

INSPECTION REPORT

MANOR CHURCH OF ENGLAND VOLUNTARY AIDED SCHOOL

York

LEA area: York

Unique reference number: 121713

Headteacher: Mr B. Crosby

Lead inspector: Mr D. Cox

Dates of inspection: 10th – 12th May 2005

Inspection number: 268416

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

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Terms used in this report

*Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 are at **Key Stage 3**, having transferred in most cases from their primary schools after Year 6. Students in Years 10 and 11 are at **Key Stage 4** of their education. Students in Years 7 to 11 follow courses and Programmes of Study set out in the National Curriculum. A course of religious education is a requirement for of all ages at school.*

*At the end of Year 9, students aged 14 take national tests in English, mathematics and science. In all subjects of the National Curriculum, teachers also make their own assessments of what the students know, understand and can do at age 14. At the end of Year 11, students aged 16 may take examinations in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (**GCSE**). Others may follow courses leading to the award of the General National Vocational Qualification (**GNVQ**) or the National Vocational Qualification (**NVQ**).*

*Inspectors judge the **standards** reached by students by comparing their attainments with national test and examination results, or by the levels of performance expected for students of the same age nationally. The judgements about students' **achievements** reflect whether they are doing well enough. These judgements take account of the educational **value added** over time. In this report, similar schools are defined as those having similar standards at the start of each stage of learning.*

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of students:	11 – 16
Gender of students:	Mixed
Number on roll:	633
School address:	Low Poppleton Lane York North Yorkshire
Postcode:	YO26 6BB
Telephone number:	01904 798722
Fax number:	01904 782902
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Linda Hildreth
Date of previous inspection:	8 th March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Manor Church of England Voluntary Aided School is a smaller than average comprehensive school educating boys and girls in the 11-16 age range. There are 633 students on roll. The school is a specialist performing arts college. The school serves the whole of the York area, although in practice most students live within three miles. The school is very popular and is oversubscribed. Although the school's population reflects a wide socio-economic background, socio-economic circumstances are well above average overall. The vast majority of students are white. The school caters for the full range of student ability; standards on entry are above average generally although the current Year 7 are closer to average.

The proportion of students who have special educational needs and the proportion with statements are below average. Most students are on the register for moderate learning difficulties, dyslexia and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. There are very few students for whom English is not their first language.

The school received the Sportsmark award in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10297	D. Cox	Lead inspector	
13395	J. Illingworth	Lay inspector	
33139	M. Wilson	Team inspector	Mathematics
19596	B. Treacy	Team inspector	English; Drama aspect of the performing arts
4145	C. Harrison	Team inspector	Science
15208	A. Briggs	Team inspector	Music; Music aspect of performing arts
17868	E. Metcalfe	Team inspector	Art and design
11933	D. Driscoll	Team inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT)
22590	R. Castle	Team inspector	Citizenship
30973	G. Hancock	Team inspector	Design and technology
15462	C. Blakemore	Team inspector	History
17404	J. Tolley	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
32178	J. Shears	Team inspector	Geography
12985	S. Jeffray	Team inspector	Physical education; Dance aspect of the performing arts
2597	C. Jackson	Team inspector	Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Independent School Inspection Services (ISIS)

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school that provides a **very good** quality of education and **excellent** value for money. Teaching, learning and students' achievement are very good. The leadership of the school is very good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are well above average by Year 11, reflecting students' very good achievement as a result of very good teaching.
- There is an ethos in the school that promotes hard work, excellent attitudes and equality for all.
- The range of extra-curricular activities is excellent.
- The headteacher provides excellent leadership and, together with the leadership team and governing body, provides clarity of vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations.
- Students achieve very well in physical education in Years 7 to 11.
- Teachers do not always use the wealth of assessment information available to them when matching work to the needs of all students.

Progress since the previous inspection is **very good**. Standards are higher and achievement is better as a result of improved teaching. Most of the weaknesses identified in the previous report have been resolved successfully and many are now strengths of the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Performance compared with:		all schools			similar schools
		2002	2003	2004	2004
Year 11	GCSE/GNVQ examinations	A	A	A	C

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
For Year 11, similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 9.*

Students join the school in Year 7 with standards of attainment that are above average overall, although this varies from subject to subject. By the time students leave in Year 11 their standards are well above average. Students attain well above average GCSE results and achieve very well.

Students achieve well during Years 7 to 9. By Year 9, standards are well above average in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, and ICT. Standards are above average in art and design, history, geography, modern foreign languages and performing arts. Standards are average in music. Students achieve very well in physical education and well in all their other subjects with the exception of music where achievement is satisfactory. Achievement is only satisfactory in music because of a legacy of instability in staffing leading to underachievement in the past.

By Year 11, standards are well above average in English, mathematics, science, physical education, design and technology, history and geography. Standards are above average in ICT, art and design, performing arts and modern languages. Standards are average in music. Students achieve very well in physical education and history. They achieve well in all

other subjects with the exception of ICT and music where achievement is satisfactory. In ICT, students achieve very well in the examination groups when taught by specialist teachers but achievement is reduced for those students who receive their ICT through other subject areas and are taught by non-specialists.

Students continue to achieve well in Years 10 and 11. The cumulative effect of achieving well in both key stages results in students achieving very well. Students achieve very well because of the very good teaching they receive. Students' excellent attitudes and the support they receive from their parents also make a major contribution to their achievement. Students' achievement is enhanced in response to the excellent ethos that permeates the school; students come to school wanting to learn and do their best.

Standards of literacy, mathematics and ICT are well above the national expectation. The achievement of students with special educational needs is very good. Through well-focused support and very good teaching, students improve their social skills as well as those in English and mathematics. Students who are gifted and talented achieve as well other students.

The school sets demanding targets for improvement and usually exceeds them.

The school is very effective in promoting positive values and inspiring students with a desire to learn. It has an excellent ethos. Students' attendance is very high and they have **excellent attitudes**. They behave very well and their personal development is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **very good** quality of education.

The quality of teaching and learning is **very good**. The proportion of excellent teaching observed during the inspection was significantly higher than the national average and there are examples of outstanding practice across many subjects. It is the consistency of good and very good teaching that students receive that enables them to achieve very well during their time at the school. The quality of teaching was a strength of the school at the time of the previous inspection and it continues to be so. Teaching and learning for special educational needs students are very good. However, in a minority of lessons, particularly for Year 7, the matching of work to the students' needs is not sufficiently accurate to allow the students to achieve their potential.

The curriculum is good, with an excellent range of enrichment activities. The school has a good match of staff to its needs, sufficient resources and adequate accommodation.

The school takes very good care of students. Policies and procedures for safeguarding their health and welfare are good, and each student receives good individual support and guidance. There are very good arrangements for consulting students and taking account of their views.

The school has a very strong partnership with parents, with other schools and colleges, and with the community. The very good links that it has developed have a positive impact on students' achievement and personal development.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management of the school is **very good**. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. The senior leadership team and governors provide very good leadership. Management is good although there are some inconsistencies in the application of school policies. There is a continuous drive for improvement. The senior team is very reflective and is always evaluating the work of the school and coming up with new ways to improve the school. The school has an excellent ethos. The financial management of the school is very good. The leadership of middle managers is very good. Governors have a very good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors have a very good strategic overview of the school.

PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Comments are based on those students and parents who responded to the questionnaires or attended the parents' meeting. Parents are very happy with the education their children receive; students enjoy school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure teachers make better use of the wealth of assessment data available when planning their lessons.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Provide a daily act of collective worship.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Students join the school in Year 7 with standards of attainment that are above average overall, although this varies from subject to subject. Students attain well above average GCSE results and achieve very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve very well because of the very good teaching they receive and their excellent attitudes.
- Students achieve very well in all years in physical education.
- Students with special educational needs achieve as well as other students.
- Non-specialist teaching limits the achievement of students in ICT.

Commentary

1. Students achieve well during Years 7 to 9. By Year 9, standards are well above average in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, and ICT. Standards are above average in art and design, history, geography, modern foreign languages and performing arts. Standards are average in music. Students achieve very well in physical education and well in all their other subjects with the exception of music where achievement is satisfactory. Achievement is only satisfactory in music because of a legacy of instability in staffing leading to underachievement in the past. Leadership of music is now characterised by a strong vision and total commitment to improving all aspects of the department. This has quickly resulted in much improved resources and schemes of work and a real drive for improving standards and achievement.
2. By Year 11, standards are well above average in English, mathematics, science, physical education, design and technology, history and geography. Standards are above average in ICT, art and design, performing arts and modern languages. Standards are average in music. Students achieve very well in physical education and history. They achieve well in all other subjects with the exception of ICT and music where achievement is satisfactory. In ICT, students in the examination groups achieve very well when taught by specialist teachers but achievement is reduced to satisfactory for those students who receive their ICT across subjects and are taught by non-specialists.
3. Students continue to achieve well in Years 10 and 11. The cumulative effect of achieving well in both key stages results in students achieving very well. Students achieve very well because of the very good teaching they receive. Students' excellent attitudes and the support they receive from their parents also make major contributions to their achievement. Students achieve very well because of the excellent ethos that permeates the school; students come to school wanting to learn and do their best.
4. Standards of literacy, mathematics and ICT are well above the national expectation. Most students are articulate and confident speakers and this helps them to achieve well in many subjects. They read with good understanding and are able to conduct

their own research when asked to do so. The vast majority of students can express themselves clearly in writing and this is a substantial advantage when they need to communicate their understanding of the National Curriculum, particularly in examinations. Students' mathematical skills are put to good use in other subjects. Students' skills in using ICT are well above average. Many subjects ensure that students use computers and other equipment on a frequent basis.

