupils. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good, brought about in recent years as a result of incorporating target-setting and by providing structured revision opportunities in Years 9 and 11. This has brought about improved results in the national tests and at GCSE.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership is good: it has clearly defined priorities for developing ICT at subject and whole school levels, and has brought about significant improvement since the last inspection.
- Management is satisfactory but the ICT experience that some pupils in Years 10 and 11 receive is not co-ordinated as well as it ought to be.
- The quality of both teaching and learning is good.
- All pupils achieve well in Years 7 to 9; the main area for improvement is in Years 10 and 11.

Commentary

71. Current standards are broadly average and all pupils achieve well in Years 7 to 9. Pupils are able to demonstrate how to use advanced features of office applications, and their work shows clear consideration of the needs of various audiences. Pupils evaluate each others' work and offer constructive and critical feedback to improve learning. However their use of ICT to support investigations through the handling of data, and computer modelling needs further development.
72. The statutory curriculum for ICT in Years 10 and 11 is not completely secure. Achievement for those pupils taking ICT courses in Years 10 and 11 is good, but just satisfactory for those pupils who do not take an ICT examination course and have limited access to ICT in other subjects. In the 2003 GNVQ assessments, the results were above the national average. Current assessments of the GCSE double award ICT course indicate just below average attainment for Year 11. However, the current Year 10 group taking the full Intermediate GNVQ in ICT is attaining standards that are broadly average for this course. All pupils studying the ICT courses respond well to the challenging tasks demanded by the coursework and they have secure knowledge of ICT systems and applications. In Year 11, pupils demonstrate and explain how to use the advanced features of a database application to their peers. In Year 10, pupils are able to research and specify computer systems to meet the needs of a range of end users.
73. The quality of teaching is good overall. In some lessons it is very good because the specialist knowledge of the teacher is able to extend the learning of higher attaining pupils through skilful use of challenging questions. The introduction and adaptation of National Strategy materials into Years 7 and 8 is setting high expectations of all pupils. Teachers use a range of teaching strategies that engage all pupils in learning, and relationships with pupils are always positive, good humoured and purposeful. Lessons are well planned and pupils understand what is expected of them. All pupils respond to their teachers with respect and enjoy learning. They support each other through discussions, and willingly share and demonstrate their work to their peers. Pupils are aware of their progress and understand how to improve their work further.
74. Leadership of ICT is good. The Subject Leader has clearly prioritised key areas for development and shares his specialist subject knowledge effectively with colleagues to support their teaching. The school's leadership has a strong vision of how ICT can enhance teaching and learning through the use of presentation technology and has targeted its resources appropriately. The management of ICT is but satisfactory, however. Assessment procedures for pupils in Years 7 to 9 need further development, and the monitoring of teaching and learning needs to improve. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 who do not take an ICT examination course have access to ICT but it needs to be coordinated more carefully. The teaching of ICT capability has improved and resources now exceed the national ratio. The course provision for pupils aged 14 to 16 has also improved, and pupils aged 11 to 14 receive their national curriculum entitlement to ICT through taught courses. Improvement since the last inspection is therefore satisfactory overall.

Information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum

75. Pupils' ICT competence is satisfactory but the use of ICT across the broader curriculum is unsatisfactory. Teachers' use of ICT is much improved across the school. For instance, it is good and improving in English when used in a creative way to support writing and in drama where the digital video camera is used to increase pupils' analysis of performance. In modern foreign languages and design and technology, ICT is used well by teachers to present topics in a visual form, thereby injecting pace and added interest into some lessons. Interactive white boards have been installed very recently in history and already teachers are using them to great effect. On the other hand, there is still insufficient use of ICT by pupils themselves. Too little of their learning takes place yet through the medium of ICT. For instance, delivery of lessons increasingly involves the use of ICT by teachers but pupils do not currently have ready access to computers in science. The application of pupils' ICT skills is unsatisfactory in mathematics, art, geography and music. Too little use is made of ICT to support the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs.
76. Pupils use the Internet to support their research for projects in a range of subjects, but with greater impact in citizenship and physical education. In design and technology, pupils use ICT to design products and to present ideas, but its use for manufacture needs further development. For pupils in Years 10 and 11 that do not take a specialist course in ICT, their learning in this National Curriculum subject is entirely through other subjects. The use of ICT in these subjects is not planned and monitored systematically enough to ensure completely that pupils' experience of ICT has the breadth and challenge necessary to ensure that they are all taught the full ICT statutory curriculum.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision for geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staffing problems have affected standards in recent years.
- The new head of department has made strenuous and successful efforts to turn the department around, but there is work still to be done.
- Current standards are below the national average at the end of Years 9 and 11 but pupils' coursework is of a good standard.
- Relationships between teachers and most pupils are good and pupils are engaged and attentive in lessons.
- Assessment at the end of Year 9 is not yet secure.

