

INSPECTION REPORT

SAINT MARTIN'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Nuneaton, Warwickshire

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120305

Headteacher: Mr M P Kerridge

Lead inspector: Mr D B Evans

Dates of inspection: 28 February – 2 March 2005

Inspection number: 268449

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle deemed secondary
School category: Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils: 11 to 14 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 332

School address: Stoke Golding
Nuneaton
Warwickshire
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Telephone number: 01455 212386
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr John McGlynn

Date of previous inspection: 8 March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Martin's Catholic High School is a voluntary aided school which admits pupils of all abilities from ages 11 to 14. It is smaller than the average for schools serving this age range. The numbers of boys and girls are broadly the same. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups and all speak English fluently. The proportions of pupils with special educational needs and with statements are average. Most pupils with special educational needs have specific learning difficulties and autistic and physical disabilities. The school serves a community with generally high aspirations and value education although there are nevertheless pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties in the school. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well above average. The school received an Achievement Award in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1049	Brian Evans	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Geography
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18709	Nina Bee	Team inspector	Special educational needs
31673	John Gwyer-Roberts	Team inspector	Citizenship Music
30699	Arthur Kemp	Team inspector	Mathematics
1085	John Laver	Team inspector	History Physical education
31688	Brian McGonagle	Team inspector	Art and design
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27351	Michael Stanton	Team inspector	Design and technology Information and communication technology
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Martin's Catholic High School provides an effective education for its pupils. There are many positive features to its work. Teaching is good as is the pastoral support provided for pupils. Pupils achieve well and standards are well above average. Pupils' attitudes towards their work are positive. This is because of the good leadership of the headteacher and senior staff who are successfully promoting an ethos of high expectations and the importance of learning. However, there is some inconsistency in the quality of management. The value for money provided by the school is good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher and senior staff give good leadership.
- Governors provide good support in strategic and financial planning.
- Provision for citizenship does not meet statutory requirements.
- Pupils have high levels of literacy and numeracy and achieve very high standards in science.
- Although there is good practice in many areas, management overall is satisfactory because effective monitoring and evaluation by senior staff are at an early stage of development.
- Attendance is well above average.
- The school seeks and values the views of pupils and parents.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to apply their information and communication technology (ICT) in a number of subjects.
- Standards are not high enough in modern foreign languages.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good most notably in the quality of strategic planning and in the improving assessment procedures. High standards in English, mathematics and science have been maintained. Assessment systems have recently been upgraded and provide a strong platform for further raising achievement. Positive action has been taken in respect of most of the key issues identified, and some strengths, such as the good teaching, have been maintained. Less progress has been made in performance management and monitoring by senior staff.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils achieve well. The standards attained by pupils by the end of Year 9 are well above average. Validated test results for 2004 are not available but in 2003 test results for English, mathematics and science were well above the national average. Pupils' average point scores were also well above the national average, as shown in the table below. In comparison with schools with similar prior attainment scores in English and mathematics were above average and very high for science – in the top five per cent of schools. The overall trend in test results at the end of Year 9 has been consistently high. Inspection evidence confirms these high standards. Pupils achieve well. They achieve very well in the core subjects, design and technology, geography and physical education. They achieve well in all other subjects except for ICT, modern foreign languages and citizenship where achievement is satisfactory. Higher attaining pupils, those who are gifted and talented and those with special educational needs achieve well. Differences in achievement between boys and girls are lower than those nationally.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A	A	B
mathematics	A	A	A	B

science	A	A	A	A*
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Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.

Similar schools are those whose pupils have attained similarly at the end of Year 6.

Pupils' attitudes to school are good and their behaviour is good. **Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual moral, social and cultural development is good.** Levels of attendance are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good.

Most teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons well to include a variety of activities and a good pace. Pupils are eager to learn, articulate and concentrate well. They work well in groups and have good independent learning skills. Provision of homework is good. Assessment is good. There are some good systems for assessing pupils and tracking their progress centrally but good practice is not universally shared across all subjects.