5. The achievement of students with special educational needs is very good. Through well-focused support and very good teaching, students improve their social as well as their English and mathematical skills. In GCSE examinations, students with special educational needs do very well. Students who are gifted and talented achieve as well as other students.
6. The school sets demanding targets for improvement and usually exceeds these.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	37.7 (38.0)	N/A (33.4)
mathematics	40.8 (39.8)	N/A (35.4)
science	37.8 (38.0)	N/A (33.6)

There were 121 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	71 (69)	52 (52)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	97 (98)	89 (88)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	98 (100)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	41.5 (41.7)	34.9 (34.7)

There were 126 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Results in the national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2004 were well above average and students achieved very well. The trend in results is above the national trend.
- Results in the 2004 GCSE examinations were well above average. Students achieved satisfactorily given their standards at the end of Year 9. The trend in results is below the national trend. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls or of those students from different ethnic backgrounds.

Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The school is very effective in promoting positive values and inspiring students with a desire to learn. It has an excellent ethos. Students' attendance is very high and they have excellent attitudes. They behave very well and their personal development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance rates are excellent, and the school has very effective procedures for promoting good attendance.

- Students are very highly motivated. They are extremely keen to learn and to achieve well.
- The quality of relationships is excellent and creates an atmosphere in the school that is conducive to learning and good achievement.
- Students are self-disciplined, responsible and very well behaved.
- The school has very effective procedures for promoting good behaviour.
- A minority of students become inattentive and restless in a few lessons where the teaching is adequate but not inspiring.

Commentary

7. Students of all ages and levels of attainment have excellent attitudes and enjoy being at school. They are very well motivated learners who arrive promptly for lessons and settle quickly in class. There is a culture among students that regards hard work and good achievement as 'cool'. They show enthusiasm for extra-curricular activities, and their participation in clubs, plays, extra classes and trips is high. They are very conscientious about completing homework and course work, and this enhances their attainment. Attitudes are very consistent across the school. There are no major variations according to year group, level of attainment, or subject of the curriculum. Students invariably show interest in their work and sustain their concentration when teachers have high expectations and provide challenging activities. They work hard and achieve very well. Most students also remain focused and keep on task where the teaching is only adequate. There are very few instances when teachers have to devote their time to controlling behaviour in lessons. Occasionally students display attitudes that are barely satisfactory. They do not listen with sufficient care and their application to task is patchy. This was the case in some science classes where staff changes and the use of temporary teachers had unsettled the students. However, these were minor and uncharacteristic lapses. Attitudes to learning were satisfactory or better in all the lessons observed during the inspection, and were often exemplary. In some cases they were significantly superior to the quality of teaching. Students' motivation is excellent and is a major contributory factor in their very good achievement.
8. The majority of students and parents think that the school is successful in promoting good discipline. The inspection findings support these views. The school is a very orderly community whose ethos is based on respect and a shared commitment to high standards. Relations between students, and between teachers and their classes, are excellent and enhance learning and progress. Students have very good collaborative skills and are able to work successfully in pairs and groups in lessons. They show respect for other people's views and spontaneously celebrate their achievements. Relationships are also excellent outside the classroom. Individuals and groups of students get on very well together and show genuine concern for one another's welfare. The inspection's survey of students' views raised the issue of bullying. Discussions with students confirmed that incidents had occurred, but the school had dealt with them very promptly and effectively. Abrasive relationships and aggressive behaviour are rare. Overall, the school is a very friendly place where students feel secure and confident.
9. The quality of behaviour in lessons is very good and contributes positively to learning. Students are polite, follow instructions and carry out the tasks that their teachers set. Behaviour around the school is also very good. Students are self-disciplined and trustworthy and show respect for property. The school's procedures for promoting good behaviour are very effective. They focus on the use of praise and rewards. Students of all ages and levels of attainment get plenty of opportunities to win merits for hard work, participate in extra-curricular activities and taking on responsibilities. The school ensures that their achievements are shared with their parents. There are very good procedures for monitoring and modifying the behaviour of the minority of students who give cause for concern. The school's systems are very successful in practice. The rate of exclusion is well below the national average and the number of exclusions has fallen in the current year.

10. Attendance is excellent in all year groups. The school's rate of attendance is very high compared to the national average, thanks to its success in inspiring students with an enthusiasm for learning. They enjoy being at school and therefore are keen to attend. Procedures for recording, monitoring and promoting attendance are very good. The main reason for avoidable absences is holiday leave, which the school makes every reasonable effort to deter. There is very little unauthorised absence.

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
607	21	
1		
1		
5		
2		
3		
1		
13		

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

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (2003-2004) (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.0	School data	0.5
National data (secondary)	6.9	National data (secondary)	1.1

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

11. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. All these aspects are fully embedded in the ethos of the school. Provision for spiritual development is good. All students take the full GCSE course in philosophy and ethics and this makes a good contribution to all these aspects, especially the spiritual, moral and social. This course deals specifically with contemporary issues and gives students ample opportunities for reflection. The essential spiritual, moral, social and cultural features of the major world religions are studied in good depth in the first three years. There is a clear programme of themes for assemblies that celebrate the Christian liturgical festivals throughout the school year. The school's motto "God is our Leader" sets ideals for the highest standards. The school is successful in promoting students' confidence, self-respect and emotional well-being and sees these as central to its Christian mission. However, the school does not meet the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship and there are, therefore, some missed opportunities to promote spiritual development.
12. Moral and social provision are well linked and are very good overall. Students have a clear understanding of right and wrong. They display excellent attitudes and behaviour throughout the school. They are considerate and show respect and for each other. The school creates a caring community and there is very good support for charities. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities, including residential, which contributes well to students' social development, particularly in promoting sportsmanship and encouraging a sense of responsibility. The performing arts also make a very good contribution to all these aspects.

13. Provision for cultural development is good. The small number of ethnic minority students is well integrated. These students are encouraged to value their own cultures. The school makes a special effort to give students experiences of a culturally diverse society by visiting mosques and other significant establishments in a multi-cultural city. There are foreign trips that help to raise awareness of other European cultures. Students acquire a good knowledge of the contribution of other cultures to design and technology and art and design. Displays around the school give students a good awareness of the extent of the culturally diverse input into our society.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality of education. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The quality of the curriculum is good. There is very good provision for support, advice and guidance. Good attention is given to the care and welfare of students.

Teaching and learning

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is very good. The quality of assessment is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and leads to students achieving very well.
- Teachers know their subject very well and so are able to teach very able and enthusiastic students.
- The teaching and learning of students with special educational needs are very good.
- Teachers do not always use assessment data when planning their lessons.
- Teachers do not always match the work to the needs of the students, particularly for Year 7 students.

Commentary

14. The proportion of excellent teaching observed during the inspection was significantly higher than the national average and there are examples of outstanding practice across many subjects. It is the consistency of good and very good teaching that students receive that enables them to achieve very well during their time at the school. The quality of teaching was a strength of the school at the time of the previous inspection and it continues to be so. Much of the school's in-service training in recent years has been about improving teaching and learning and the effects of this are now being seen in the classroom.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 98 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
10 (10%)	23 (24%)	41 (42%)	22 (22%)	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.

15. In Years 7 to 9, teaching and learning are very good in physical education. They are good in all other subjects with the exception of music where it is satisfactory. In music, teaching observed was good; however, until very recently teaching has been disrupted and has resulted in students not learning as much as they should have done.

16. In Years 10 and 11, teaching and learning are very good in physical education. They are good in all other subjects with the exception of music and ICT where they are satisfactory. In ICT, the teaching in Year 9, and in the examination classes in Years 10, is very good. However, for the students in Year 10 who do not study to examination level, the teaching is satisfactory because these students are taught by non-specialists.
17. Teaching is most effective when the teacher possesses excellent subject knowledge and excellent knowledge of the course requirements and shares these with students. The result is that students know exactly what is required of them, are able to assess themselves and feel confident and optimistic that they can improve their standards and do themselves full credit in their examinations. In such circumstances students respect their teacher and give of their best. Teaching is also excellent when the teacher knows the capabilities of their students well and ensures that the challenge of the work and way it is taught will lead students on to achieve at the highest levels that might be expected of them. Such lessons are extremely well paced, include variety, allow students to be active in their learning and draw upon resources that are relevant and stimulating. Consequently the majority of students are well challenged and understand what is to be learnt. However, in a small minority of lessons, the matching of work to the students' needs is not sufficiently accurate to allow the students to achieve their potential; this is particularly true of Year 7.
18. Teachers' enthusiasm is infectious. Most students are highly motivated, and their attitudes are excellent. This is evident in the very high level of participation in lessons and extra-curricular activities, very good behaviour and the commitment students give to their subjects. Very good planning and organisation ensure that students are engaged in a variety of interesting and challenging activities.
19. Where teaching is very good as in textiles and food technology, the pace of lessons is very brisk, and students are inspired through challenging activities that encourage active participation. In contrast, lessons in some resistant materials and graphics lessons are uninspiring and too easy paced.
20. Teaching and learning for special educational needs students are very good. Members of staff know students very well. They break material down into manageable sections so that students can learn more easily. Relationships across the school are very good. Teachers respect students' views and have high expectations of how students should behave and what they can achieve. As a result, students want to learn and have very good attitudes to their studies. Individual needs are well catered for, and teaching assistants are very well deployed and make a significant contribution. Members of staff understand well the next steps students need to take in their learning and they provide a wide range of activities to help students to learn.
21. The school has a wealth of high quality data on the attainment and achievement of students. The use of such data is satisfactory. The picture is an improving one as a result of the school currently implementing a range of effective strategies covering all aspects of assessment, recording and reporting. Good departmental assessment practice was seen in physical education and English. However, the use of National Curriculum levels and assessment criteria has been inconsistent across the school. Assessment procedures have been inaccurate, but systems are now in place to ensure students are given a more precise level for their work and useful comments to help them improve.