Commentary

77. Teachers assessed pupils' work at the end of Year 9 in 2003 as above the national average. Standards of work seen during the inspection, however, were below the national average. This is because pupils' work is not being assessed accurately to identify their levels of attainment at the end of Year 9. Pupils' achievement in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory compared to their attainment on entry to the school. They acquire a good knowledge of geographical terms although many are reluctant to use the appropriate language in their written work. They learn a range of geographical skills but they are not developed to a high standard. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are able and talented do not achieve as well as they could. Most of the time the demands made upon them, and the tasks and materials used, are the same as for the whole class.
78. The 2003 GCSE examination, results showed significant improvement on those of the previous year but were still well below the national average and pupils tended to do less well in

geography than in their other subjects. Girls' results were very much better than those of boys and were much closer to the national average. Current standards in Year 11 are below average. Achievement at this stage is satisfactory overall. Pupils' coursework is of a good standard and allows them to show their capability in geographical enquiry but their knowledge and understanding of much other basic geography is limited.

79. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The new head of department has worked hard and successfully to develop a systematic approach to teaching so that pupils know what they are expected to do. Lessons are carefully planned and appropriately resourced. Relationships with most pupils are good and the often lively, energetic style of delivery engages pupils' interest so they are keen to respond, work well and learn effectively. Pair work is extensively used to encourage pupils to learn with and from each other. However, the main focus of planning and of the delivery of lessons is on teaching rather than on pupils' learning. The reliance on using pupil's prior knowledge or their own ideas about geographical concepts and processes that are outside their experience, does not lead to good learning of geography. Their learning is not sufficiently assessed during lessons or through assessment of their written work.
80. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The head of department has a good sense of purpose and has created a good team. His energy and enthusiasm make him a good role model. He has worked hard to introduce some stability into the difficult staffing situation. Although one of the specialist rooms is too small for group work, both rooms are attractively decorated with displays of pupils' work and other relevant materials and provide a good atmosphere for learning. However, the work of the department is not sufficiently focused on ensuring that all pupils produce good quality work that is based firmly on the requirements of the National Curriculum and that will support pupils well in the study of geography at higher levels. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory overall. Teaching has improved. Coursework has improved. Teaching and learning are formally monitored. However, assessment at the end of Year 9 is not yet completely reliable and the use of ICT is still under-developed.

History

Provision for history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results in tests at the end of Year 9 and in GCSE were below average in 2003 but have improved over the last three years.
- Good learning results from the creative strategies being developed by teachers.
- Pupils have positive attitudes and achieve well.
- Good departmental leadership and teamwork are combining to raise standards.
- Assessment is used well but incomplete work is not followed up and data is not used well in planning.

Commentary

81. Results in tests at the end of Year 9 were below average in 2003 but have risen steadily over the last three years. Standards seen during the inspection are broadly average. Pupils enter the school with standards which are below average in history and make good progress during Years 7 to 9. All groups of pupils achieve well. Impressive work was seen during the inspection demonstrating that pupils develop the higher skills of analysis in, for example their individual research on World War II and in empathy, seen in work such as 'interviews with Hannibal'. Lower attaining pupils are keen to participate in lessons but some of their written work remains weak and incomplete.
82. In 2003, GCSE results though still well below average have again slowly risen in recent years, though there was a dip in 2002. Current standards in Years 10 and 11 are closer to average

reflecting the good quality teaching the pupils receive. Most pupils achieve well and the work of some higher attaining pupils is above average. Pupils can compare, contrast and evaluate the material they study and work in a methodical and well-organised way. Boys performed less well than girls and less well than boys nationally.

