

INSPECTION REPORT

LITCHAM HIGH SCHOOL

King's Lynn

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 121168

Headteacher: Mr James Neale

Lead inspector: Carmen Markham

Dates of inspection: 28th February to 3rd March 2005

Inspection number: 268411

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 students: 11 to 16 years
Gender of students: Mixed
Number on roll: 550

School address: Church Street
Litcham
King's Lynn
Norfolk
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Appropriate authority: Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors: Reverend Canon Brian Cole

Date of previous inspection: 19th April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Litcham High School is a small, mixed 11 to 16 community comprehensive school serving a very rural area east of King's Lynn in Norfolk. Although few students are entitled to claim for free school meals, the level of social deprivation in this area is broadly in line with the national average. There are no students with English as an additional language in the school but there is an above average number of students with special educational needs.

The school has specialist science status and admits students who have attained standards similar to the national average in Year 7. It is a very popular and oversubscribed school as it has a reputation for high standards and student care. The school has been recognised nationally as a high achieving school and has received a national award for its contribution to family learning. It was also awarded Investors in People and Sportsmark in 2003. The school serves the local community by offering a large range of services and activities to a local population who live a long way from more urban areas where similar facilities would usually be found. In turn, this community is very proud and supportive of the work of the school. The school has been awarded a Schools Extra Award for its out-of-hours provision.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1959 9	Carmen Markham	<i>Lead inspector</i>	
9472	John Edmond	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
2798 3	Mary Sewell	<i>Team inspector</i>	English, drama
1067 9	Mike Aston	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics
6432	Mick Sewter	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science
2060 9	Carol Worthington	<i>Team inspector</i>	Information and communication technology
2402 6	Celia Holland	<i>Team inspector</i>	Music
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4474	Ian Punter	<i>Team inspector</i>	Art and design, design and technology
2488 7	Yvonne Salmons	<i>Team inspector</i>	Modern foreign languages
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1500 3	Mike Smith	<i>Team inspector</i>	Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Litcham High School is a very effective and inclusive school where the achievement of students is outstanding. Under the excellent leadership of its headteacher it achieves standards that are well above the national average, and the quality of its provision is enhanced by excellent links with the local community. The school provides excellent value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The very good leadership by the senior leadership team and key staff.
- The benefit to students of the thorough individual monitoring of their progress and the excellent support, advice and guidance provided for them.
- The excellent punctuality of students and their very good attitudes to learning, attendance and behaviour, which are the result of excellent relationships and very good teaching.
- The very good provision for students with special educational needs (SEN).
- Very good curriculum enrichment through opportunities outside lessons.
- Excellent links with other schools and colleges, and very good links with parents.
- Financial constraints which limit the effectiveness of school management and the curriculum.
- Unsatisfactory provision for citizenship, insufficient time for religious education for some students in Years 10 and 11, and the absence of a daily act of collective worship.

Change in effectiveness since the previous inspection

The school has made very good progress since the previous inspection. The accommodation has significantly improved. A policy for mathematics across the curriculum is in place and is used effectively by staff. Students' literacy skills are now good, and students also receive their entitlement to information and communication technology (ICT) in Years 10 and 11. However, although increased time has been provided for religious education for all those students in Years 10 and 11 who do not follow the GCSE course, there is still not enough time for all aspects of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education to be taught. Despite this, students achieve well. Increased provision has also been made for the daily act of collective worship, though requirements are still not fully met. Standards have been rising faster than the national average, as the school has been very successful in its strategies to improve standards, teaching and learning. In the 2004 GCSE examinations, boys outperformed girls for the first time, following the introduction of strategies to improve the achievement of boys. Increasingly good use has been made of data to track students' progress and to identify personal targets. Specialist science college status has had a significant impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Since the previous inspection, very successful work has been carried out to develop links with the community.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Standards achieved at the end of Years 9 and 11 are well above the national average. They are consistently ahead of the national trend and are very high in comparison to those of similar schools. Students' **achievement overall is excellent** in relation to the standards they had attained on entry to the school. This has been recognised by Norfolk Local Education Authority and the Specialist Schools Trust. Students with SEN achieve very well, as the provision for them is very good.

Standards in Years 7 to 9 are well above the national average in English, mathematics and science, and high in comparison to the standards attained by students in similar schools. Achievement is good or very good in almost all subjects, and excellent in science and modern foreign languages. In Years 10 and 11 standards are also well above the national average in English, science, mathematics and most other subjects. In 2004, 20 per cent of all GCSE entries attained A* or A grades, which is very high compared to the national average.

Year 11 results

Performance in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
	A	A	A	A*

Key: A – very high; 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.

Students’ personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. They have very good attitudes to their learning. Punctuality is excellent, attendance is very good, and students behave very well. They are very responsible and care for each other and for their environment.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is very good. Students are very well cared for, and they receive excellent advice and guidance. **The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is very good.** There are very good partnerships with parents, and excellent links with the community and other schools and colleges. The curriculum is satisfactory, and provision for enrichment activities is very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is very well led and managed. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. He and his staff have a clear vision for the school, based on the belief that everyone can achieve given high expectations and good teaching, support and guidance. They are well supported by the very good senior leadership team and very good governors. The management of the school is good and successfully puts into practice a range of initiatives to maintain high standards. Governors have not ensured that all statutory requirements are fully met as the act of collective worship does not take place daily.

PARENTS’ AND STUDENTS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about every aspect of the school. They recognise the hard work of all staff and the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, which provides an excellent climate for learning. They value the high expectations of the school and the opportunities the school provides for students to develop academically and socially. Students enjoy school and feel that they are listened to and cared for. They are very proud of the school’s achievements.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue to explore strategies to ensure that the workload of school managers is more manageable and in line with the requirements for work force remodelling.
- Review and develop the provision for citizenship throughout the school.
- Consider more effective ways of providing for religious education in Years 10 and 11.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Provide a daily act of collective worship for all students.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are well above average at the end of Years 9 and 11 in relation to the national average point scores. Standards are very high at the end of Years 9 and 11 in comparison with those of schools whose students achieved similar results at the end of Year 6. Students' achievement from the end of Year 6 to the end of Year 11 is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards attained in national tests are well above average at the end of Years 9 and 11. They remain consistently well ahead of the national trend.
- Overall, the achievement of students throughout the school is excellent.
- Students with SEN make very good progress.
- In 2004, 20 per cent of all GCSE entries were graded A* or A; this is a strength.
- There is little difference between the overall performance of boys and girls in Years 7 to 9 or in Years 10 and 11.

Commentary

1. Standards are rising twice as fast as the national trend and are well above average in comparison to the national average and very high in relation to standards achieved by similar schools. The school consistently meets or exceeds the ambitious targets that it sets itself for the end of Years 9 and 11. Students make exceptionally good progress, and this has been recognised by Norfolk Local Education Authority and the Specialist Schools Trust. The school falls into the top five per cent of all schools nationally in relation to students' achievement.

Key Stage 3 (Years 7 to 9)

2. Standards in Years 7 to 9 are well above the national average in English, mathematics and science, and high in comparison to the standards attained by students in similar schools. Standards are satisfactory in ICT, but this indicates good achievement as students enter the school with below average standards. Achievement is excellent in modern foreign languages and science, and very good in English, mathematics, geography, physical education and religious education. It is good in design and technology and history. Achievement is satisfactory in music and art and design. The published value added scores demonstrate that in English, mathematics and science the achievement of students, in relation to prior performance, is consistently excellent.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 9 – average point scores in 2004 (unvalidated)

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	36.2 (35.9)	33.5 (33.4)
mathematics	37.9 (36.8)	35.7 (35.4)
science	36.7 (37.2)	33.2 (33.6)

There were 116 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year. Validated data for 2004 were not available at the time of the inspection.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11)

3. Since 2000 there has been a steady and dramatic rise in standards in GCSE. Results in 2004 showed the steepest rise, and boys outperformed girls for the first time, following initiatives taken by the school to improve the performance of boys. In 2004, students in Years 10 and 11 attained standards that are well above average in science, design and technology, English literature, French, geography, physical education and religious education. Standards were above average in English, mathematics and below average in history. However, the history students achieved very well in relation to their ability. Evidence from the inspection indicates that standards in mathematics and English are currently high. Overall, students' achievement by the end of Year 11 in relation to prior attainment is excellent. In 2004, 20 per cent of all GCSE entries attained A* or A grades, which is very high compared to the national average and is an indication that gifted students are achieving well, although during some lessons they appeared to require more challenge. All students with SEN achieve very well, as the provision for them is very good. In 2004, all students achieved at least one GCSE pass grade, and 99 per cent achieved five or more pass grades, including English and mathematics. These results are an indication of the school's successful inclusion policies and provision for SEN.