22. The assessment of students with special educational needs is good. Information obtained from primary schools and from later testing is well used for identifying targets in students' individual educational plans. In many learning situations in the classroom, students are helped to judge their own work and to evaluate what they need to do to improve. Helpful information on students' achievement provided by subject teachers is effectively incorporated in the annual reviews of students with statements.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good overall, with an excellent range of enrichment activities. The school has a good match of staff to its needs, sufficient resources and adequate accommodation. The school maintains its buildings well despite their age and cramped nature.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many more clubs and activities than are usually seen.
- Provision for students with special educational needs is good.
- There is no register of the gifted and talented students in Year 7.
- Students in Years 7 to 9 study more subjects than is usually seen.
- The school does not provide a daily act of collective worship for every student.

Commentary

23. The curriculum in Years 7 to 11 includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The curriculum is good in Years 7 to 9, where there are substantially more of the performing arts taught than is usually the case, reflecting the school's specialist status. Students also study two languages, which serves them well in terms of broadening their options for study further up the school.
24. In Years 10 and 11, the school offers a satisfactory range of subjects, including some vocational subjects, such as the very unusual vocational music technology course. As in Years 7 to 9, there are strengths in the performing arts, particularly in drama. The careers and personal, social and health education (PSHE) programmes are satisfactory throughout the school, although the lack of PSHE in Year 8 hinders continuity. Not all form tutors provide an act of worship each morning, so the school does not meet statutory requirements in this respect.
25. Curricular provision for students with special educational needs is good. Teaching assistants provide very good support in class and work very well with subject teachers. Withdrawal sessions satisfactorily improve students' English and mathematical skills but do not discriminate sufficiently to meet the whole range of individual needs identified. Students say they benefit from the individual attention they receive and the computer programs provided.
26. The school provides an excellent range of extra curricular clubs and activities for students outside of the normal school day. The relatively long lunch break is used very well to provide sporting and arts activities in particular, but there are also many subject-based clubs such as extra geography classes, drop-in mathematics and the opportunity to study for a GCSE in ICT. All Year 7 students take part in a residential experience shortly after joining the school, which helps them to settle in and make friends, while at the same time improving their teamwork skills. The numbers of students who take part in sporting and arts activities are exceptionally high.
27. The provision for gifted and talented students is satisfactory overall. There are very good opportunities for special events, such as master classes in several subjects, which help to boost their achievement. The school has many more students than is the norm who attend the national academy for gifted and talented students. However, other aspects are not as good; there is no register of such students in Year 7 for

example and the school is only just starting to find out what provision is made in subjects across the school.

28. The school has a good match of specialist teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum, except in the teaching of ICT where there is heavy reliance on non-specialist staff to teach the course. The situation is made worse because of the lack of continuity year by year and it results in the level of achievement being inconsistent across the years. There are good opportunities for teachers to regularly up-date their skills through in-service training and there are well-established arrangements to support newly qualified teachers on entry to the school.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good care of students. Policies and procedures for safeguarding their health and welfare are good, and each student receives good individual support and guidance. There are very good arrangements for consulting students and taking account of their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good procedures for introducing new students to the school and helping them to settle in.
- The school monitors and supports students' progress very effectively.
- Students have very good access to sources of advice, with the peer 'Listeners' being a strength of the school's provision.
- Students feel that their opinions are respected and valued by members of staff.
- The shortage of support staff impairs the quality of support for learning in some subjects.

Commentary

29. The very good care that students receive enhances their learning, personal development and general well-being. They are happy and confident and make good progress because the school looks after them very well. It has put in place effective arrangements to promote their physical and emotional welfare. It has good procedures for dealing with issues of child protection and health and safety, and it provides students, members of staff and visitors with a safe and secure environment. The school is particularly good at promoting healthy eating. The canteen staff play a significant part in encouraging students to eat healthy food.
30. The provision of care for students starts with the induction of Year 7 into the school. This is handled sensitively. Students get good opportunities to meet pastoral staff and to visit the school site while they are still in Year 6. When they join the school they are allocated peer mentors, known as 'Listeners', from Year 10 and 11. Year 7 are very appreciative of the support that they get from their 'Listeners'. They find them very helpful in allaying worries and resolving problems, such as how to get to the right classroom. Manor School has a large number of feeder primary schools, and in some cases takes only one or two students from each. It makes special arrangements to support these students and to ensure that they do not feel isolated. The residential visit to Otterburn in the autumn term makes an important contribution to the induction process. It is outstanding in promoting good relations between students and staff and in helping members of Year 7 to get know one another.

31. The school's pastoral structure provides students with a good choice of sources of personal advice. Form tutors and heads of year are generally the first point of reference for students who need help. If they do not want to talk to a teacher they can go to the 'Listeners' or to the school nurse for advice. The quality of relationships within the school is an important factor in the provision of care. Members of staff know students very well as individuals and can give them guidance that meets their particular needs. They are very approachable and are readily accessible at breaks and lunch hours. Students know that there is always someone to whom they turn if they need help. They have confidence in teachers' ability to deal effectively with problems, and quote examples of the very useful guidance that they have received.
32. The school has very good procedures monitoring and supporting students' progress. Their academic attainment is carefully recorded and assessed, and individuals who are in danger of underachieving are identified and given support. For example, selected students in Year 11 receive support and encouragement from mentors from industry. All students get good formal feedback on their work, and helpful guidance on how to improve it, through marking, target setting and written reports. Most of them acquire a sound understanding of their attainment and what they need to do to achieve their full potential. Sometimes targets for improvement are broad and focus on attitudes to learning rather than on skills and subject knowledge, but overall the system of target setting enhances students' understanding of their progress and helps to raise their standards of attainment.
33. The school has effective arrangements for monitoring personal development. This is done formally through the system of sanctions and rewards. The tally of merits enables members of staff to identify students who are not doing well as might be expected, and the system for recording breaches of discipline highlights individuals who give serious cause for concern. The school gives these students very good support. The success of its measures is evident from its low exclusion rate, high levels of attendance and good record of achievement. The school's formal measures are backed up by very good informal provision. Students say that teachers respond very positively to requests for further advice on and explanations of work. However, the shortage of teaching assistants impairs the effectiveness of support for learning in some subjects of the curriculum. For example, in mathematics the lack of support staff means that some students with special educational needs do not achieve as well as others.
34. The staff in the special needs department make a very good contribution to students' well-being. Members of staff have very good relationships with students and a comprehensive understanding of students' achievements and development. Students receive consistent, apposite advice and guidance. Students' personal and educational well-being is a priority for special educational needs staff. Outside of lessons, members of staff are available to give individual advice and support and this helps students to learn more quickly. The lunchtime club allows students to develop their interpersonal skills in a supportive atmosphere. All special educational needs staff place a great emphasis on improving social skills. As a result, students think better of themselves and are more confident that they can achieve well.
35. There are very good arrangements to involve students in the life of the school through consulting them and acting on their views. There is an active school council that has a real impact on the way that the school operates. Its members keep their peers well informed of its work via oral reports in tutor periods. The school also seeks out

students' views through surveys on issues such as bullying and changes to the school uniform. Students are happy with these arrangements. They feel that they have sufficient influence over the running of the school because members of staff genuinely respect and take account of their opinions.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a very strong partnership with parents, with other schools and colleges, and with the community. The very good links that it has developed have a positive impact on students' achievement and personal development.

Main strengths

- Parents are very supportive of the school and of students' learning.
- The school keeps parents very well informed about their children's progress.
- The school's very good partnership with other schools is particularly strong in respect of the performing arts.
- Links with the local community make a major contribution to the school's curriculum and to students' learning.