83. Teaching and learning are good overall and sometimes very good. Teachers have expert subject knowledge, and impart it with humour and enthusiasm. Good attention is paid to developing pupils' literacy with a well-planned balance of reading, writing, discussing and debating in lessons. Pupils' personal development is also fostered effectively. The pupils respond positively to the many opportunities to participate in lessons and it is clear that all the teachers have worked hard to develop new strategies for learning. The media is used well along with useful Internet research. Relationships are very good and a positive atmosphere for learning is created. Homework is used well to extend learning beyond the classroom, though gaps in some pupils' work are not followed up.
84. Leadership of the subject is good. The whole department is motivated to move forward, improve standards, embrace new ideas and develop new skills. There is good teamwork. Clear priorities have been set and the teachers are rising to the challenge of new methods. Interactive white boards have been installed very recently and already teachers are using them to great effect. Management is satisfactory. Lessons are well planned and assessment is good, but the department does not yet analyse data sufficiently to inform future planning. Standards are rising and improvement overall since the last inspection has been good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- Most pupils enjoy the subject as a result of good teaching that engages them well.
- Better use of data to monitor and analyse performance and to take effective action is needed.
- Learning through pupils' use of ICT is insufficient.
- Staffing issues remain to be resolved.

Commentary

85. Current standards in Year 9 are broadly average and all groups of pupils achieve well during the first three years. There is substantial good quality written work in pupils' books, and the early beginning to GCSE work in Year 9 challenges pupils well and helps to raise achievement. Higher attaining pupils produce mature and thoughtful work as, for instance, when they explain Buddhist understanding of Nirvana. Lower attaining pupils write briefly but reflectively on key human issues such as grief and justice.
86. The 2003 GCSE examination results were well below the national average. There is no clear trend, and numbers are low for analysis, but it is clear that for some individuals, achievement was good, and most pupils did better in this subject than in others. Short course results were also below the national average, but again, pupils achieved well in relation to their personal targets and better than in other short course examinations. It was not possible to see a Year 11 lesson, but other evidence confirmed that standards in the current Years 10 and 11 are broadly average for this stage of the year. Some good quality work was seen in pupils' books across the ability range, and it was clear that pupils are benefiting from thorough marking that encourages and also challenges them. Achievement overall is good.
87. The quality of teaching is good overall. The range was from satisfactory to excellent. The large team of non-specialist teachers are ably supported with well-devised lesson plans. In all lessons, pupils are effectively managed and they behave very well. Lessons engage their

interest successfully and so they learn well. Much good use of lively materials was seen such as a Jewish Torah scroll and the effective use of images through interactive whiteboards. Pupils themselves, however, use ICT in their learning less than they ought. The use of drama and role play was also highly effective in one inspiring lesson. Where lessons were not as strong, expertise was not so good, starter activities took too long or teachers and pupils were struggling to hear against background noise.

88. There has been a period of significant staffing turbulence since the last inspection, but improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, particularly in terms of the quality of teaching and learning with its consequent effect on pupils' achievement. This year a temporary subject leader is leading and managing satisfactorily the daily running of lessons, but another specialist teacher, a permanent leader, and a smaller team are needed for further improvement.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of achievement are good.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The department is well led and managed, although the monitoring of teaching and learning requires a little more vigour.
- Design folios suffer from insufficient evaluative annotation.

Commentary

89. Current standards in Year 9 are broadly average. GCSE results in 2003 matched the national average and were amongst the best results in school, as at the last inspection. Pupils tend to do better in this subject than the others that they study.
90. Pupils' work currently meets expectations. Pupils consider specification, suitability of function and manufacturing methods to produce prototypes, and then evaluate the benefits to the user. The girls' folio work is better than the boys'. The best work is word-processed, improving the presentation of research and development work. Occasionally pupils rely too much on logos and imagery from magazines, and the results are less valid. The annotation on design sheets is too often descriptive rather than evaluative. Pupils select and use tools correctly although, surprisingly, Year 7 pupils had difficulty peeling a potato. The most convincing work is in food technology and Year 10 pupils planned, cooked and assessed, with good regard for hygiene, the taste, appearance and nutritional value of surprisingly exotic "cook and chill" food. They record and write up their findings carefully. There was less originality amongst GCSE graphics pupils, sketching a box for a toy car, although one cleverly designed the box as a garage for the car. Pupils' positive response to challenging new work brings good achievement through Years 7 and 11. Their teachers know all their pupils well and this is helpful in ensuring that they make good progress. For instance, the highest attainers achieve A grades at GCSE.
91. Teaching and learning are good. The best teaching and learning is in Years 7 to 9 where they are sometimes very good and occasionally excellent. Teachers' very good planning, good subject knowledge and clear explanations of tasks generate interest in pupils. Lesson endings are not so well planned and opportunities for pupils to discuss their own or their classmates' achievements are often missed. Occasionally, teachers spend too long talking and pupils spend too long listening and their concentration wanders. The teachers working with food and textiles are particularly well organised, expecting the same of their pupils. Year 8 pupils made excellent progress producing and assessing the nutritional value of a cheese and potato bake,