Standards in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11 in 2004 (unvalidated)

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	79 (65)	52 (52)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	99 (97)	89 (91)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	100 (98)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	41.9 (39.6)	34.9 (34.7)

There were 100 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year. Validated data for 2004 were not available at the time of the inspection.

Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is very good and punctuality is excellent. Students' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance is now well above the national average, and unauthorised absence is minimal.
- Students' punctuality is excellent and lessons start on time.
- Attitudes and behaviour are very good and relationships throughout the school are excellent.
- Exclusions are low.
- Students accept very willingly the many opportunities offered to take on extra responsibility.
- Students' overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.1%	School data	0.1%
National data	6.9%	National data	1.1%

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

4. There was minimal unauthorised absence. During the current academic year attendance has improved further from 92.8 per cent to 93.6 per cent. So far this year, students have been late for only 0.5 per cent of sessions. The measures in force to promote good attendance are excellent, and parents are very assiduous in ensuring that their children attend regularly and on time.

5. Attitudes and behaviour in the classroom and round the school are very good. In two out of every three lessons seen they were excellent or very good, and good in a further quarter. No unsatisfactory behaviour was noted in lessons. There were only 11 fixed period exclusions last year, and no students have been excluded permanently for about ten years.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of students

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of students on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	522	11	0
White – Irish	4	0	0
White – any other White background	12	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	5	0	0

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

6. The school's high expectations of students in all areas, together with very good teaching and a friendly atmosphere, stimulate in students a real desire to learn and to take a deep interest in school life and its activities. The measures in force to deal with untoward behaviour also ensure that students are as nearly as possible free from bullying or racial harassment. As a result, relationships throughout the school are exceptionally good and students are confident in their own abilities. In their questionnaires students showed some concerns over the standards of behaviour and levels of bullying. However, subsequent interviews with students, and inspectors' own observations, indicated that this concern was exaggerated. Students interviewed were articulate and confident and were very positive about their life at school.

7. Even though the school does not fully meet statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship or have a formal policy for students' spiritual development, it nevertheless makes very good provision. Individual assemblies are carefully planned and contain moments of spiritual uplift, and there are some opportunities for reflection in lessons. Staff successfully encourage self-knowledge in their charges.

8. Moral teaching is firmly in place and the school consistently applies the values and aspirations set out in the prospectus. Students are encouraged to reflect on moral issues. The difference between right and wrong and the importance of respecting other people's feelings, values and beliefs are made absolutely clear. Students do not betray the school's trust in them. They are allowed indoors during the lunch hour and can leave their school bags outside classrooms in complete safety. They respect property; there is no sign of graffiti, and the twice-daily litter-pick yields a very small crop. The school nurtures students' social development with great success, in lessons, at break-time, and by the fine examples set by staff. This is a highly civilised, thoughtful community, with students actively supporting those less fortunate than themselves.

9. Overall, cultural development is strong, with many visits to places of interest and visitors who develop students' appreciation of the outside world. While the school makes good provision for students' multicultural development, it recognises that there is still room for further progress in this area.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is very good, as the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is very good. New technology is used very effectively to motivate students and to improve learning. The

quality of the curriculum for students in Years 10 and 11 is limited by the lack of variety of both vocational courses and well-developed courses for all students in religious education and citizenship. On the other hand, the curriculum for students in Years 7 to 9 is good, and provision for enrichment activities is very good. There are also several outstanding features which contribute to the very good quality of education. Students are very well cared for and they receive excellent advice and guidance. There are very good partnerships with parents, and excellent links to the community and to other schools and colleges.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching, learning and assessment is very good. The quality of teaching is significantly stronger in Years 10 and 11, where it was judged to be very good, than in Years 7 to 9, where it was judged to be good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection.
- High expectations of all students and the very positive climate for learning, where all students believe that they can achieve.
- Skilled teaching that makes very good use of resources available, including the interactive whiteboards.
- Very supportive and detailed marking in most subjects.
- Students' understanding of the standards they are achieving and what they need to do to improve.
- High quality tracking of students' progress, with very good interventions to support identified needs.
- The significant impact of science college status on the quality of teaching throughout the school.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 112 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
7 (6%)	47 (42 %)	36 (32 %)	20 (18 %)	2 (2%)	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.

10. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection, which reported good quality teaching throughout the school. The quality of teaching is stronger for students in Years 10 and 11 than for students in Years 7 to 9, but in both groups the percentage of very good lessons has almost doubled. The percentage of lessons that are good or better increased by 30 per cent for the younger students and 38 per cent for the older students. In lessons observed, 80 per cent of teaching was good or better and 48 per cent was very good or excellent. This reflects the school's focus on improving teaching and learning and the rising standards that have been achieved.

11. Overall, teaching is judged to be very good in science, geography, history, modern foreign languages, physical education, religious education and personal, social and health education (PSHE). It is good in English, mathematics, ICT, and music. In citizenship, art and design, and design and technology, teaching is satisfactory.

12. All teachers are specialists in the subjects they teach, with the exception of PSHE, which is taught by form tutors. This specialism provides teachers with the skills and confidence to be effective teachers. They develop very good relationships with their students and have very high expectations in terms of achievement and behaviour. Overall, the grouping of students is a benefit to teaching and learning, although in Years 8 and 9 setting is not as effective in design and technology, as students are not set in relation to their ability in the subject but in relation to their ability in modern foreign languages. In the majority of lessons teachers do ensure that the level of work meets the needs of the students, but there are some instances where classes are very large, with insufficient support staff, and a small minority of students struggle to make the expected progress. Additional support in lessons from learning support assistants generally ensures that students with SEN have good access to all the curriculum and that their learning is in line with, and similar to, that of their classmates. The quality of teaching in withdrawal lessons by learning support staff is generally very good, and it ensures that students make rapid progress in their learning and understanding as well as in their general confidence.

13. Students with gifts and talents are usually stretched by setting arrangements and teachers' high expectations. These expectations are reflected in the very ambitious annual targets that the school sets and usually exceeds. This accounts for the high proportion of A*/A grades achieved by students at GCSE. However, inspectors in mathematics, art and design, design and technology, geography and ICT report some lack of challenge for gifted students in the lessons seen in these subjects. Nevertheless, this is not reflected in GCSE results, except in mathematics, where the proportion of A*/A grades is 11 per cent, well below the school average of 20 per cent but above the national average of seven per cent.

14. A range of strategies and initiatives has clearly made a very good contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. The Key Stage 3 strategy, designed to improve teaching skills and the structure of lessons for students in Year 7 to 9, has achieved its stated aims and the new skills have been transferred to Years 10 and 11. The additional resources, skills and experiences of science college status have also improved teaching. In particular, the additional technical resources have made teaching more effective and have motivated students to take a more active part in learning. Boys have particularly benefited from the increasing use of technology in teaching and their performance is now matching that of girls.

15. A very significant reason for the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning relates to the very good use of assessment within the school. Data on the performance of each student is collected and analysed for information relating to progress. The outcomes of the analysis are used to identify students for additional help and intervention and to set targets in all subjects. The progress of all students is regularly reviewed against their targets, and parents are kept informed of concerns. All students understand how well they are achieving and what they need to do to improve. They are very well motivated and are beginning to understand how their work is marked and assessed, as they are being given opportunities to assess their own work in order to enable them to be critical of their own performance. In almost all subjects students' work is supported by detailed marking. There are some areas of inconsistency but, overall, the quality of marking is very good.

The curriculum

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum for its students. There is a very good range of opportunities for enrichment outside lessons. Accommodation and resources are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The needs of the curriculum are met by very good staffing arrangements.
- The very good provision of interactive whiteboards is contributing to students' motivation and successful learning.
- The school provides few vocational courses for students in Years 10 and 11.
- Students benefit from a wide range of enrichment activities.
- Provision for students with SEN is very good.
- Provision for citizenship is unsatisfactory.
- The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 does not provide sufficient time for the statutory course in religious education.
- Poor accommodation in physical education limits students' learning opportunities.

Commentary

16. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum for its students. Provision is good in Years 7 to 9 and satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. In Years 7 to 9 there is sufficient curriculum time to enable all National Curriculum subjects, religious education and PSHE to be taught. The requirements for ICT and citizenship in Years 7 to 9 are fully met. In modern foreign languages half of all students study a second foreign language in Years 8 and 9.

17. In Years 10 and 11 curricular constraints arise because of the small size of the school. In spite of this the school offers many benefits for its students, for example an 'open choice' option system which enables them to choose freely subjects which interest them. There is a successful Spanish course for low attaining students. Additionally, all students take the double science award at GCSE, and physical education offers a strong emphasis on games. However, in Years 10 and 11 provision for citizenship, for all students, and religious education, for some students, is limited because of insufficient time within the weekly PSHE programme.