Commentary

36. The school has a very good reputation with parents and is oversubscribed. It is clear from the response to the pre-inspection questionnaire that parents have confidence in the leadership and management of the school. They also strongly believe that their children are well taught, make good progress and are encouraged to become mature and independent. Inspectors agree with these positive opinions of the school. More than six out of ten parents completed the questionnaire, which is evidence of a very high level of parental interest and involvement.
37. Parents give a great deal of support to students' learning. They are keenly interested in their children's education, as their high attendance at school productions, sports events and consultation evenings shows. They ensure that their children attend regularly, wear the correct uniform, and take the right equipment to school. They encourage them to work hard on their learning at home. Parents are very co-operative if there are concerns about their child's progress. They will work closely with members of staff in order to solve the problem. Parents make a very valuable contribution to the life of the school via the Manor Association and the parents' Music Support Group. The assistance that these two organisations give to the performing arts significantly extends students' opportunities for learning in music, drama and dance. Physical education also benefits greatly from parents' involvement. Many of them help with extra-curricular activities and act as 'taxi service' for team players. The physical education department's very constructive partnership with parents is one of the strengths of its work.
38. The school values the support of parents and takes positive steps to maintain good relations with them. It has very good arrangements for seeking out and taking account of their views. For example, parents were consulted on the proposed changes to the school uniform via a questionnaire. There are very good ongoing communications between school and home. Students' planners are an effective way of informing parents on a day-to-day basis of what their children are learning and of the number of merits they have earned. Students' achievements are also celebrated in the school's half-termly newsletter. Various other documents, including the prospectus, governors'

annual report, and calendar of events, give parents very good information on current developments and forthcoming events.

39. Most parents are satisfied with the information that they receive from the school. However, in the pre-inspection survey, one in five parents said that they did not feel well informed about their child's progress. Inspectors, after examining all the available evidence, do not support this view. In their judgement the school provides very good information on students' progress. It has very good arrangements for celebrating achievement, and regularly sends home letters praising students' successes. The annual reports on academic progress give clear accounts of students' efforts and levels of attainment. Each subject report gives the National Curriculum level or GCSE grade at which the student is working, together with his or her target level or grade. They also tell parents whether their child is working at, above, or below the expected level. Targets for improvement are included. They tend to be rather broad in Years 7 to 9 reports, but are precise and helpful in Years 10 and 11. Parents get good opportunities to discuss students' progress with teachers. The school holds formal consultation evenings, but members of staff are always willing to see parents at other times, especially if there are concerns about a child's work or personal development.
40. There are very good links with the community. The school has strong ties with the local church. For example, it provides a base for a local church group who use its facilities on Sunday afternoons. The school capitalises on its location and exploits the City of York to the full as a resource for learning. It arranges frequent visits to local theatres and museums, and makes very good use of members of local organisations as visiting speakers and coaches. The school has very good links with a number of performing arts companies. Its recently acquired status as a specialist college has embedded and enhanced these contacts. It has had a productive partnership with Opera North for the last three years, and also has strong and ongoing links with Radio York. The school receives very good support from local companies through its involvement with the North Yorkshire Business Education Partnership. Their contribution enhances the curriculum and promotes students' progress in the areas of careers education, ICT, and work-related learning.
41. The school has numerous links with other schools and colleges. It works closely with the staff of primary schools over the transfer of Year 6 pupils from primary to secondary education. Good co-operation over induction arrangements, and over transition work in English and mathematics, assists the students to settle and make good progress in Year 7. The school has developed strong links with many local schools as a result of its successful bid to become a performing arts college. For example, it provides master classes in the performing arts for all the schools in the City of York. Four local primary schools are partners with Manor School in its specialist college status. As such they have access to specialist advisers and coaches in the performing arts, and their pupils benefit greatly from this expertise. The school has very good links with York College over the provision of information and guidance to Year 11 on courses in further education. It also has good contacts with the University of York and St John's College, York. It has a formal partnership with the latter that extends significantly its curriculum. As part of its service level agreement with St John's, the school is able to offer its students the option of a course in music technology.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school is very good as is the governance of the school. Management is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides excellent leadership and together with the very good senior leadership team there is a clear strategy for moving the school forward.
- The quality of leadership and management of physical education is excellent.
- Governors provide very good strategic leadership.
- The ethos of the school is excellent.
- What is happening in the school signifies the school's founding Christian principles.
- Whilst management systems are good, there are inconsistencies in the application of some policies.

Commentary

42. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. He is ensuring that each individual in the school community is happy, cared for effectively and provided with the opportunity to achieve very well. The Christian tradition of the school is being upheld and its values contribute significantly to the development of both staff and students. The headteacher has a highly visible presence around the school and is approachable to students and teachers. His determination and strength of vision have provided a purpose and drive which are leading the school forward so that improvement is very good. The aims in the strategic improvement plan are wholly appropriate and clearly reflect where the school still needs to improve. The headteacher has high expectations of his staff and is keen to provide them with the opportunity to develop their departments effectively.
43. The headteacher has been successful because he has the support of a very good senior leadership team. Individual members of the team have expertise in a range of aspects and use this well to challenge existing practice. The school is not complacent; for example, teaching which was a strength of the school previously has improved and is a key factor in bringing about an improvement in standards. This team knows the strengths and weaknesses of the school well.
44. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. There is a hardworking and dedicated support staff team who serve the school well. Communications are effective, particularly with parents who can be assured of a rapid response when they contact the school. The financial management of the school is very good. There are effective procedures in place for monitoring expenditure and making informed decisions about school priorities. With a below average budget the school is providing excellent value for money. However, whilst systems and procedures are clear, policies such as those for assessment and gifted and talented are not always applied consistently.
45. There are examples of effective teamwork among staff. For example, in physical education, excellent leadership, supported by a strong committed team, is moving the department forward with clear direction resulting in very good achievement. New leadership in music is bringing about rapid improvements. On the other hand, the quality of leadership of the design and technology department is satisfactory and is resulting in widely varying standards and achievement between the different areas of design and technology.

46. The quality of leadership and management of special needs is very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator has a clear vision and is well informed. Her systems are sufficiently flexible to cope with initiatives or the unexpected. She leads a unified and hardworking team of teaching assistants who are committed to helping students learn better. She ensures that all the teaching assistants are clear about their roles and responsibilities and all have ready access to guidance, support and relevant training. Administration is very efficiently carried out and annual reviews carefully planned.
47. The governance of the school is very good. Governors are clearly aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are supportive of the headteacher and senior leadership team. There is a very good range of business experiences amongst the governing body and this enables them to question and challenge the school's decisions appropriately. The one weakness is the governors' failure to ensure that the school is providing a daily act of collective worship.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	2411126	Balance from previous year	34131
Total expenditure	2426641	Balance carried forward to the next	18616
Expenditure per pupil	3791		

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

Work-related learning (WRL)

During the inspection no lessons directly related to work-related learning (WRL) were observed. Consequently no judgments could be made in respect of teaching, learning, standards or achievement.

Provision for work-related learning is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The work experience programme is good; it supports and complements school-based work.
- Subjects do not consistently take advantage of work-related experiences to enrich learning.
- Partnerships and links, as yet, are insufficiently used to support learning.

Commentary

48. Overall, the school's provision is satisfactory and it meets the statutory requirements. All Year 11 students take part in a two-week work experience programme. The preparation and de-briefing of work experience are good features of the programme. Students keep a detailed diary of the experience. They value their placements and employers write very positively about the work that they do. Additional work experience is provided through music technology, which gives opportunities to a small group of students who aspire to careers in the performing arts. There are also extended WRL opportunities for students to work at York Television and the Theatre

Royal. A very small cohort of Year 10 and Year 11 students take part in a day-a-week course through the year, gaining experience about vehicle maintenance, carpentry, beauty therapy and health and safety. At present, the school runs two vocational courses: leisure and tourism and music technology. More vocational courses are to start in September 2006 and only a few subjects take advantage of WRL to enrich teaching and learning.

49. Careers guidance is satisfactory. Through this guidance and the WRL programme students start to understand the needs of employers and the world of work. Students successfully write job applications, prepare curriculum vitae and undergo interviews. The North Yorkshire Business Education Partnership (NYBEP) gives support in these processes. This link, with the NYBEP, has allowed for a worker to be attached to the school in order to develop work-based courses and within six months a vocational music technology course has developed.
50. The school manages WRL satisfactorily. It recognises that WRL is at an early stage of development. The gradual developments of vocational subjects together with the recent support from the NYBEP are both enhancing students' learning. Many subjects could make better use of WRL as it does not yet enhance teaching and learning across all subjects. The school recognises that WRL is at the early stages of development. It was not a subject at the last inspection.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **very good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well above average	Well above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of English, which support students' achievement very well.
- There are examples of excellent teaching and learning.
- Students have very good attitudes and this makes an important contribution to their learning.
- Monitoring has not yet been successful in spreading best practice and eliminating less effective practice.

Commentary

Examination results

51. Results in the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 9 were well above average and students achieved very well; these results continued the higher than national upward trend. At GCSE level, results in English were well above average and in English literature they were very high. However, almost a third less of Year 11 than is normal was entered for GCSE literature.

Standards and achievement

52. Achievement across all year groups is consistently good and the cumulative effect is that students' overall achievement by the time they reach the end of Year 11 is very good. Additionally, students' excellent attendance, their very good attitudes to the work and the strategies (including team-teaching) that the head of department has put in place to counter the effects of staff being on leave have all ensured that achievement is very good.
53. By Year 9, students' skills in speaking and listening are well above the national average. They are confident, use a full vocabulary and can speak at length when it is appropriate to do so. Standards in reading are also high. Students understand what they read, have a good recall of what they study and can offer their response in a clear, logical manner. Most students are able to present their ideas clearly in writing and understand how to adapt language for different audiences.