The curriculum has some significant strengths but also some important weaknesses. It is unsatisfactory overall because National Curriculum requirements for citizenship are not met. Opportunities for enrichment are good. Accommodation is satisfactory and staffing and learning resources are satisfactory. The school provides good quality care and pastoral support for pupils and good guidance. It values and acts on pupils' views well. The school's partnerships with parents, schools and the wider community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is good. Management is satisfactory because there is inconsistency in monitoring and evaluation of policies in a number of the subjects and aspects of the school. The work of the governors is good. There is now a balanced budget and the governing body is implementing appropriate strategies to address weaknesses in the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils are positive about the school's provision.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Extend existing good practice in monitoring and evaluation across all subjects and aspects of school life.
- Improve opportunities for pupils to apply their ICT skills.
- Raise standards in modern foreign languages.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that statutory requirements for citizenship are met fully.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Standards by the end of Year 9 are well above average and pupils achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good in English and science and high standards have been maintained in the core subjects since the last inspection.
- Pupils have well above average literacy and numeracy skills.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their ICT skills in a number of subjects.
- Standards in French and citizenship are not high enough.

Commentary

1. National test results in all three core subjects at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were well above the national average. These high standards have been maintained since the last inspection and are confirmed by work seen during the inspection. There are no national comparative data published yet for 2004 but the school's calculations show that results are likely to follow the same pattern. When compared with schools with similar prior attainment at Key Stage 2 the average points score per pupil in 2003 was above average in English and mathematics and very high in science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	n/a (36.1)	n/a (33.4)
mathematics	n/a (38.8)	n/a (35.4)
science	n/a (39.6)	n/a (33.6)

Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Inspection evidence shows that the school's strategies are being successful in maintaining high standards in tests at the end of Year 9 in English, mathematics and science. Good teaching, good attitudes to learning and improving assessment procedures for monitoring progress all underpin pupils' good achievement in most areas of the curriculum. Achievement is very good in English, mathematics and science because teaching is of a high quality and teachers have successfully adapted elements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to pupils' needs. Recently installed ICT hardware and specialist accommodation provide a good platform for improving ICT across the curriculum. Standards are average because opportunities for pupils to apply their ICT skills are limited in a number of subjects including mathematics and science. However, in design and technology, computer software is used effectively to support learning and pupils achieve very well. Achievement in French is not as high as it should be partly because the modern foreign languages department has been affected by staffing difficulties. In citizenship there is no formal assessment of achievement and this subject is a priority for further improving standards.
3. Gifted and talented pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. This good achievement has been maintained since the previous inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is very good and punctuality is good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attendance is very good with pupils keen to come to school.
- Although behaviour is good overall, there is inconsistency in the behaviour of pupils in classes.
- The school has very effective policies to deal with any instances of bullying or harassment.

Commentary

4. Virtually all pupils believe that they are well taught and that the school has high expectations for them. They are pleased to be at school and take an active part in the activities provided. During the inspection pupils stated that teachers were keen to understand any difficulties they had and work with them to overcome these. As a result most pupils are enthusiastic to contribute to lessons and take full advantage of extra-curricular activities such as the school orchestra. Pupils with special educational needs generally show good attitudes to learning. They develop very good relationships with the joint special educational needs co-ordinators and show very positive attitudes to learning when she teaches them in small groups.
5. Behaviour is good overall and at the last inspection it was very good. Around the school pupils behave well are polite and relate well to each other and adults. At break-times and during lunch they are mature and responsible. In formal situations such as assemblies behaviour is very good. There is a clear behaviour policy culminating in exclusion. Behaviour in most classes is good. However, the application of the behaviour policy is not consistently applied across all classes. As a result excellent behaviour was seen in some classes while in other classes there were occasional instances of inappropriate behaviour by a minority of pupils.
6. Bullying and harassment is uncommon but where it does exist the school has a very clear policy to deal with it. Pupils are well aware of the policy and state that it is very effective. Relationships between pupils and with adults are good and parents recognise that their children become mature and independent.
7. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils' spiritual development is good with four assemblies a week and a form period which includes an act of worship on the other day. In assemblies there is a strong spiritual dimension which reinforces the school's moral code of conduct. Moral education is good with clear behaviour rules which are reinforced well in individual subjects such as mathematics, English and physical education. Pupils' social development is very good with pupils working responsibly in groups and in pairs particularly effectively in music, mathematics and English. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory with very good contributions from English, geography and modern languages. Pupils of all backgrounds are satisfactorily prepared for life in a multicultural community. The school is to undertake its own audit of its provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in the near future.