18. The provision for vocational subjects in Years 10 and 11 is limited, although there are plans to address this. Students are well prepared for their next stage of education and employment. There is a very good two-week programme of work experience in Year 10, and the careers programme within the PSHE course includes a wide range of visiting speakers, for example the police, armed services and local business. Additionally, students can obtain personal careers guidance once a week from a visiting specialist, and from a series of further education information evenings.

19. Students requiring learning support have access to the full curriculum where appropriate. The access is supported and enhanced by learning support assistants, who are well deployed across the curriculum. Students with behavioural and/or social needs are managed sensitively, have appropriate targets, and are carefully monitored to demonstrate improvement. Subject areas, along with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and learning support department, plan their curriculum to accommodate the needs of all students. Additional support opportunities, such as the reading club and homework club, enable students to have high quality tuition in small groups, and these further enhance their general progress and achievement. Dedicated learning support assistants enable students with severe learning needs to learn alongside other students. They enable all other students with SEN to achieve as well as others, with the exception of some students in the large low ability groups in mathematics and modern foreign languages, where there is inadequate provision.

20. Students benefit from a comprehensive programme of extra-curricular activities and enrichment opportunities which contributes substantially to their very good personal and social development. Apart from homework and coursework clubs in many subjects, there is a wide range of social, sporting and enrichment activities. These include visits to art galleries and local theatre companies, successful participation in the Norfolk geography quiz, a school band and musical events, and visits abroad. Visiting speakers increase students' awareness of community services and businesses, and of other cultures, for example the visit of a black street poet.

21. Staffing is very good and meets the demands of the curriculum, with the exception of citizenship, where the large number of teachers involved makes subject monitoring difficult, and of ICT, where the head of department is a science specialist. Provision and quality of support staff is good. Laboratory technicians provide excellent support for students and staff in science; technical support contributes effectively to students' learning in design and technology and art and design.

22. Accommodation has improved significantly since the previous inspection. as a result of a major building programme. and it is now satisfactory. The school has also benefited from specialist science college funding, which has provided enhanced computing facilities, some new and refurbished accommodation in music and science, and disabled access. However, in physical

education, the hardcore games area is unsatisfactory; it requires resurfacing and currently severely limits students' sports and games opportunities. Additionally, there is no sports hall; this limits students' achievement, particularly in gymnastics. In music there are not enough practice rooms for small group activities, and the drama room is too small.

23. Learning resources are good overall. An important innovation in all curriculum areas, which has had a beneficial influence on teaching and learning, is the provision of interactive whiteboards in most classrooms. These are provided through funding for the science status of the school and contribute substantially to students' achievement. Provision of computers is good, but the lack of music technology limits students' composing skills. However, most subjects are well resourced and the library is well stocked.

24. Since the previous inspection, issues relating to ICT and mathematics across the curriculum have been addressed effectively. More time has been found for statutory religious education in Years 10 and 11, but this is still not sufficient to meet all the requirements of the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus.

Care, guidance and support

The school cares for its students exceptionally well and ensures their health and safety. It provides outstanding levels of support, advice and guidance which are firmly based on the monitoring of personal progress. The school consults students and acts on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child protection measures are properly in place, and the school has close and very effective relations with outside agencies.
- The school is clean and maintains high standards of health and safety.
- Staff provide outstanding care and exceptionally well informed support, advice and guidance to all students.
- The arrangements for inducting students into Year 7 are outstanding, and the needs of vulnerable students are identified well before they join the school.
- The school is very good at consulting students through the school council and acts on their suggestions.
- New requirements have not yet been met in respect of the monitoring of the work of the child protection officer by the child protection governor.

Commentary

25. All proper child protection practices are in place and records are up to date; new staff are trained on arrival. However, the appointed child protection governor has not been trained and does not yet monitor the work of the child protection officer; nor is there a specific written commitment to child protection in the prospectus. Students and staff work in a clean, litter-free environment which is healthy and safe. The school has very good systems for maintaining and reviewing health and safety practices, and staff are trained; the governing body is actively involved. All known risks have been properly assessed and are reviewed at least annually. Medical arrangements are appropriate. Testing of all equipment is regular and up to date, and fire drills are carried out at least once a term. Access to the internet is strictly controlled. The layout of the school entrances is not ideal for separating vehicles and pedestrians but, to minimise risk, the arrival and departure of students are well supervised. The school is taking action on one or two minor health and safety deficiencies noted during the inspection.

26. Students are exceptionally highly valued, whatever their background. The student questionnaires indicated some negative perceptions of how they are treated by staff. Again these proved exaggerated: students consulted by the inspectors agreed that teachers treat them fairly. Students and parents are very pleased with the induction arrangements, which

include family interviews and excellent documentation. Students feel quite at home on arrival at the school and are really looking forward to the change. There are many ways in which the school promotes students' personal development, and students know they have first class access to support and guidance, based on close monitoring of their progress. This results in happy students. The school has introduced excellent measures to help under-performers, the vulnerable and those who have difficulty in conforming.

27. Staff all know their charges exceptionally well, and the pastoral structure ensures there is always at least one member, often several, with whom students feel they can develop a thoroughly trusting relationship. Older students take their responsibilities seriously: the mentoring arrangements enable them to help staff to run the school and support younger students, including those in the main feeder primaries; older students help supervise bus and lunch queues and organise charity work.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with other schools and the local community are excellent; those with parents are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are kept well informed about the school's activities and their children's progress.
- The school is very good at seeking and acting on parents' views.
- An overwhelming majority of parental response to the questionnaire was extremely positive.
- The contribution of parents to promote students' learning is very good.
- Links with the local community are extensive, varied and very valuable, both to students and to the community.
- The school plays a leading part in the outstandingly successful cluster group of local schools.

Commentary

28. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are comprehensive and well produced and meet statutory requirements. The induction documentation for parents of new students is also of very high quality. Parents really appreciate the bright, informative weekly newsletter, but do not receive an outline of each term's or year's curriculum. The annual reports on students meet statutory requirement but do not set out in sufficient detail what students know, can do and understand. The two interim reports, however, are very helpful in keeping parents abreast of their child's effort and attainment during the year. The school's internet website is still not yet complete.

29. The school makes its expectations of parents clear right from the start of their child's time at the school, and parents respond very positively, in particular in attending formal and social meetings and supporting sports fixtures. Parents contribute very well to their children's learning at school and at home and most keep a close eye on progress through the homework planner. A very active Parents', Friends' and Teachers' Association arranges several social and fund-raising events for the benefit of students. The school consults parents as a whole every two years. Appropriate staff are available for consultation with individual parents at short notice. Parents really appreciate what the school does for their child. As a result, complaints are minimal, and the school has a very effective system for dealing with them, if they do occur.

30. Links with the community are very strong. The school works closely with professionals in the local education authority (LEA) and with the community, and uses them most effectively as critical friends. Students gain substantially from the school's wide range of cultural, artistic and sporting connections and from taking part in local debates and competitions. The school encourages students to give of themselves through support for individual Third World students and local charity work. There are useful links with local industry and commerce.

31. The school has exceptionally close relations with the other schools and colleges in the area and plays a leading part in the outstandingly successful cluster group of local schools, notably in developing joint arrangements for curricular development in science and sports. Transfer arrangements for students moving on to further education are highly effective. All institutions in this phase are keen to receive positive and well-qualified Litcham students. The headteacher and other staff are involved in some excellent developmental work with other schools and provide extensive training and support for many schools throughout the county.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher's leadership of the school is excellent. He is supported by a very good leadership team and very good governors. The management of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governors and other key staff, led by the headteacher, have a clarity of vision, sense of purpose and commitment to inclusion, high standards and student care, all effectively shared with all members of staff.
- The vision, and the very good development of the vision, has produced the excellent climate for learning.
- The governors and the school leadership team know the school's strengths and areas for development, so the school's strategic planning is very good and is closely linked to departmental planning.
- The school's approach to financial management and best value principles is excellent.
- Management systems and structures are good and work effectively, but financial constraints place a very heavy workload on school managers, which is difficult for them to sustain.
- Governors have not ensured that the statutory requirements for collective worship are fully met.

Commentary

32. The headteacher is an inspirational leader who has a powerful vision for the school which he shares with all. It is a vision which is continually being reinforced through word, example and action. His work has created a much improved school which continues to improve, and his expertise is sought by other schools in the area. He delegates very effectively but remains fully involved in every aspect of school life. He is therefore highly respected by staff, parents and students. His energy and hard work mean that teachers have more time to concentrate on the quality of their teaching, and this is raising standards.