as part of their PSHE programme. Their working together with pace and enjoyment was excellent. An imaginative lesson devoted to designing model houses from identical elements led Year 7 pupils to consider living spaces, parking a car in a garage, the advantages of large and small gardens and elements of town planning. The innovative and engaging lesson, promoted increased independent learning. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good, although, a small minority of pupils intentionally interfere with the learning of others, or arrive without equipment such as a pencil. Marking in food and textiles gives pupils a clear view of standards and how they might improve. Spelling errors occasionally go uncorrected in pupils' folio work, particularly in resistant materials and graphic products.

92. The energetic head of department, who is ambitious for her pupils and staff, provides good leadership. The department has a good mix of experienced and newly qualified teachers plus an efficient technician. They all pull together well. Documentation is thorough, well designed and focused on raising standards. The department is also well managed even though the monitoring of teaching and learning requires a little more rigour to ensure a thoroughly consistent approach. Good assessment methods strengthen the broad and balanced curriculum, raise standards and identify and set targets for pupils. Pupils use ICT to design products and to present ideas, but its use for manufacture needs further development. There is a shortage of basic equipment such as steel rules.
93. The department has made good progress since the last inspection. Although the range of materials used in resistant materials is still narrow, standards have risen and achievement is good. The gap between the boys' and girls' attainment has reduced.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Drama (three lessons) and media studies (one lesson) were sampled, and art and design and music were inspected in depth. The teaching and learning is good in both subjects, with some very good teaching in drama. Media Studies is now offered as an option in year 10 and is taught well. Drama is now offered to all pupils in Years 7 to 9 (an improvement since the last inspection).

Art and design

Provision in art is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards and achievement are too low.
- Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory.
- Pupils' basic skills are well below average.
- Pupils do not maintain a sketchbook for investigation and experimentation.
- The curriculum is too narrow and ICT is not used sufficiently.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.
- Relationships in the department are good.

Commentary

94. Pupils enter school with below average skills but standards by the end of Years 9 and 11 are well below average. GCSE examination results were well below average in 2003 and lower than at the last inspection. Therefore, achievement is unsatisfactory. The long-term absence of key members of staff, and having to concentrate specialist teachers on examination classes has lowered standards from Year 7 onwards. Pupils cannot draw. Too many pupils say, "I can't draw!" Most drawing is inaccurate and seen as another way of making a picture rather than a method of gathering information. Sketchbooks are not used for development work, experimentation or to investigate composition. There is insufficient use of computers, sculpture, collage or printmaking in the pupils' work and an unhealthy reliance on imagery taken from magazines and the Internet. Pupils lack sufficient knowledge to allow them to relate their

work to that of famous artists or discuss artwork in any critical way. There is limited annotation in sketchbooks and where it does exist it is insufficiently evaluative. Pupils with special educational needs also make unsatisfactory progress, due to weaknesses in basic art and design skills. Higher attaining pupils make satisfactory progress and expected numbers gained higher grades in the GCSE examination.

95. Teaching and learning in art are unsatisfactory. Basic skills are not well taught, preventing independent learning or innovation in pupils' work. Pupils rely too much on their teachers for direction, thus removing any feeling of discovery. Development work does not figure well enough and work displayed in the department is entirely highly finished. No reference is made to the local culture or the spectacular landscape seen from the art room windows. The lack of challenge in lessons does not demand concentration and pupils soon engage in low-level disruption, interfering with the learning of others. The national strategy for teaching Years 7 to 9 does not feature and opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own and their classmates' achievements are missed. Despite the teachers' absence, good pupil teacher relationships are apparent although it is clear that expectations are too low.
96. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. Subject documentation lacks measures to raise standards. There is insufficient use of ICT. Assessment procedures do not follow the school's preferred methods and pupils do not know how well they are doing relative to national standards. Assessment does not strengthen weaknesses in the narrow curriculum. The accommodation is unsatisfactory and one area is too small while both areas suffer noise pollution from each other. The closure of the kiln room due to the presence of asbestos further limits opportunities.
97. The department has made unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Standards have fallen and achievement is now unsatisfactory. Leadership, management, teaching and learning have all deteriorated and are now unsatisfactory.