54. In Years 10 and 11, students improve their skills at a rate that means their standards remain well above average. Most of the features found in the three earlier years are also found in Years 10 and 11. The majority of students are articulate, speak in turn, listen carefully and can debate issues in a considered and respectful manner. Standards in reading remain well above average, with many students showing considerable insight into demanding literature and being able to communicate their understanding of philosophical ideas and literary techniques. Most students produce well-structured essays on a good range of topics and higher attainers produce work of a very high quality. Most students re-draft their work to improve its quality.

Teaching and learning

55. Students receive teaching that is at least good and there are examples of excellent teaching; this leads to students achieving very well. Teaching is most effective when the teacher possesses excellent subject knowledge and excellent knowledge of the course requirements and shares these with students. The result is that students know exactly what is required of them, are able to assess themselves and feel confident and optimistic that they can improve their standards and do themselves full credit in their examinations. In such circumstances students respect their teacher and give of their best. Teaching is also excellent when the teacher knows the capabilities of their students well and ensures that the challenge of the work and way it is taught will lead students on to achieve at the highest levels that might be expected of them. Such lessons are extremely well paced, include variety, allow students to be active in their learning and draw upon resources that are relevant and stimulating. Such work is also supported by excellent, careful marking and assessment that ensure that students take a pride in their work, knowing what they need to do to improve and being very keen to do it. The most effective lessons use learning support assistants to full advantage to engage the enthusiasm and involvement of students. Teaching delivers the best quality learning when students are shown how to perform tasks, particularly written tasks, rather than by simply being given instructions.
56. On the rare occasion when teaching is less effective, students' prior attainment is not sufficiently taken into account, with the result that work can be either too easy or too difficult. Often, tasks are not adequately explained or demonstrated. When the pace of the lesson is too slow, or the priorities have not been clearly thought through, students start to lose interest and become restless. When students' work is not marked sufficiently frequently or promptly, or the marking overlooks many errors or the teacher's comments are superficial and do not show students what they need to do if they are to improve, students become demotivated.

Leadership and management

57. The head of department is a very good role model and the department is efficiently managed. He has been particularly effective in ensuring that assessment is accurate across the department. He has also provided some good support for newly qualified teachers and non-specialist teachers and he certainly enjoys the confidence of his colleagues. However, monitoring in the department has not yet been successful in sharing the best practice and eliminating less effective practice.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. Standards of literacy are well above average. Most students are articulate and confident speakers and this helps them to achieve well in many subjects. Students learn and use subject-specific vocabulary. They read with good understanding and are

able to conduct their own research when asked to do so. The vast majority of students can express themselves clearly in writing and this is a substantial advantage when they need to communicate their understanding, particularly in examinations.

59. Students are provided with sufficient opportunities to develop their skills in literacy. However, there is inconsistency across subjects as to how far and how well literacy as a basic skill is taught. In some subjects, for example, there are fewer opportunities for extended writing than might be expected.

Modern foreign languages

Provision in modern languages is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Above average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good and enables students to achieve well.
- Students' attitudes are very positive, their behaviour is very good and they have very good relationships with their teachers which aids students' learning.
- Assessment is not always used effectively in lesson planning to challenge higher attainers and support lower attainers.

Commentary

Examination results

60. In GCSE examinations in 2004, results were above average in both French and German. The proportion of students entered for examination is higher than the national figures in French and very high in German.

Standards and achievement

61. By Years 9 and 11, standards in French are above average. In German they are above average by Year 9 and well above average by Year 11. This represents good achievement. Lower attaining students and students with special educational needs achieve well in Years 7 to 9 but the highest attaining students do not always reach their full potential. Because they are frequently asked to identify and apply patterns in lessons, students have a good understanding of grammar and apply rules effectively to express their ideas. They write at length and in detail to describe events in the past, present and future and to express their opinions. Lower attaining students follow models and adapt set phrases whereas average and higher attaining students write independently.
62. By Year 11, the majority of students link their ideas effectively using adverbial and time phrases and use a good range of vocabulary and structures. Most identify detail from extracts of speech and short texts with little need of guidance; lower attaining students and students with special educational needs identify the main points and specific detail with guidance. They participate in dialogues with confidence and pronunciation is usually good. They are more hesitant, however, in responding spontaneously and many place too much reliance upon written notes in expressing their ideas in speech.

Teaching and learning

63. The quality of teaching and learning is good and enables students to achieve well. Teachers' command of the languages they teach is very good, although the use of the languages being learned is somewhat erratic so that students do not always benefit from these very good role models and opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills are therefore missed. Teachers use questioning well to enable students to respond successfully and so increase their confidence in speaking. Presentations of new language are clear, using visual aids and the overhead projector so that students rapidly understand and use new language themselves. Teachers frequently ask students to identify, explain and apply patterns themselves and this results in students having a good grasp of the way the languages work and their writing is usually accurate as a result. Control and management are good; students have good relationships with their teachers, respond well, listen attentively and are concerned to do well. Starters are used well to revise previous learning and key language is effectively consolidated on the board. Activities are appropriate and well sequenced, enabling students to build effectively on what has gone before. Students are given opportunities to practise informally in pairs and increase in confidence and competence as a result, but this is often restricted in both time and scope; students are not always required to use the language to find out and give information and are therefore more hesitant in responding spontaneously. Although behaviour and attitudes are very good, students become restless and lose concentration where teacher-led activities are lengthy and they are not given the opportunity to try out the language themselves. Lower attaining students sometimes have difficulty identifying the main points in listening activities; this is because they are not always given sufficient guidance, for example by predicting key words they might hear, or the process of transferring what they have heard on to paper is too complex. Homework is used well to consolidate and extend learning and marking is thorough and gives good guidance about how to improve.

Leadership and management

64. There has been satisfactory progress since the previous inspection; appropriate action has been taken to improve assessment procedures and new course materials and the use of ICT are proving successful in raising standards. However, there is still scope to improve the use of assessment information to plan for the progress of groups of differing ability within lessons, particularly to more effectively challenge higher attaining students in Years 7 to 9. The monitoring and development of teaching and learning are effective and there is a good level of consistency across the department. Curriculum provision is good; all students study a language in Years 7 to 9 and the majority of students take both languages to Year 9. Opportunities for students to develop their learning in extra-curricular activities such as master classes and exchanges to France and Germany abroad are very good.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well above average	Well above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of mathematics, which support students' achievement very well.
- Students benefit from good regular assessment and the resulting performance data is used very well to monitor their progress.
- There is very good leadership of the department resulting in students achieving very well.
- Inconsistencies in the use of diagnostic marking of students' work prevent some students from knowing how to improve further.

Commentary

Examination results

65. Results in the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 9 were well above average and students achieved very well; these results continued the higher than national upward trend. The GCSE results in 2004 were higher than those in previous years and were also well above average.

Standards and achievement

66. By Year 9 standards are well above average. Students make at least good achievement across Years 7 to 9, having entered Year 7 with above average standards. In Years 10 and 11 those standards and good achievement are both maintained. However, the cumulative effect of the consistently good teaching and achievement, along with the students' very good attitudes to learning and very high attendance in lessons, results in students achieving very well.
67. In Year 9, higher attaining students have well above average algebraic skills. They can sketch very well graphs of linear, quadratic and reciprocal functions. However, lower attainers' numerical and algebraic skills are much weaker. Whilst they show an understanding of how to determine the rule of a basic numerical sequence, they lack confidence in working out those involving negative numbers. In Year 11, higher attaining students also have well above average algebraic skills. They can solve quadratic equations by factorisation and completing the square as well as finding graphically the solutions of complex functions. The lower attainers have weaker shape, space and measures skills. Whilst they are able to measure everyday items, they find converting between metric and imperial equivalents difficult.

Teaching and learning

68. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of mathematics. Lessons are well planned using a three-part structure and teachers do make clear the learning objectives. Consequently the majority of students are well challenged and understand what is to be learnt. However, in a minority of lessons, the matching of work to the students' needs is not sufficiently accurate to allow the students to achieve their potential. Good starter activities are used to get students engaged in the lesson. However, only in the better lessons, such as one Year 11 lesson on scatter diagrams, is learning revisited well enough to ensure students understand what they have learned. Computers are used in some lessons, though this use has not yet been fully developed to maximise students' learning. Students' self-assessment of their learning is developing and is helpful. The students are clear as to the current level or grade they are working at and targeted for, though are less clear as to the areas they have to improve upon. Helpful, diagnostic marking does take place in the better lessons. In the other lessons the teachers' written comments are more celebratory, rather than informing the students how to improve. Homework is regularly provided and contributes well to improving the students' understanding and the raising of achievement.

Leadership and management

69. The head of department is a very good role model to staff and students, providing good management and very good leadership, with a very clear vision for improvement. A very good team spirit exists amongst the hardworking teachers, who have high expectations of the students. Schemes of work are in place for Years 7 to 11 though are not sufficiently developed to fully support teaching. Good monitoring of teaching takes place and helps in the raising of standards. However, the monitoring of students' books is not as well developed, leading to inconsistencies in both marking and presentation. The students benefit from good regular assessment. The resulting performance data is used well to monitor their progress and set targets, as well as to inform planning and monitor needs within the department. Rigorous self-review does take place and results in effective development planning to move the department forwards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

70. Standards of mathematics as a basic skill across the curriculum are well above average. In a few subjects, very good use and development are made of the students' mathematical skills. For example, in one Year 10 music lesson, the students' use and understanding of numerical sequences to create random melodic patterns were integral to the lesson and their learning. However, this is not the case in most subjects and does lead to students often seeing the learning and use of mathematics as restricted only to mathematics lessons.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well above average	Well above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results in tests and GCSE examinations are well above the national average.
- Students experience consistently good teaching in all year groups. This adds up to a very good experience of teaching and learning.
- Students have very good attitudes to science and work hard.
- In some mixed ability classes in Year 7, higher attainers could learn more quickly than they do.