33. The leadership team is very effective, as it is dedicated to ensuring the highest possible standards and achievement in all areas of the school's work. It regularly monitors and evaluates its performance and responds to the findings. This includes the monitoring of the impact of all initiatives like the introduction of interactive whiteboards, the careful monitoring of the progress of all students, and the monitoring of students' and the parents' views of the school. Systems are in place to ensure that all departmental meetings are recorded and monitored. There is a high level of consistency across the school.

34. The governors have an active role in the life of the school and there is a very good working relationship between the headteacher and the chair of governors. Governors have a very good knowledge of the school. All governors have good links to subject departments; their knowledge and understanding of school performance data is very good, and they use the knowledge to ask questions and influence school improvement strategies. They have a very good understanding of the budget and how to ensure that they achieve best value. They use local commercial networks very successfully in this respect. The

governors are keen to improve and have recently evaluated their performance as governors. Since the previous inspection the governors have increased the time available for religious education for students in Years 10 and 11 and have increased the number of acts of collective worship in the week. However, there is not a daily act of collective worship. In this context statutory requirements are not fully met. However, the team considers that the governors have done their best to address the requirements, given constraints of accommodation.

35. The management of the school is good, with some very good features. There is a clear focus on raising standards, and managers are fully committed to enabling the school to fulfil its vision and strategic objectives. There is a consistent and non-bureaucratic approach to school management, and the school is run effectively. However, financial constraints are reducing the effectiveness of the school management team, as there are insufficient managers to share the heavy workload of a school where the welfare of students and raising standards are at the heart of its work. Financial planning is not sufficiently flexible to cope with initiatives like work force remodelling or with the unexpected. A real strength of school management is the comprehensive and analytical assessment procedures which enable the school to monitor the progress of the school and of individual students. This, linked to effective target setting and action to help meet targets, is a key to the success of the school. The monitoring of the quality of teaching and the curriculum is good, but it is not consistent across the school and relies too heavily on the outcomes of performance management and the belief that in a small school vigilant managers are aware of what happens in classrooms. There is therefore insufficient focus and rigour in some areas like the monitoring of marking and citizenship across the curriculum.

36. The learning support department is very efficiently led and managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), who organises the department to ensure that there is clear communication between staff, parents and students. Learning support assistants are effectively deployed and clearly make a difference to the students' learning where they are used, though there are lower set groups which do not get any learning support. Special educational needs (SEN) documentation meets statutory requirements. There is a named governor who has appropriate experience and knowledge and supports SEN developments. There is clear communication with the SENCO.

37. Arrangements for the professional development of staff and for performance management are very good and are well linked to the school improvement plan. Professional development is not limited by these initiatives and all staff are able to undertake training which they believe will help them to be more effective. The whole-school approach to training for new developments is very effective, as seen in the introduction of the interactive whiteboards that have revolutionised teaching for all teachers. Staff feel cared for and supported, and the turnover of all staff is very low.

38. Financial management is excellent. Finances are expertly managed by the principal administrative officer, who is a member of the senior management team. She carefully costs all proposed initiatives to inform governors and the senior leadership team of the costs. The principles of best value are an essential part of financial arrangements and are used very effectively. Without expert financial management the school would not have been able to achieve all that has been achieved in terms of educational priorities and the development of accommodation. The school provides excellent value for money. The financial constraints faced by the school are related to the high cost of running a small school which qualifies for very little additional funding, and where the funding for each student is a little below the national average.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

<i>Income and expenditure (£)</i>	
Total income	1,933,768.00
Total expenditure	1,914,611.00
Expenditure per pupil	3481.00

<i>Balances (£)</i>	
Balance from previous year	23,876.00
Balance carried forward to the next	43,036.00

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

Community provision

39. The school makes **excellent provision** for the community, which makes extensive use of the premises. A key feature is the active family learning programme, which last year won the national 'Best Family Learning Week-End' certificate. The school is highly involved in providing an adult educational information service and in helping adults, particularly those with a negative experience of school or lacking self-confidence, to acquire additional vocational and other skills. There is a high adult take-up on the courses run for adults.

40. A governor has run a twice-weekly, highly successful youth club in the school for many years. The young persons' centre on site is very well supported. It provides a much appreciated weekly mentoring and advice service to Year 11 leavers and other, older teenagers. There is an oversubscribed further education taster course for Year 9 students to help with option choices. A Youth Service group for these age groups is about to start. The appointment of a part-time school community worker has been fundamental to the development of the school's excellent community provision. She works closely with primary schools to develop home/school partnerships and even runs playgroup computer training, which the little ones really enjoy. She also promotes and provides events which develop the self-esteem of students and of community members.

41. The awarding of the national Schools Extra Award recognises the quality of the school's out-of-hours provision for students and the community.

Work-related learning

42. The school makes **satisfactory provision** for work-related learning. Preparation for the next stage is good. Careers work is good, and links with Connexions are effective. All students are placed before they leave the school and 90 per cent go into extended education or training. The school has very good links with a range of providers of education, training and employment. Students learn well from work through an efficient programme of work experience in Year 10. The school meets the non-statutory minimum requirements of the National Curriculum with regard to work-related learning. However, the provision of vocational education and full engagement with the 14 to 19 curriculum is an area of weakness, because the school offers only one vocational course and has limited providers of vocational education on other sites.

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

The provision for English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership and management give clear direction on raising standards.
- Standards are very good, as a result of good teaching.
- The use of ICT is very good; it motivates and inspires the students.
- The use of assessment to inform planning and students' progress is very good.
- The department does not share good practice across all teaching groups.

Commentary

43. Students enter school with standards which are largely average. They make good progress, and by the end of Year 9 achieve standards in the national tests which are above the national average. The gap between boys and girls has narrowed as a result of a well-structured curriculum and strategies focused on raising boys' aspirations. Results in GCSE English and English literature were above national expectations in 2004. Higher attaining students do better than students in similar schools, with one fifth of all students achieving the highest A* and A grades. Students with SEN are well supported and nearly all obtain a GCSE grade in English language. This represents very good achievement for all students. Current standards are higher. The rise in standards is due to the effective monitoring of individual students' progress against their targets, and extra teaching beyond the school day.

44. Standards in speaking and listening are very good. Students are articulate and animated when discussing their work. They collaborate and negotiate with a high degree of maturity in debates, as seen in the lesson in which they defended their choice of a new statue for Trafalgar Square.

45. Standards in reading are good, largely as a result of the many opportunities to develop reading skills for the hesitant reader. Tutor time is also used to improve students' reading, but this would benefit from closer monitoring to ensure that all students read regularly. Students respond well to media texts and are able to deconstruct visual images, as observed in an excellent lesson on 'Macbeth' where the king's character was sensitively analysed and evaluated.

46. Standards in writing improve rapidly and by Year 9 students manipulate language confidently. Written responses to reading both fiction and non-fiction are good for students of all ages. This is due to structured teaching which shows students how to respond to a text and represent information in a variety of writing styles. This improvement continues as

students are taught examination and redrafting techniques. Higher attaining students in Year 11 are creating imaginative pieces of professional quality.

47. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and some very good and excellent teaching was seen during the inspection. Very good use is made of interactive whiteboards to stimulate and motivate students. Careful planning combined with rigorous and purposeful teaching supports the more successful lessons. In these lessons students understand what it is they are expected to learn and how they will learn it. Assessment of students' work is thorough and provides them with a framework for improvement.

48. The department is very well led and managed. The team of enthusiastic and hardworking teachers has a full understanding of how assessment informs planning for individual students' needs. It is this clear thinking and team approach which enable teachers and students to share in the learning process. Further monitoring of teaching will ensure a coherent approach to the teaching of some units and further development of the very good practice seen on inspection. Improvement since the previous inspection is good. Multicultural texts are taught to all year groups.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. Standards in literacy are good. Speaking and listening skills are very good in English, history, music, science and physical education. In these lessons, high quality discussion enables learning to be consolidated. However, opportunities for discussion in religious education work are limited to students in pairs rather than groups. Standards in spelling and reading have developed as a result of whole-school policies on teaching subject-specific vocabulary. All students have a quiet reading time once per week. Good examples of creative writing were reported in geography, where travel guide leaflets provided an insight into journeys in Italy. Very good examples of writing responses to non-fiction came from English. However, students lack opportunities to practise extended writing in religious education and history.

50. The quality of literacy teaching is good. Structured lessons enable all students to understand exactly what it is they need to learn and how to learn it.