Music

The provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE students achieve well.
- The teaching and learning of pupils in Years 7 to 9 needs greater consistency and progression.
- The use of ICT requires development.
- Pupil-teacher relationships are good.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory.
- The brass band performs at a very high standard, and reaches out into the community.

Commentary

98. By the end of Year 9, standards are broadly average. Given the varied quality of musical experience of pupils entering the school, this represents satisfactory achievement. Although the numbers of pupils opting for the subject at GCSE are small, they achieve well. The most recent GCSE results indicate standards which are above average, and current standards in Year 11 are the same. All pupils have access to the music curriculum with boys and girls responding and achieving equally well overall. The recently revised schemes of work are broadly in line with National Curriculum requirements, though work involving ICT is under developed at all levels.
99. The standard of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 10 and 11. Positive pupil/teacher relationships are a notable feature of lessons and behaviour is good. Teaching is at its best in examination classes where pupils make significant gains in subject knowledge. Where lessons are less successful, with younger pupils, it is because there is

some lack of pace and insufficient variety of work. Learning objectives are not always clear and successfully achieved. Some restructuring of lessons could be made to permit the regular on-going development of subject knowledge and skills. This would help achieve greater consolidation and progression in areas of learning such as singing and the use of musical notation. This approach to the development of curriculum strands could also allow more opportunities for listening, particularly to music from the western classical tradition and that of the British Isles.

100. There has been a satisfactory improvement in music provision. Leadership and management of the department are positive and committed and satisfactory overall. The stock of classroom instruments has been increased and curriculum planning has started to move forward. The problem of accommodation remains and continues to impede the quality of pupils' education in music. Some teaching takes place in non-specialist rooms; there is insufficient storage space and no adequate practice rooms.
101. The extra-curricular music making is an important aspect of the department's work and extends out into the community. The brass band has a long and distinguished history in the school and continues to perform at a very high standard. It is maintaining an important tradition and is a justifiable source of pride to all concerned. Choral work and the provision of other instrumental ensembles should now also be developed on a regular basis.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching with high levels of challenge promotes good achievement by pupils.
- The good climate for learning promotes very good attitudes in pupils.
- Completion of risk assessments for all activities is needed to ensure safe practice in the face of potential hazards created by poor accommodation.
- Leadership and management are strong - the highly committed team work tirelessly, against a backdrop of poor accommodation, to raise standards further.
- This poor accommodation is hindering the development of an otherwise balanced curriculum.

Commentary

102. Teacher assessment of Year 9 pupils in 2003 stated that standards in physical education were below the national average. Evidence from the inspection shows that current standards are broadly average, although there is variation between year groups. By the end of Year 9, the vast majority are applying skills with accuracy, precision and control whilst developing technical and tactical expertise.
103. The accurate application of skill and the pupils' developing understanding and knowledge of different sports is transferred into Years 10 and 11. Standards in statutory physical education lessons match national expectations, as they also do in GCSE lessons. In 2003, the results were average and 55 per cent of pupils gained an A*-C grade pass. The trend based on sound evidence is for improved examination success. Pupils link theory to practice well.
104. Throughout Years 7 to 11, all pupils achieve well and develop a good knowledge and understanding of how different types of exercise can contribute to their fitness and health. All pupils are confident in performing warm up and cool down exercises and develop a sound knowledge of how body parts work.
105. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The department has established a good climate for learning despite poor accommodation. It promotes pupils' good progress and success. Very good subject knowledge, high expectation and challenge and very good encouragement and engagement of pupils underpins all teaching and learning. Some very

good teaching was observed. The department adopts teaching and learning styles appropriate to pupils' levels of attainment. Pupils are encouraged through appropriately challenging tasks to reach high levels of attainment. Teachers' relationships with pupils are very good which produces lessons of high productivity and very high levels of engagement and enjoyment. Only when class management is less than good do a few pupils come off task. The vast majority of pupils display very good attitudes and behaviour in physical education.