Commentary

Examination results

71. In the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 9, results were well above the national average and similar to those in 2003; students achieved well. Results in the 2004 GCSE science examinations were also well above the national average, as they have been for several years.

Standards and achievement

72. All students, including the lowest attainers, have at least a satisfactory basic knowledge and understanding of the topics they are studying. Their notebooks are carefully presented and contain thorough and detailed notes that are very useful for revision. Students do particularly well in investigation work and gain relatively higher marks in this part of the GCSE assessment. In higher sets, students regularly achieve standards that are very high in comparison with the national average. For example, some students in Year 9 made excellent use of ICT in recording and presenting their experimental results. In Year 11, higher attainers were successful in calculating reacting masses, having first set up the balanced equation for the reaction.
73. By Year 9, students do better in tests than might be expected, given their test results when they entered the school. They then make good progress through Years 10 and 11 so that, by the end of Year 11, their GCSE results are much better than expected in relation to their standards when they joined the school. Hence their overall achievement by the age of 16 is very good. While the quality of teaching is the major factor in enabling students to achieve so well, students' own very good attitudes, and the effort that they make both in class and doing their homework, also play an important part.

Teaching and learning

74. Most students in the school, irrespective of their year group or ability level, experience teaching that is good or better. This consistency in teaching quality enables each teacher to build with confidence on the work students have covered in earlier years. The cumulative effect of this good, secure learning at all stages is that students' eventual achievement is very good.
75. Teachers are very knowledgeable and enthusiastic; they enjoy their subject and establish very good relationships with students. Teachers give clear instructions and explanations so that students understand exactly what they are required to do and what they need to learn. An important strength of the department lies in the preparation of students for tests and examinations. Teachers provide carefully planned revision activities and plenty of practice with examination questions. They enable students to undertake a detailed analysis of where and why they went wrong, for example after the 'mock' examinations, so that students genuinely learn from their mistakes.

An example of outstanding practice

A Year 7 lesson on 'sound' began with a student reporting back on his research into the ancient myth that a duck's quack does not echo, followed by another student providing an excellent rendition of 'Baa baa black sheep' played on a plastic ruler. Students were captivated by these imaginative reminders of what they had learnt in the previous lesson. All students were then involved in classifying the loudness of sounds by 'hanging' various sounds on a 'washing line' representation of the decibel scale. They looked at a model ear and discussed the functions of the parts of the ear. They wrote their own descriptions of the ear, using the 'key words', and completed a worksheet that further reinforced their understanding of the ear and how it can be damaged and repaired. A silent final session, where students reflected on, and wrote about, what they had learnt – by seeing, doing and hearing – completed a fast-moving, challenging and hugely enjoyable lesson which had given students an excellent understanding of the topic.

76. However, where teaching is satisfactory, rather than good or very good, there are some weaknesses. In the occasional lesson for the large mixed ability groups in Year 7, the pace of the lesson, while appropriate for middle and lower attaining students, is rather slow for higher attainers who could learn more quickly than they do. Teachers generally mark students' work regularly and some give helpful suggestions about how

the work might be improved. However there is also some marking that consists only of ticks and crosses and, occasionally, important errors are not picked up.

Leadership and management

77. The head of department leads his team by example, particularly in his enthusiasm for the subject and his high expectations. Teachers, support assistants and technicians work well together as a team and share a determination to provide high quality science teaching for students. Although an appointment has been made, there is, at present, no co-ordinator for science in Years 7 to 9. This has slowed some developments in Years 7 to 9, notably the updating of the curriculum for those year groups, which the department acknowledges would now be appropriate.
78. Monitoring of teaching and learning is good, and the head of department is well informed about the strengths and weaknesses in his department. There is scope for more formal evaluation of examination results for the various teaching groups, particularly in circumstances where staffing is changing more frequently than in the past.
79. Since the time of the previous inspection, the GCSE examination results have remained well above average and the Year 9 test results have improved, particularly for higher attainers. All the weaknesses identified in the previous report have been overcome.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

	Year 9	Year 10
Standards	Well above average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Satisfactory
Teaching and learning	Good	Satisfactory

Leadership	Very good
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Very good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve very well in Year 9 and the examination classes, because of the very good teaching they receive.
- There are not enough specialist teachers of the subject.
- Teachers in other subjects provide students with many opportunities to use computers.

Commentary

Examination results

80. No students have studied to examination level in the past.

Standards and achievement

81. Students join the school with above average standards in ICT; standards are well above average by the time they reach the end of Year 9 and they have achieved well. However, this level of achievement is not consistent across the years. In Years 7 and 8, achievement is satisfactory, as students have lessons that are taught by non-specialists who do enough to maintain standards, but not raise them any further.

When taught by a specialist in Year 9, the level of achievement improves dramatically; students make great gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding and they achieve very well. Standards are well above average in all respects, irrespective of the aspect of ICT students are studying. Students who are not fluent in English make better progress than others, because they receive individual support of very good quality.

82. In Year 10, most students are taught their ICT through other subjects. Many subjects make very good use of ICT, but this helps to consolidate students' skills, rather than improve them at anything better than a satisfactory rate. Two classes follow a GCSE course; they achieve very well and their standards are very high, with the majority expected to gain GCSE grades at B or above. Their knowledge of technical aspects of ICT is outstanding. No Year 11 work was seen, because there are no timetabled classes currently in Year 11 and too little work was available from other subjects as students were revising for their GCSEs.
83. Throughout the school there are examples of outstanding work; such as the on-line testing system built by a Year 7 student, or the jazz website developed by a Year 9 student.

Teaching and learning

84. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 7 and 8, but very good in Year 9. Lessons in Years 7 and 8, taught by non-specialists, tend to follow the lesson plan to the letter, with little flair or excitement. Tasks are appropriate to the students' prior attainment, but students are not pushed to the same extent as in Year 9, so they learn enough to keep them going, but not to really extend them.
85. The teaching in Year 9, and in the examination classes in Years 10, is very good; tasks are demanding and the teacher knows exactly how to get the most out of students. These lessons are planned very well to use starter activities that build up to the main activity, such as analysing websites in pairs to draw up a list of 'dos and don'ts' for use when designing their own. Questioning is particularly good, as the teacher matches questions to the individual student and never accepts brief or incorrect answers, instead teasing out what students understand about a topic. Students' excellent attitudes also play a significant part in their very good learning in such lessons; they work exceptionally well together, work hard and concentrate completely.
86. For the students in Year 10 who do not study to examination level, the teaching is satisfactory. Teachers get students to use computers a great deal, especially in the production of coursework. However, with the notable exception of music and some design and technology teachers, few extend the skills and understanding of the students any further and the emphasis is on consolidating and using the skills they already possess. In music technology, on the other hand, students learn new skills related to music production and they achieve well.

Leadership and management

87. ICT was one of the school's biggest weaknesses at the time of the previous inspection and major improvements have been brought about as a result of the very good leadership of the head of department, who is an excellent role model. He leads by example in terms of the quality of his teaching and the extra activities that are organised; there is one group of students in Year 11 who study for GCSE in their

lunchtimes, a very high proportion of whom are expected to gain A* in the examination. The curriculum is now much better than previously and standards are much higher; there are many innovative approaches to the curriculum, such as piloting materials for national strategies and setting projects within the context of the performing arts. Nevertheless, staffing problems, caused by having only one specialist teacher, mean that students in Years 7 and 8 receive little in the way of continuity. Assessment, too, is an issue as levels awarded at the end of Year 9 are too low so they do not reflect students' actual standards, while nobody is checking on the quality of students' experiences in Years 10 and 11, outside of the examination classes.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

88. Students' skills in using ICT are well above average by the end of Years 9 and 10. Many subjects ensure that students use computers and other equipment on a frequent basis in their subjects, with particular strengths in design and technology, geography, music and physical education. However, insufficient use is made in art and design and mathematics. The experiences of the students are well planned to ensure they are taught the National Curriculum and that they consolidate their skills through regular use.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Above average	Well above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Very good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of leadership is very good, providing a clear vision.
- Students are given good advice on how to improve their work.
- Students are motivated to learn as a result of good relationships with the teachers.
- Aspects of the citizenship programme are not yet fully integrated into the teaching.

Commentary

Examination results

89. Results in the GCSE examinations in 2004 were above average and this has been the trend in recent years. Students achieve as well in geography as in their other subjects and boys and girls achieve equally well.

Standards and achievement

90. Students enter Year 7 with average geographical skills. By Year 9, their standards are above average which represents good achievement. Their geographical vocabulary is well developed enabling them to talk confidently about physical processes, while they have good map skills and can locate places accurately. Students who choose geography as a subject in Year 10 are by Year 11 working to a standard well above average which represents good achievement. They have a detailed knowledge of the impact of man on the landscape and can explain confidently a range of physical processes. Their GCSE coursework is well presented and very thorough and makes very good use of their skills in ICT.