Modern foreign languages

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In 2004, GCSE results in French and German were excellent.
- Lower attaining students make excellent progress in the Year 11 Spanish course.
- BOYS ACHIEVE AS WELL AS GIRLS, AND CONSIDERABLY BETTER THAN BOYS NATIONALLY.
- THE DEPARTMENT SUPPORTS STUDENTS' LITERACY DEVELOPMENT VERY WELL.
- In Years 7 to 9, teachers do not use spoken French sufficiently in lessons.

COMMENTARY

51. In Years 7 to 9 all students study French, and from Year 8 more able students also study German. Standards at the end of Year 9 are above average and students' achievement is very good, especially considering the limited time given to students studying two languages. In French, most students, including the lower attaining students, can read and write confidently; able students can also use the future tense accurately, and have an extensive vocabulary. In German, students make rapid progress; impressively, by the end of Year 9 most have almost reached average standards. In French, teachers' inconsistent use of the foreign language in lessons frequently limits

students' development in fluency and good pronunciation. In both languages, students can readily understand recordings of native speakers using familiar language. All students develop literacy skills very well, because of teachers' clear explanations of how language works. Against national trends, boys achieve as well as girls, and often better.

52. By the end of Year 11, standards in both French and German are high, and students' achievement is excellent in both languages. GCSE results in modern foreign languages in 2004 were excellent and standards seen during the inspection were very good. In both French and German, boys' results were excellent compared with the national expectations for boys. In recent years results have been well above average. By Year 11, students have made substantial progress in writing, reading and listening. Speaking has developed well; for example, in a Year 11 lesson, students used German confidently in unpredictable situations in a restaurant. In both languages, boys speak unselfconsciously; in German they have very good accents. Low attaining students make excellent progress in the beginners' Spanish course.

53. Students have very good attitudes to language learning. Students with SEN achieve well, but provision for these students is no more than satisfactory. Lack of support in the large lower sets limits their learning opportunities.

54. Teaching and learning are very good; two thirds of the teaching seen was very good or excellent. Lessons are meticulously planned and efficiently delivered, ensuring students' maximum progress. Skilled use of interactive whiteboards and other resources motivates all students, especially boys. Colourful displays show students' good use of ICT in writing assignments.

55. Assessment is very good; students record their National Curriculum levels and targets, and detailed marking is highly supportive. Assessment data is well used to inform planning and to support students.

56. Leadership and management are very good. Strong vision and high expectations are fully shared by the expert, committed team. Meticulous organisation maintains high departmental standards. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good, including the impressive rise in GCSE standards from average to excellent. Students' French accents still require improvement.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' achievement is well above the national average at the end of Year 9 and above the national average at the end of Year 11.
- The assessment of students' work, target setting, and individual support are highly effective.
- Students' attitudes to learning are very good.
- The leadership of the mathematics department is very good.
- The breadth of curriculum opportunity for the most able students is limited, particularly in Years 10 and 11.

Commentary

57. On students' entry to the school, attainment is a little lower than the national average. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9, the percentage of students gaining Level 5 or above was higher than the national average in 2003 and increased further when compared with national results in 2004. The trend in these tests over the last five years shows a steady increase. Observation of students' work during the inspection showed that they were achieving very well in their first three years at the school.

58. The GCSE results for 2004 show that the percentage of students gaining grades A* to C has declined slightly when compared to the 2003 results. This small decline began in 2002, when the results peaked after the previous inspection. However, the standards in mathematics at the end of

Year 11 are above the national average. Observation of students' work during the inspection showed that the majority were achieving well in their last two years at the school, but the most able students were not always challenged sufficiently with tasks that matched their ability. There is little difference in the performance of boys and girls in national tests and GCSE.

59. The quality of teaching is generally good, and in some cases very good. At the start of lessons, teachers make it clear what students are expected to learn and, in most cases, check that individual students understand by using a variety of methods. Teachers use a diversity of teaching strategies, and both teachers and students make very effective use of the interactive whiteboards provided in every classroom. Students worked hard in the lessons observed and most of them clearly enjoyed the subject. Behaviour in general is very good and teachers deal firmly and effectively with the rare instances of misbehaviour. Teachers use assessment very well to consider the strengths and weaknesses of students in each area of the subject, and this results in well-focused individual target setting. Students receive sensitive help in lessons from teachers and support staff. Additional help is available outside formal lesson times in revision classes and a homework club. The setting of homework is not consistent and comments on students' work are not always helpful. The provision for students with SEN is marred by the lack of continuity and regularity of support staff, although when present in the classroom they offer a valuable support for students' learning.

60. The leadership in the department is highly effective. The inspiration to share good practice and change methods of teaching has been a strength over the last few years. Leadership in the subject has been recognised as very good by the LEA, and the influence of the head of department has been experienced throughout the school in the development of interactive teaching and learning styles.

61. The management of the department is good, but there are questions about the deployment of staff across the ability range, the reliance on commercial schemes of work, and the co-ordination of programmes of study.

62. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used extremely effectively by teachers and occasionally by individual students in the classroom, but is not yet included in the schemes of work for each year group.

63. The improvement since the previous inspection is good overall, particularly in regard to implementing school-wide mathematics policy and developing a range of teaching and learning methods. There is still not enough formal monitoring of the department's policies and schemes of work.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. The head of department has produced a very good policy which is already having an impact across the school. It contains examples of how mathematics can be used and developed in a wide range of subjects. Evidence was seen during the inspection. In music, for example, students show competency in mathematics by their understanding of time signatures, rhythm and sequences. In geography, students are competent in using map references, drawing graphs and interpreting numerical relationships. There was much evidence of good mathematical skills being used in coursework. In a number of subjects, mathematics appears in the schemes of work used by teachers, all of whom are aware of the school's policy.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Years 9 and 11 are well above the national average.
- Leadership is excellent, and science has a positive and exciting image.
- Students make excellent progress from Year 7 to Year 11.
- Teaching is very good and engages students' interest and enjoyment.
- The implementing of initiatives developed in relation to science college status has led to improved provision in the subject.

Commentary

65. The results of national tests at the end of Year 9 show a pattern of steady improvement, and more than 80 per cent of students gain Level 5 and above. Results are well above the national average, and in comparison with those of schools in a similar context results in 2004 show that students achieve in the top five per cent nationally. Progress from Year 7 to Year 9 is therefore outstanding. Overall, there is no regular or consistent difference in the results of boys and girls, although boys generally do better at the higher grades. Similarly, results in the GCSE double award examinations, now taken by all, are well above the national average and have been maintained over the past six years. Results in 2004 indicate that the proportion of students gaining the highest grades of A* and A was also much better than the national average. Standards seen in lessons are very high and all groups of students, including those with SEN, achieve extremely well.

66. Students in Year 8 quickly develop practical skills, and those in Year 9 show good knowledge and understanding of chemical reactions. Able students in Year 10 work very well together and are confident and mature in their discussions about the ethical and moral issues arising from the human genome project.

67. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall and there are examples of excellent practice. The clear explanation of learning objectives and the successful use of starter activities are well developed from the National Strategy, although plenary activities are not as effective. Thorough and detailed planning of lessons, some with illustrated and engaging presentations and focused questioning, help students to learn very well. Students are well motivated and enthusiastic, and use equipment with care and enjoyment. They work hard both independently and in small groups, and are confident and competent learners. However, there are occasional lessons, as in Year 9, where challenge is insufficient and the most able are not fully stretched. Students' experience is enriched through a range of extra-curricular activities.

68. Leadership and management are excellent. The head of department has already successfully identified key areas for development and work has begun on these areas. Staff are handled with sensitivity and the team of teachers and other colleagues are very well supported. There is a keen sense of purpose to the work of the department, and knowledge and understanding of science are high. Documentation is of excellent quality. The team of two technicians provides excellent support to practical science, although the amount of technician time is insufficient.

69. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good, and many changes have been brought about in the way the science curriculum is organised. The recently acquired science college status has had a significant effect throughout the school and on its links with others. There is a sharper focus on teaching and learning in science, and facilities are considerably improved. Technician support has increased slightly and a new laboratory, preparation room and chemical storage are now in use, together with improved ICT facilities

and equipment. All courses have been reviewed, updated and resourced, and support to students has greatly improved. Assessment is regular and rigorous, and information is easily accessible by all staff. However, its use to inform students of what is required to meet targets is not yet fully established. Assessment for learning and other developing strategies enable students increasingly to assume greater responsibility for their own learning. Students' work of good quality is on display throughout the department and in the entrance to the school and supports a popular and positive image of science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the GNVQ course is very good and students achieve very well to attain above average results.
- Teachers' expertise in Years 7 to 9 is not effectively monitored and evaluated, and good practice is not shared.
- The scheme of work from the Key Stage 3 Strategy is not tailored to the needs of the school.
- Students of lower ability achieve well, but those of higher ability and the gifted and talented do not do as well.
- Very good resources are used well by the school and the community.