106. Assessment procedures are good. Pupils are developing a good knowledge of National Curriculum levels and, with teacher assistance, are setting themselves targets to improve their performance and understanding of physical activity. In examination courses there is good use of ICT. The department offers a good range of curriculum activities, which enhances pupils' opportunities for participation in sport. A number of pupils go on to gain local, regional and national honours. Teachers give generously of their time to provide these opportunities.
107. Poor facilities restrict the curriculum. The small, inadequate, uneven, hard play areas and the playing fields, which are difficult to access, are in very poor condition. This situation has not improved since the last two inspections. The gymnasium is old, worn and tired. The poor facilities are restricting the quality and range of standards achieved and are potentially dangerous in inclement weather.
108. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The teachers form a committed team who have high aspirations for their pupils and are determined to raise standards. Improvement since the last inspection is good (except in respect of the accommodation which is out of the school's control). The department has resolved issues from the last report, maintained the average standards and demonstrated the capacity to improve further.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

109. There are no business courses. The main vocational courses are the applied ICT course, the leisure and tourism course (which was not inspected) and the small scale placements at a local college.
110. Achievement for pupils taking applied ICT courses in Years 10 and 11 is good, reflecting the good teaching and learning in the lessons seen. In the 2003 GNVQ assessments, pupils attained above the national average proportion of pass or higher grades in ICT. The current Year 10 group taking the full Intermediate GNVQ in ICT is attaining standards that are broadly average for this course. All pupils respond well to the challenging tasks demanded by the coursework and they have secure knowledge of ICT systems and applications.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education is **good**.

111. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is taught in all years for one lesson each fortnight. The teaching, learning and achievement seen (in at least one lesson in every year group) was never less than satisfactory and over half of it was good, occasionally very good and excellent. The school utilises well the skills and expertise of a wide range of outside agencies to complement the work in lessons. Many visiting speakers are specialists in their field. Students have the confidence to participate fully in discussions and enjoy the lessons. All the staff involved are well informed and enthusiastic and the delivery of PHSE represents very good teamwork. All the necessary policies are in place regarding sex and drugs education as well as a wealth of other valuable and interesting topics. Schemes of work are very well planned. The school is ready to be assessed for the Healthy Schools Award.

Citizenship

Provision for citizenship is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planned citizenship themes are well integrated across the curriculum.
- Pupils are eagerly involved in active citizenship.
- The School Council, a good example of citizenship in action, has a high profile and the pupils are proud of their achievements so far.
- Leadership is good.
- Assessment procedures are not consistent enough.

Commentary

112. Standards match expectations and achievement is satisfactory for all pupils in Years 7 to 11. Units of citizenship are taught throughout the humanities subjects and in ICT lessons in Years 7 to 9. The three strands of citizenship are effectively covered within the curriculum. Pupils have completed good work on both the local and global community. Their designs for a tourist leaflet for Mossley show evidence of significant levels of research. Their understanding of the impact of war and poverty on some global communities has been fostered through their study of the work of the United Nations and Fair Trade.
113. In Year 10, citizenship is taught as a separate subject and this will extend into Year 11 in the next academic year. In Year 10, pupils have good knowledge and understanding of consumer rights, especially with reference to buying goods on the Internet and the effects of crime, including football hooliganism, in the local and wider community. Notes in their books in preparation for speeches are good, as is their assessment work on dealing with car crime. In lessons, Year 10 pupils were articulate and positive in a debate on the law, able to justify their views effectively. Currently, citizenship is taught within the personal, social and health education programme in Year 11. Pupils have completed units on responsible driving and crime in the community. Their work shows a clear understanding of citizens' rights and responsibilities.
114. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and some of is good. Lessons are planned thoroughly using a good range of resources. Interesting and creative strategies are used to fire pupils' imagination and encourage active participation in lessons. The pupils' response is good and many say that they enjoy citizenship. Opportunities are provided for pupils to work together and become more involved in local and national issues. Assessment is thorough but inconsistent because teachers are using two different methods of marking and assessment. It is not always clear to pupils how they can improve their work.
115. The School Council is well established. There are form and year representatives and pupil representatives on the governing body, all voted for democratically. Pupils have participated in the Youth Parliament session held at a local college. The ECO group is organised by a number of deeply committed pupils. It has achieved much in raising the awareness of pupils about their local environment. Through their efforts the school is a recycling centre and pupils raise funds through the collection of waste paper. Their current project involves trying to gain sponsorship for creating a school garden.
116. Leadership is good since the department has come a long way in a short time. Management is satisfactory but assessment has yet to be securely developed in the units taught in tutor time. The present subject co-ordinator has only been in post since September 2003 but has made significant progress in strengthening provision for citizenship and ensuring that assessment and reporting procedures are in place. In addition to the topics taught in lessons, he provides each form with a citizenship discussion topic for the week. These debates are co-ordinated by form tutors in two of the weekly form time sessions. Recent topical discussions have focused on voting by text message, racism and healthy diets. Many visitors, including the local Member of Parliament and councillors come into school to meet pupils and talk with them. The department is securely established and has the capacity to improve further.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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