Teaching and learning

91. In Years 7 to 9, students benefit from knowledgeable, enthusiastic teachers. Teachers plan lessons well and engage the students by using a range of activities although there is a slight tendency to try to cover too much. Teachers create interesting, enjoyable lessons and, with good relationships based on mutual respect, behaviour is good and students want to learn. Students answer questions with enthusiasm and everyone is involved, being keen to offer their own ideas. Written tasks and homework are used to reinforce learning but there are insufficient opportunities for extended writing. The teaching of citizenship is underdeveloped. Students are given very good guidance on how to improve their work and encouraged to evaluate their own learning.
92. In Years 10 and 11, students are actively engaged by purposeful well-planned lessons. Students' attitudes to the subject are very good and their responses to well-directed questions are confident and evaluative. They need more opportunities for independent or group study. Teachers have a good knowledge of the examination requirements and are able to guide students towards high grades. Marking is regular and informative. Support for GCSE coursework is especially strong.

Leadership and management

93. Leadership is very good with a clear vision for raising standards and creating opportunities for students. The department is well managed with very good teamwork. Detailed schemes of work are supported by effective policies and procedures. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection.

History

Provision in history is **very good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Above average	Well above average
Achievement	Good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Good	Very good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Very good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Years 10 and 11 are well above average because of very good guidance that students receive.
- Students achieve very well in Years 10 and 11 because of very good teaching.
- Arrangements to assess and monitor students' progress are not developed enough.

Commentary

Examination results

94. Results in the 2004 examination were average and lower than in the previous year. This was due to staffing issues that have now been satisfactorily resolved.

Standards and achievement

95. By Year 9, students gain skills in using sources of evidence to interpret the past but a minority do not explain answers in enough detail when interpreting events. They have good understanding of chronology and can place events in time lines. Students are knowledgeable of topics, and understanding is improved through research using books and ICT. Some students, however, use ICT too much for presentational purposes rather than to advance their knowledge and understanding of the topic. They know about the development of black peoples of America and are aware of social and moral issues of the slave trade. At the end of Year 11 students have made very good progress in extending the range and depth of knowledge of topics. In particular, they make significant gains in answering questions and coursework because they get much guidance. They gain knowledge of a wide range of terms and use them effectively in extended writing. They express themselves well and are able to interpret cartoons and other sources of evidence.

Teaching and learning

96. In Years 7 to 9, students benefit from being taught by enthusiastic, specialist teachers and as a result learning is good. Lessons are well managed so that students know what is expected of them. As a result learning is brisk, time well used and much is achieved. Teachers use a variety of resources and it helps students to become self-reliant. Resources are well used and help students think and generate ideas about

topics. Marking is regular but the setting of targets for improvement is inconsistent. Students with special educational needs achieve well when provided with additional adult support, but at other times there are not enough strategies used to meet the needs of all students. In Years 10 and 11, students are well engaged in a variety of interesting and challenging activities because teachers plan their lessons well. In some lessons, however, too much time is spent on minor activities, leaving little time to consolidate learning. Students' attitudes to study are very good. They benefit from very good guidance that leads to them improving coursework and examination skills. Teachers expect much of students in effort and application to study. Regular testing and assessment enable them to know how well they are doing and how to improve. As a result students' morale is high.

Leadership and management

97. The curriculum is well planned and learning intentions identified and incorporated into the development plan. Emphasis is on raising standards and improving students' achievement in history. The strategies adopted are good and are leading to rapid improvements, particularly in Years 10 and 11. The procedures to assess students' achievement at National Curriculum levels are at an early stage of development. There has been very good progress since the previous inspection because of better curriculum provision and improved learning opportunities.

Religious education

Religious education was not part of the Section 10 inspection.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well above average	Well above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good teaching in all years, together with students' very good attitudes, leads to good achievement by all students.
- Standards in food and textiles are very high and reflect the rigorous teaching that students receive.
- Higher attaining students are not consistently extended in Years 7 to 9 because the work is not always matched to their needs.
- The department does not evaluate its own performance rigorously enough in order to know how well it is doing or what it needs to do to improve further.

Commentary

Examination results

98. Results in the 2004 GCSE examinations were above the national average. Girls did better than boys.

Standards and achievement

99. The standards attained by students by Year 9 are at least well above average in all aspects of the subject. Students are articulate and can explain their ideas and understanding very effectively. The department makes a good contribution to students' citizenship education and in food and textiles lessons students draw upon different cultural influences in their designing. By Year 11, most students show confidence in using a range of materials and processes and use product analysis effectively. Students' work is often outstanding, particularly in textiles and food technology. Standards in resistant materials have risen significantly; work produced by students reflects well above average standards of making and a creative approach to designing. ICT is very well used for presentation and is having a beneficial effect upon standards in all areas. Students' attitudes are very good and the hard work and initiative they show are major factors in their achievement.

Teaching and learning

100. Students benefit from knowledgeable teachers who demonstrate an interest in the subject. Lessons are planned well, and the pace of lessons is usually brisk. A good range of activities captures the interest and involvement of all students. Teachers use their own knowledge and experience to challenge and extend learners; however, the most able students often receive the same tasks as the rest of their groups and consequently do not achieve as much as they could. Homework is used well to reinforce learning. Where teaching is very good as in textiles, the pace of lessons is very brisk, and students are inspired through challenging activities that encourage active participation. In contrast, lessons in some resistant materials and graphics lessons are uninspiring and too easy paced. The standard of marking and ongoing assessment is good; teachers regularly mark students' work and give useful feedback. Students are generally aware of their own performance targets and know what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

101. The department works well together and the day-to-day running of individual subjects is good; however, there is insufficient rigour in the evaluation of the department's performance. This is particularly true for the monitoring of teaching and learning, and as a result, best practice is not being shared and the head of department cannot pinpoint exactly what needs to be done in order to raise standards.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

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

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Above average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good

Progress since previous inspection	Good
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Main strengths and weaknesses

- Work in ceramics is of a high standard.
- Drawing in point perspective is impressive in Year 9.
- Students' very good attitudes to the subject contribute to their success.
- There is inadequate use of ICT to fully extend students' learning.
- There is limited emphasis on tone and texture in students' drawings.

Commentary

Examination results

102. In 2004, GCSE results were above the national average. Standards and results have fluctuated between average and above average over the past three years.

Standards and achievement

103. Standards by Year 9 are above average, which represents good achievement given students' average standards in art and design on entry to the school. The vast majority of students have very high standards of drawing in one and two-point perspective. Work in ceramics, especially when based on natural forms, is also well above average. Drawing and painting are less successful. Despite learning a range of techniques for achieving tone and texture in drawing in Year 7, students rarely use these effectively in subsequent work. Where done, drawing from direct observation, such as portraits in Year 7, is of a high standard. However, it is not extensive enough to drive up standards in drawing.
104. Students continue to achieve well in Years 10 and 11. By Year 11 the majority of students research and develop their topics in good depth and show good imagination and initiative. There is good use of line but the application of tone and texture is limited to the higher attaining students. There is good awareness of composition. Work is generally small scale, delicate and subtle with little that is bold and dramatic. A minority of students, mostly boys, do not spend enough time on their coursework and a significant amount of their work is unfinished.
105. In all years there is good use of ICT for research into the work of major artists but there is little use in manipulating images or exploring impact in design and composition. There is inadequate provision of ICT within the art rooms.

Teaching and learning

106. The teachers have good specialist knowledge and expertise. They give students a wide range of artistic experiences in two and three-dimensional work. This ensures that they have a good basis for further creative and imaginative study. Teachers give all students individual attention within lessons so that all students, including those with special educational needs, make equally good progress. Students show very good attitudes to learning in lessons. However, in GCSE, when students fall behind with coursework they need more specific written guidance to help them meet deadlines.

Leadership and management

107. There is good vision for the subject and good mutual support. As at the time of the previous inspection there is inadequate space in one of the rooms, especially for the large groups in Years 8 and 9. Standards, teaching and learning have all improved since the previous inspection.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Average	Average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
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Leadership	Good
Management	Unsatisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Unsatisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' enthusiasm for the subject and secure musical knowledge raise standards and improve achievement.
- Students enjoy music lessons and work hard.
- Students' learning is enhanced by the good quality specialist tuition they receive from the visiting teachers.
- Weaknesses in management over time have resulted in some underachievement in the past and a drop in standards since the previous inspection.

Commentary

Examination results

108. Results in the 2004 GCSE examinations were below average and considerably lower than at the time of the previous inspection. Boys did much worse than girls. Boys and girls did not do as well in music as they did in their other subjects.

Standards and achievement

109. By Year 9, students have strong performance skills but a much weaker understanding of composing and musical structure. They work co-operatively and enthusiastically in pairs and really enjoy using the good quality improved resources. Higher attainers are confident performers and because work is well matched to their needs they are able to incorporate effectively their secure understanding of musical elements in the pieces they perform and create. Lower attainers and those with special educational needs are less confident about performing and composing. Students in Years 7 and 8 are benefiting from a much improved curriculum and have recently started to use computers to enhance their composition work. In Years 10 and 11, standards are lower than they should be because students have underachieved for some time. Higher attainers perform very well on their chosen instrument because of the good instrumental tuition they receive, but are much weaker at composing and theoretical aspects of the course. Musically talented students are accomplished performers and get regular opportunities to take part in the good quality ensembles within the school. Lower attainers struggle with appraising music and their knowledge of musical elements is limited. Students on the music technology course are achieving well because the course is well matched to their needs and abilities.