Commentary

70. Standards attained by the end of Year 9, as assessed by teachers, are average in terms of the proportion of students gaining National Curriculum Level 5 or above. None has gained Level 7 in the past few years. Standards seen in the work samples and lessons during the inspection were also average. This is the same as the judgement given in the previous inspection, but expectations of the breadth of study have increased since then, and this represents an overall improvement. Students achieve well from their varied attainment on entry, which is generally below average.

71. Standards in the GNVQ intermediate examination taken by Year 11 students are above average, with virtually all achieving a pass, equivalent to four C grades at GCSE, and a significant number achieving merits equivalent to four B grades. This represents very good achievement, particularly for students of low and average ability and for the high proportion of those taking the course who have SEN. However, those of higher capability do not do so well; there has been only one distinction, equivalent to four A grades, in the past three years. Nevertheless, standards have been steadily rising, as shown by an increasing GCSE equivalent points score. Attainment of students who do not take the examination course is also above average, due to good cross-curricular provision in many subjects. Standards seen during the inspection matched those attained in examinations.

72. Students have very good attitudes to the subject in Years 10 and 11. This aids learning because they show mature ability to work individually and to help others by evaluating their work objectively. In Years 7 to 9, students' good attitudes help their achievement.

73. Teaching and learning are very good in Years 10 and 11, and satisfactory in Years 7 to 9. In the GNVQ course, teachers have very good command of the standards and

requirements, and plan well to meet the needs of most students. This is helped by the course itself, which contains all the required material for students to succeed at all levels. Teachers support students of lower ability particularly well, ensuring that they succeed in gaining a worthwhile grade. A particularly good feature is the provision of assessment criteria, so that all students can follow their own progress and know exactly what they have to do to gain a pass, merit or distinction.

74. In Years 7 to 9, teachers have appropriate expectations but are sometimes lacking in specific expertise, such as in the use of spreadsheets, which prevents students from attaining higher National Curriculum levels. The pace of the lessons is sometimes slow and students themselves feel they have not learned enough. Nevertheless, the standard of work seen shows improvement from Year 7 to Year 9, and students' learning is good in many areas, such as in the use of presentation and publishing software, and in control technology, involving simulations of traffic lights and level crossings. Many students have computers at home; this aids achievement, as students can email homework to themselves.

75. Leadership is good. The deputy head, who runs the GNVQ course, has developed it well and has a good vision for further development into a new course which will enable all students to reach the equivalent of at least one GCSE grade in the subject. This work is ably supported by the ICT co-ordinator, who does a good job in mapping provision for ICT across the curriculum. The department's review of its performance is good but, overall, management is only satisfactory. The department runs well on a daily basis, but the very busy leaders do not have sufficient time for rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9. Teaching material has not been adapted to meet students' needs fully, and good practice is not sufficiently shared, so the overall standard is lower.

76. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good, particularly in resources. Some recent additions, such as the interactive whiteboards, have been provided, partly as a result of the school's specialist science college status. There is now a course in Years 10 and 11 and cross-curricular ICT is being mapped. Standards are being maintained in Years 7 to 9 through a much wider curriculum. and they are rising steadily in Years 10 and 11.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

77. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well in many subjects and raises overall standards. In English, provision is very good; students use PowerPoint to make presentations about themselves and produce posters, leaflets and newsletters in all years. In a recent county-wide science competition, a Year 7 team from Litcham High School won with its presentation. In many subjects, such as English, history, geography, religious education and modern foreign languages, very good use is made of research via the internet. Good displays abound in the school.

78. Many subject areas are now using their newly acquired interactive whiteboards to good effect, though some teachers still require training. Use of ICT in presenting GCSE coursework is well advanced, and this occurs in most subjects. Of the specialist applications required in some subjects, good use is made of data logging in science, and of computer-aided design and manufacture in design and technology; computer control work is also learned by all students in Year 9. Not all subjects have enough resources for the specialist needs, however. This is particularly true in art and design, which does not have sufficient access to computers in its area, and in music, where there is not enough equipment to help students' composition skills.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results in GCSE examinations are well above average.
- Very good teaching and well-planned lessons promote very good learning.
- Very good marking and assessment are used to monitor students' progress and for development of the curriculum.
- There is very good support for the development of key skills in literacy and ICT.

Commentary

79. Attainment when students enter Year 7 is average, and they have variable geographical skills. Currently in Year 9, standards of work in lessons and in other work seen are well above average, which represents very good achievement. GCSE results in 2004 were well above average, with boys' results for grades A* to C slightly better than those of girls, whilst girls gained more of the higher grades. Standards in Year 11, both in lessons and in work seen, are well above average, which represents very good achievement in Years 10 and 11.

80. In Years 7 to 9 students develop good geographical skills with maps, diagrams and use of graphs. They also use ICT competently for research, homework and creative writing. By the end of Year 11 students have acquired knowledge and understanding of a broad range of geographical issues and places. Attitudes to work are very good and students work well together and with their teachers. Students with SEN make good progress and the most able produce very detailed essays and annotation of work.

81. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers are knowledgeable and use a wide range of teaching strategies to motivate students and to promote literacy and students' learning. In a Year 9 lesson on tourism the use of the interactive whiteboard stimulated students as they interpreted photographs and watched a video clip before using graphs to identify stages in the development of tourism. In this, as in other lessons, students were asked open-ended questions to ensure a very good understanding of their work. Attractive worksheets provide work to suit the abilities of all students, and open-ended tasks challenge the most able students. When learning support is available it is well used to suit students' needs. Marking is very good and provides students with both support and clear advice on how to improve.

82. Leadership and management of the department are very good. The schemes of work are used as working documents; there is very good preparation and follow up of students' coursework, and students' progress is well monitored. Good fieldwork visits are organised for Years 7, 8 and 10.

83. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good. Teaching, learning, marking and assessment have all become very good. Attainment has improved in both key stages; all key skills have improved, especially literacy, and GCSE results are now well above average.

History

Provision for history is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership is very good.
- Students achieve very well at GCSE, and standards are rising.
- Teaching is very good and consequently students learn very well.
- There is not enough enquiry-based learning to give the highest attainers access to the highest levels of the National Curriculum in Years 7 to 9.

84. In 2004, estimated attainment at the end of Year 9 was broadly in line with the national average. However, standards seen in class are above average and progress is

accelerating. This represents good achievement in relation to average attainment on entry. However, there are not enough open-ended tasks for very able students to achieve the highest levels of the National Curriculum.

85. Standards seen are higher in Year 10 than in Year 1 and are rising because history is beginning to attract to a well-organised GCSE course more students of above average prior attainment. Previously, many students who chose history as an examination subject were lower

ability students; therefore, attainment at GCSE in 2003 and 2004 was significantly below the national average. Nevertheless, these students made very good progress in relation to their below average attainment on entry to the GCSE course. Their achievement was therefore very good. Boys performed better than girls.

86. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers' very good subject knowledge and confident command of classrooms and materials promote very good learning. An excellent analysis of the changing interpretations over time of General Custer's disastrous defeat at Little Big Horn gave Year 10 a very clear insight into shifting historical perspectives. Learning is driven at a demanding pace, with high expectations that students of all levels of prior attainment, boys and girls, will achieve very well; and they do. No one is left out. Teachers make very good use of advanced classroom technology to manipulate on the whiteboard the same stimulating images and tasks that students have in front of them. This improves students' understanding. Very good questioning obliges students to use what they understand to draw conclusions. This often promotes a learning conversation to which students contribute in increasingly extended talk. Thus, students become increasingly efficient analysts of a good variety of texts, pictures and data. Classroom assistants make a very good contribution to the very good progress of students with SEN, because they are well prepared and are effective supporters to more than their target students. The requirement to write and research is improving but the variety of styles is still too narrow. Homework extends learning.

87. Marking is regular, tough and demanding. Written comments are terse but promote improvement, and oral feedback is effective. Students know their targets and are shown how to improve. Teachers assess each individual accurately and accumulate continuous records which are clinically analysed to recognise patterns and plan improvement.

88. Leadership is very good and management is good, but some targets for improvement still need to be addressed. External consultants have helped identify these accurately, and planning is good. Monitoring of teaching is in place and is effective. Departmental performance is reviewed regularly and targets readjusted. Accommodation is overcrowded but adequate. There are not always enough books to go round in Years 7 to 9. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

Religious education

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

- Students achieve very well on the GCSE course.
- Achievement on the non-examined course in Years 10 and 11 is good, but there is not enough time to cover in full the programmes of study of the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus.
- Teaching and learning are very good in Years 7 to 9 and on the GCSE course, and good on the non-examination course in Years 10 and 11.
- Students hold the subject in high esteem.

Commentary

89. By the end of Year 9, standards seen in books and in lessons are above the average expected of the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus. This represents good achievement from average attainment on entry to the school. At GCSE, results improve over time, and in 2004 students attained well above average results at A* to C; all passed. Numbers in GCSE classes have risen and achievement is very good in relation to the students' average attainment on entry to the school. Boys do better than girls, and students of average and below average prior attainment and those with SEN make very good progress. Students achieve well on the non-examined course in Years 10 and 11.

90. Teaching and learning in Years 7 and 9 and on the GCSE course are very good. Teaching on the course in Years 10 and 11 for those not taking GCSE is good. The specialist teacher's very good subject knowledge and good classroom management lead to very good learning. Very high expectations of work and behaviour are fully met by students. Probing questions extend thinking because students at all levels are expected to use what they understand to interpret ideas. Students express very well quite profound perceptions, for example, about reincarnation in Buddhist philosophy. Boys participate as well as girls and engage unselfconsciously in mature debate, especially in Years 9 to 11. Students hold the subject in high esteem because they enjoy and respect their learning. Teachers use advanced classroom technology very well to project well-chosen, powerful images. These stimulate empathy and very good understanding, for example in a persuasive clip about Buddhist beliefs which evoked subtle perceptions. A very powerful video about the Holocaust stilled a Year 11 class on the non-examination course into hushed awe. The subject makes an excellent contribution to students' spiritual and moral development. Assessment is used very well to raise standards; marking is tough and targets are demanding. Comments are terse but oral feedback is good. Accurate, continuous assessment of individual performance sets clear targets which are supported by close guidance. Increasing use is made of students' assessment of their own work and that of others. These all build students' confidence and contribute strongly to very good progress from Years 7 to 11.

91. Leadership and management are very good, and all courses are very well organised and managed. Materials for the non-examination course are well prepared and non-specialist teachers well supported. The time allowed for this course does not permit the full delivery of the programmes of study of the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus but, despite this, students achieve well. Accommodation is very good and resources for learning are good. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is an improving trend of GCSE results, and the achievement of boys is very good.
- Good leadership from the new subject leader has already led to improvements.
- The lack of teaching time and curriculum organisation in Years 7 to 9 have a negative impact on standards and the progress of some students.
- There are inconsistencies in approaches to teaching and learning across the department.

Commentary

92. Standards on entry in Year 7 are low, and students come from their primary schools with varied experiences of design and technology. By the end of Year 9 standards are in line with national averages, which represents good progress and achievement for most students. The GCSE examination results in 2004 are well above national averages and are a significant improvement on 2003, continuing an upward trend, particularly in the resistant materials and graphic products courses. Girls' attainment is above the national average for girls but the boys' results are even higher and are well above national figures. This is the reverse of the national trend and represents very good achievement for these students.

93. In Years 7 to 9 students acquire a range of practical skills by working with food, resistant materials, electronics and graphics and develop their understanding of the designing and making process. Product analysis is well used to help them to evaluate the effectiveness of commercial products and their own ideas for products. This programme supports good achievement for many students, but the organisation of teaching groups and the pattern of short six-week modules in Years 7 and 8 lead to tasks that are too prescriptive, and this results in underachievement for more able pupils. There are differences in approaches to teaching and learning and in teachers' expectations of standards across the department, and these are a further hindrance to some students' progress. The GCSE results are evidence of good achievement in Years 10 and 11, but the work seen in lessons does not fully support the maintenance of such very high standards. The achievement of students with SEN is good in all year groups, and the work of teaching assistants is effective.

94. The quality of teaching is always satisfactory and sometimes good. Effective teaching is well supported by good working relationships with students and good subject knowledge on the part of the teacher. Teaching strategies are often varied and well matched to activities. Not all teachers' planning supports high enough expectations for more able pupils, and some activities are not challenging enough for these students. These are missed opportunities, given that students' attitudes and behaviour are so positive. Assessment systems are effective for recording and tracking pupils' progress, but in Years 7 to 9 not enough use is made of National Curriculum level criteria to inform teachers' expectations of standards or to help students to know how well they are doing. In Year 11 students know what their target grades are and what they have to do to achieve them. The marking of students' work is good.

95. Leadership and management by the new subject leader are good and have already brought improvements and a clear vision for the future. The relative strengths and weaknesses of the subject have been identified through realistic self-evaluation, and there are appropriate plans for further developments. The scheme of work ensures that curriculum requirements are met, but the present review of lesson activities and the subject handbook must be completed to eliminate the inconsistencies across the department and to raise levels of challenge. Pupils choosing the graphic products GCSE course visit a local graphics company, and the department plays a full part in the Year 6 taster days. However, both staff and pupils would benefit from being involved in more out-of-school activities such as trips and competitions.

96. There has been more than one change of leadership in the department since the last inspection and this has disrupted the process of development. However, the improving trend of GCSE results and the greater use of ICT to support teaching and learning represent good progress since the previous inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students bring positive attitudes to art lessons.
- The use of sketchbooks is well established.
- Large classes in Years 7 to 9 have an adverse impact on students' experience in art.

Commentary

97. Students start in Year 7 with varied experiences of art and design, but by the end of Year 9 standards are in line with national averages in many aspects of the subject. Standards are not,

however, as high as those suggested by the Year 9 teacher assessments reported to parents in recent years. The GCSE examination results in 2004 were a significant improvement on those of 2003 but remained well below national averages. Detailed comparisons are not possible, as few students studied art and design at GCSE. Overall, however, their attainment was lower than in other subjects.

Predictions for 2005 suggest an improvement in results, with an examination entry of almost twice as many students. The standards seen in lessons and in the scrutiny of Year 11 students' work suggest that the results may be nearer to national averages.

98. In Years 7 to 9 students acquire a range of technical skills, and their understanding of the formal elements of art is developed well. They use a range of media, working in both two- and three-dimensional formats, although much of the work is on a small scale. Their critical and analytical skills are well supported through the study of the work of other artists, and the use of sketchbooks is well established. This supports good achievement for many students, but the large class sizes in Years 7 to 9 constrain the investigative, creative and imaginative aspects of the subject. This leads to underachievement for more able students and for those with more artistic talent who need more open-ended opportunities to further explore their skills and abilities. The achievement of older students is satisfactory, and in Years 10 and 11 they show increasing independence in producing their individual coursework pieces. The achievement of students with learning difficulties in all years is good.

99. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and is sometimes good. The large group sizes in Years 7 to 9 make it more difficult to engage all students fully, but the range of teaching strategies used could be extended to take more account of students' positive attitudes and good behaviour. Teaching is most effective when an appropriate balance is achieved between whole-class instruction and one-to-one support, but opportunities to extend students' learning are often missed in lessons. Assessment systems for recording and tracking students' progress are satisfactory and the quality of marking is good, with comments that reward good work and guide further improvement.

100. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There are plans to move the subject forward and to raise standards. The art room is well organised, with good display, and there are good examples of students' work around the school. The schemes of work provide secure coverage of curriculum requirements, but the documentation is not structured to support art provision effectively in the longer term. The use of ICT as an aid to teaching is developing well with the recent acquisition of an interactive whiteboard, but the use of ICT by students in their artwork is underdeveloped. Increased opportunities to use ICT would better engage some students, especially boys. Take-up for the GCSE course is increasing. Valuable study visits to galleries are organised but students do not use the good ceramic resources in the department.

101. The quality of the provision for art and design reported here is not as high as at the last inspection, particularly with regard to GCSE results. Improvement therefore is unsatisfactory.

Drama

102. This subject was sampled. Students in Year 9 have made satisfactory progress in drama and have achieved average standards. Drama is taught as part of the English curriculum in Years 7 to 9. The drama input to these units provides balance and perspective. In one such topic, 'The Titanic', students were able to empathise with the passengers on board the ship and present small sketches.

103. Standards in drama are in line with national expectations at GCSE. In one lesson observed, students produced sensitive interpretations on the theme 'Celebrity'. The more able students were able to sustain and develop their roles to produce realistic scenes. All students are able to create tension and atmosphere through the use of dramatic lighting.

104. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Good use is being made of drama resources. The subject is enriched by extra-curricular activities such as theatre visits, workshops and the school production.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards and achievement in Years 10 and 11 are very good. All students achieve A* to C grades.
- Standards in the instrumental lessons are good.
- Standards in extra-curricular work are very good, and styles are varied.
- A very limited resource for music technology adversely affects standards in composing and curriculum development.
- Some areas of assessment are underdeveloped.