Teaching and learning

110. Teaching observed was good overall and has recently improved. Teachers have secure knowledge of music and produce highly practical, well-planned lessons that enable students to learn and achieve well. Lessons have a good range of activities that capture the students' interest. They usually start with activities that quickly grab the students' attention and prepare them for the main task. Most lessons end with an effective summary of what has been learned. Resources are used well and teachers spend time and care creating high quality learning aids. Relationships are excellent throughout the department. Students generally work hard in lessons and do not need to rely on the teacher to keep them focused. In Years 10 and 11, students work really well on their own or in small groups because they have very positive attitudes to learning. However, until very recently teaching has been disrupted and has resulted in students not learning as much as they should have done.

Leadership and management

111. This is an improving department recovering from some significant weaknesses in management. Leadership is now characterised by a strong vision and total commitment to improving all aspects of the department. This has quickly resulted in much improved resources and schemes of work after a period of instability and a legacy of underachievement. There has previously been a heavy focus on ensuring high quality out-of-school activities. There is now a much clearer view on raising standards in lessons and ensuring students now achieve as well as they should. The underachievement that resulted from management and teaching weaknesses is now being tackled, and the department is beginning to improve. Over the last few years targets have not been reached and the department has suffered a significant decline since the previous inspection. Assessment procedures have been inaccurate, but systems are now in place to ensure students are given a more precise level for their work and useful comments to help them improve. The quality of the extra-curricular musical activities, such as the 'Manjazz' group, remains a strength of the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

	Year 9	Year 11 (GCSE groups)
Standards	Above average	Well above average
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good	Very good

Leadership	Excellent
Management	Very good
Progress since previous inspection	Excellent

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve very well because of their very good attitudes and the very good teaching they receive.
- Excellent leadership has resulted in excellent progress being made since the previous inspection.
- Outstanding extra-curricular opportunities enable all students to participate, and the talented to excel, in school and beyond.
- Inadequate accommodation constrains the curriculum and restricts students' opportunities to achieve high standards in some activities.

Commentary

Examination results

112. The 2004 GCSE results were well above average with a significant proportion of students, particularly boys, gaining the higher grades. Students did better in physical education than in their other subjects.

Standards and achievement

113. Standards by Year 9 are above average. This represents very good achievement, not only in relation to students' starting point on entering the school, but also in overcoming the constraints of the accommodation. All students achieve very well in outdoor games, well illustrated by boys in tennis, and girls in rounders. Students with special educational needs are very well supported and achieve as successfully as their classmates, as seen in athletics.

114. In the Year 11 GCSE course, standards are well above average in both the theoretical and practical aspects of the course. This also reflects very good achievement, well illustrated by girls in the shot putt, and boys in the triple jump. It was not possible to see any core curriculum practical work in Years 10 or 11. Standards in extra-curricular sport are very high, reflected in individual and team successes at district, county and national level.

Teaching and learning

115. Very good teaching provides a high level of challenge, pace and expectation of what students can achieve. Tasks and resources are carefully matched to students' abilities with the result that learning for all students is very good, well illustrated in athletics. Teachers' enthusiasm is infectious. Most students are highly motivated, and their attitudes are very good, and often excellent. This is evident in the very high level of participation in lessons and extra-curricular activities, very good behaviour and the commitment students give to the subject. Excellent planning and organisation ensure that students are engaged in a variety of interesting and challenging activities, despite the constraints of the accommodation. A strength of assessment for learning is the way students play an active role in self and peer assessment in all lessons.

Leadership and management

116. Outstanding leadership, supported by a strong team, has successfully developed a distinctive ethos focused on the philosophy that every student matters. Excellent teamwork ensures that students' needs come first, despite many difficulties caused by inadequate facilities. The department is moving forward dynamically; recent initiatives to develop new schemes of work and assessment procedures are very good. Development plans are good, but require further detail on how they are to be achieved. An excellent extra-curricular programme provides many opportunities for all students, especially the gifted and talented, to participate and excel. The school is very close to achieving the aim of the national strategy for 85 per cent of students to receive at least two hours a week of quality physical education.

117. Excellent progress has been made since the previous inspection. The GCSE examination course has been introduced, students achieve very well and teaching is now very good.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

The school is a designated specialist performing arts college. This recognition has created new opportunities in drama, music and dance, with new studio and rehearsal facilities. Much of the school's work is **vocationally** based. Exciting performance projects in partnership with outside arts professionals have culminated in musicals and drama productions.

Performing arts

Provision in the performing arts is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Above average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	N/A

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching of drama is excellent and leads to students achieving exceedingly well in this strand of the performing arts.
- Good use is made of visiting artists to enhance students' learning.
- Not all departments throughout the curriculum have embraced fully the development of performing arts.

Commentary

Examination results

118. The subject has recently been introduced and there are no previous examination results.

Standards and achievement

119. By Year 9, most students can create and perform dances using a range of basic movement patterns and techniques. Students produce a 'partner dance' but the quality of movement is poor. In drama, students use a variety of dramatic techniques to explore ideas and issues. Students improve vocalisation skills and develop good understanding of character, though lower attaining students do not always vary tone and pace. In music, good use is made of visiting artists and business links.
120. By Year 11, through various aspects of the performing arts, students learn the value of close collaboration when preparing devised pieces. In drama, pupils adopt different roles such as being pompous through to playing the fool. Relationships are excellent, so that students are very supportive of one another in performance. Students use space well and show good awareness of audience. The majority reach a high standard in practical work, portraying a character convincingly and engaging an audience's interest. Presentation is very good, showing students' commitment to their work.
121. The vocational music technology course is an innovative and exciting venture. Manor School is one of only two educational establishments across the nation offering this course to students in Years 10 and 11. Students enjoy the experience to link the work they do directly to the music industry and life outside school such as a local music studio. The course is designed to give the students an experience of using music technology to create, manipulate and refine music using high quality sound recording equipment and computer software. It is proving very popular with the students. Teachers understand the course requirements and pass this knowledge on well to the students. All students are achieving well. It is not possible to judge standards at this stage of the course, as this is the first year of its existence.

Teaching and learning

122. Teachers have very good specialist knowledge, prepare well and plan lessons carefully, as seen in a Year 11 drama class where students were well motivated and made excellent progress, through well-designed tasks. There were discernible gains in students' knowledge, skills and understanding, where clear objectives were shared with students, and a brisk pace of learning moved them forward step by step to produce some creditable performances.
123. Teachers enthuse students. Through a wide range of activities students are encouraged to become more confident, to co-operate closely together and to realise that the contribution of each individual is vital. A notable feature of the work in drama

is that is that it looks outwards; it places the context of what is happening beyond the classroom into the real, live theatre or workshop.

Leadership and management

124. Very good leadership is beginning to bring the different strands of the performing arts together. This leadership extends to making teachers in other subjects aware of how practical and performing skills can be used across the curriculum. Even so, it still remains the case that the benefits and ramifications of being a specialist college are not fully understood in all subjects.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	No judgement made	No judgement made
Achievement	No judgement made	No judgement made
Teaching and learning	No judgement made	No judgement made

Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Not applicable

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment and reporting arrangements do not sufficiently tell students how well they are progressing.
- The suspended timetable enables students to take part in an active citizenship programme.
- There is no effective monitoring or evaluation of the citizenship programme.
- Whole-school and year activities for national and local charities enhance active citizenship.

Commentary

Standards and achievement

125. Citizenship is taught through subjects and special occasions when the timetable is suspended for specific topics. Only one lesson could be observed during the inspection. No scrutiny of students' work was undertaken as it could not truly reflect the debate, small group skills and oral interaction needed for accurate judgments to be made about standards and achievement in citizenship. Consequently no judgements were made about standards or achievement. Students do not follow an examination course in citizenship.

Teaching and learning

126. No judgements were made on teaching and learning. In the one lesson seen, the level of debate and student involvement was good as students discussed issues about refugees and their integration into society. The citizenship programme is enhanced when a suspended timetable operates and enables activities such as a Year 10 visit to the Galleries of Justice and a Year 9 citizenship day on crime and personal safety. Awareness of local and world problems are well recognised by students. For example, the non-uniform days help to raise money for a range of charities, like the shoe box appeal. This helps students to appreciate and understand about wider aspects of being a well-informed citizen.

Leadership and management

127. The new citizenship co-ordinator has been in post for two terms. She has successfully assessed the situation and has the vision to see how to develop the subject. At present, all subjects contribute to citizenship; however, not all subjects make a strong contribution and only occasionally are students made aware that some elements of subjects are also part of the citizenship programme. All teachers teach citizenship but the majority have had insufficient training in order to make a good contribution within

their individual subject. Monitoring and evaluation of citizenship have yet to be developed to ensure all elements are successfully covered. Although the subject is reported to parents, assessment procedures are inadequate as they do not measure the progress students make across the three strands. Citizenship was not a curriculum subject at the last inspection.

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	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	1
Attendance	1
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	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).