Commentary

105. Standards on entry are in line with national levels, although students' prior musical experience varies widely. By the end of Year 9 standards are average, with some instrumentalists attaining above the average. Students can describe musical features, using the appropriate terminology, but they have very little opportunity to develop skills in music technology. Standards in composing are adversely affected as students cannot refine, manipulate, store and retrieve their ideas because there is a shortage of computers. Achievement in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory for all groups of students including those with SEN.

106. GCSE results in recent years have been very good, with small groups of students all attaining A* to C grades. Work seen in the inspection is of a similar standard. Students' performing skills are particularly good and these small groups are able to share the two computers to realise their composing ideas. Standards in composing are good. Achievement is very good. Standards in instrumental lessons are good, and the numbers learning are above average.

107. Teaching is good overall. It is always at least satisfactory and is very good in Years 10 and 11. Teachers have very good subject skills, and lessons are carefully planned with well-chosen listening extracts for the various age groups. The interactive whiteboard is well used to present and explain, and good use is made of questioning to check and expand knowledge. In an instrumental lesson the students appraised each other's efforts. In some lessons too much time is spent on listening and factual learning; students need more time to develop their practical skills. Tasks are matched to the different abilities of the students. Students work very co-operatively, and in Years 10 and 11 they develop independent learning skills. Smaller numbers than usual have opted for music in recent years but the current Year 10 group is just above average size. Students know how to improve their work and it is assessed regularly. National Curriculum levels and examination marking criteria are not always shared with the students, and in Years 7 to 9 there are not enough recordings of students' work.

108. Leadership is good. The subject leader has a clear vision for the development of the department, and standards in examinations, instrumental lessons and extra-curricular work have risen. Management is satisfactory; some issues in curriculum and assessment have still not been addressed.

109. A variety of topics are studied through performing, composing and listening, but there is insufficient emphasis on learning about the various styles through performing and composing. This same emphasis is needed in studies of world music. There are not enough resources for music technology and instruments from around the world to support these developments. A choir, wind band and jazz band rehearse regularly and various other small ensembles also take part in the regular concerts. The music department makes a significant contribution to the biennial school show.

110. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. With the appropriate technology in place, the department is well poised to move further forward.

Physical education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership is strong and student achievement is at the heart of all activities and developments.
- Teaching, learning and students' achievement are very good.
- Excellent relationships and students' attitudes create an environment of positive learning.
- Lessons and the range of extra-curricular activities enhance the experience of all students.
- Participation and success in team games is strong.
- Continuous assessment procedures and peer evaluation are good, although more can be done to further clarify the levels of students' achievement on a regular basis.
- Policy and schemes of work have not been reviewed recently.

Commentary

111. Students enter the school with physical skills that are generally in line with national averages. Achievement is good in Years 7 to 9 and standards by the end of Year 9 are slightly above national standards. Students benefit from taking part in a wide variety of activities, and although girls and boys have strengths in different areas there is no significant difference in their overall standard.

112. Achievement is very good in Years 10 and 11. However, there is a small group of talented students who excel in a range of activities. They perform at county and national standards in their chosen sport. Their achievement is excellent. In recent years students taking GCSE have achieved results that are well above the national average. All students are encouraged to study the subject for GCSE and many students routinely attain results above those predicted. All groups of students make similar progress, because there is additional provision to meet the different needs of gifted and talented students and those with physical and/or learning difficulties. Team games are a strength and there have been many notable victories in area and county competitions. Overall, standards have been consolidated and improved since the previous inspection. This represents good improvement.

113. The lively teaching offers a good level of challenge, keeps the students fully involved and stimulates their interests. Overall, teaching and learning are very good. The excellent attitudes, the high participation rates of the students, and the excellent relationships between staff and students and between the students themselves create a positive environment in which very good learning can consistently take place. Continuous student assessment and evaluation in lessons is very good. Students are encouraged and able to evaluate their own work and, when asked, that of others, offering suggestions for improvement. Levels of attainment are occasionally discussed, although there is very little discussion of National Curriculum levels to ensure that all students are clear at what level they are working and what they need to do to progress to the next level.

114. The curriculum is relevant and broad in Years 7 to 9 but curriculum opportunities for older students could be extended, and the school is quite rightly planning to include dance and aerobics that will be of particular interest to girls. Very good use is made of a local sports centre and swimming pool. A Year 7 girls' swimming session illustrated students' excellent behaviour, enthusiasm and progress in learning. The wide range of extra-curricular activities and sporting fixtures support students' learning, and the department staff and many other school staff give generously of their time. School sport has a high profile and plays an important role in the positive and successful public image of the school.

115. Leadership and management of the department are very good. There is a clear vision for improvement and a commitment to develop and support the school sports partnership programme, working alongside the school sports co-ordinator (SSCO) and feeder primary schools. The SSCO programme, although quite new, has already added a new dynamic dimension to the sports programme, and students here and in the primary schools are benefiting from the range of activities on offer. The department works very well as a team and provides excellent role models. There is a self-evaluation programme, and further areas for improvement have been identified. The department's policy document and schemes of work are not sufficiently well developed as they do not indicate the contribution of physical education to areas like literacy and ICT.

116. The department makes good use of the available accommodation, but it is still generally restrictive. The sports field is adequate but is not easily accessible. A recently resurfaced hard court area is uneven and will have to be resurfaced again. The small gymnasium is very well used, although it is very restrictive for teaching large groups of students and the multi-use hall (dining hall) is also not always available. When the weather restricts outside activities, problems in accommodation can arise.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

117. The school does not offer any business courses. One vocational course for GNVQ ICT is provided for half the students in Years 10 and 11. Teaching, learning and students' achievement are very good. Currently the school provides an off-site vocational course for one disaffected student.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

118. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is an integrated course which includes citizenship and careers. It is taught by form tutors who have received some in-service training and have topic booklets to support their teaching. Students record their work on paper or worksheets or in notebooks, but there is not enough time for them to record and develop the ideas discussed in lessons. Very good discussion and group work are a major feature of lessons, and overall teaching and learning are very good, but written work is often incomplete. Sex, health and drugs education are included in lessons, with additional input provided by visiting speakers and the school nurse. Progress files have recently been introduced for students to record their personal achievements. Moral issues such as bullying and racism are included in the course and there is some overlap with citizenship modules.

Citizenship

Overall provision is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and is willing to take on new ideas.
- Management is unsatisfactory.
- The achievement of students in Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory.
- The reporting of students' work is unsatisfactory and no assessment is in place.
- There is insufficient monitoring of teaching.
- A good review of the contribution made by National Curriculum subjects to citizenship has been carried out.

Commentary

119. Attainment on entry to the school is average, and work seen in folders for students in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory in quality but unsatisfactory in quantity. In Years 10 to 11, work seen in folders is unsatisfactory in both quality and quantity. In both key stages, standards seen in work in English related to citizenship are above average, but in history the work seen is not sufficiently allied to the aims of citizenship. Overall, standards in citizenship are below average and current achievement in all years is unsatisfactory.

120. In Years 7 to 9 students are taught citizenship, PSHE and careers in one lesson per week. In Years 10 and 11 there is a similar pattern, with religious education included in the time available. During the inspection week no citizenship was scheduled to be taught in the PSHE lesson. However, citizenship is taught in National Curriculum subjects, and good examples were seen in English and geography.

121. Teaching and learning, based on work seen in folders, is satisfactory overall. The course is delivered by form tutors who are non-specialists. The basic resources are satisfactory and provide guidance to teachers. Students' work, however, is not monitored; it is sometimes untidy and is often unfinished. Low attainers produce little written work. Work seen across the key stages included protest posters on village developments, crime, government, consumer rights and advertising. No work on citizenship was seen for Year 11 students. Teaching and learning seen in PSHE topics, and in one geography citizenship lesson, were good.

122. Leadership is satisfactory. There is a completed timetable for teaching the modules of citizenship, PSHE and careers for all year groups, for all weeks of the year. This is a very helpful guide for teachers with the limited time available. There is also ongoing evaluation of course content. Plans for visiting speakers and enquiry projects are included in the timetable. Management is unsatisfactory. There is no monitoring of teaching, and no assessment to monitor students' progress, and reports make minimal comments on students' knowledge and understanding of citizenship.

123. The provision for students' participation in active citizenship is limited in this rural area, but provision for this aspect is satisfactory. In Years 8 and 9, students are involved in enquiry projects on local village and environmental issues. The school forum is open to all, and good quality discussion takes place on issues raised in tutor groups. All year groups contribute financially to an overseas child through the World Vision project, and the school supports a local children's hospice.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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