Attendance

Attendance at the school is well above the national average with very low unauthorised absence. Parents and carers support the school by ensuring that their children attend regularly. There are very good systems to deal with occasional absences. Many pupils arrive by school bus and although these can sometimes be delayed, punctuality is still good. These are improvements on the last inspection when attendance was good and punctuality satisfactory.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.2
National data	6.9	National data	1.1

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

Exclusions

In the past year, the number of fixed-term exclusions was low. There were no permanent exclusions in the same period.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	319	25	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	1	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good overall. Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is good. Apart from unsatisfactory provision in citizenship, the breadth of curricular opportunities is satisfactory and opportunities for enrichment are good. Accommodation, staffing and resources for learning are satisfactory. The school's partnerships with parents, other schools and the wider community are good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have high expectations and pupils respond by achieving well.
- A comprehensive assessment database supports teachers' planning well although there are inconsistencies in its effectiveness between subjects. Citizenship is not assessed.
- Pupils are eager learners.
- Good teaching and learning has been maintained since the last inspection.

Commentary

8. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching was good or better in over two thirds of lessons observed and in a third it was very good. One lesson observed was unsatisfactory, one was poor and just over one in four lessons were satisfactory. Some very good teaching was seen in nearly all subjects.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 73 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (1%)	24 (33%)	26 (36%)	20 (28%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	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.

9. Key strengths are teachers' high expectations, including the ability to involve pupils in their learning, and teaching styles that allow all pupils to participate in lesson activities. These qualities remain much as they were at the time of the last inspection. In return pupils apply themselves well and often achieve higher standards than expected. Since the last inspection a further support for teachers in raising achievement has been the setting up of a comprehensive database for the analysis and monitoring of individual performance.
10. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and give clear and informative explanations to pupils. The friendly relationships that many teachers have with pupils and the way they intervene to keep them on task enable pupils to learn well. Students contribute a great deal to the success of many lessons, as they arrive ready to work and concentrate very hard. They are attentive, interested and are eager learners. In a few occasions, work is not challenging enough and pupils show their disaffection by idle chatter and poor behaviour in lessons. Generally, high attaining and gifted and talented pupils are given opportunities which challenge them to apply their knowledge and understanding in problem-solving. Provision of homework is good. It is taken seriously as is the opportunity to inculcate good work habits and to encourage pupils to take some responsibility for their learning. The impact of this is seen, for example, in Year 9 where pupils experience success in tests in English, mathematics and science.
11. A comprehensive assessment policy has been introduced recently. Information is used from national base data provided from primary schools and confirmed from alternative commercial schemes. As a result the school is securely positioned to create a firm basis to set challenging targets for pupils of all levels of ability. Progress is regularly monitored to confirm target acquisition with both interim and full reports. Performance is analysed within department areas, which remains a developmental issue. There are some inconsistencies between subject areas relating to pupils awareness of their past, current and predicted levels of attainment. Citizenship is not assessed. Overall the management of the data is excellent with very widely researched and secure systems of data gathering.
12. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. When the specialist teachers work with pupils with special educational needs in small groups, they are taught very well. This is because they are very aware of the levels the pupils are working at and accurately matches work to their individual needs. In all classes, pupils with special educational needs are integrated well and generally supported effectively. However, sometimes teaching in whole lessons is not so good because some teachers do not consistently use assessment information when they plan lessons. As a result, activities are sometimes planned that are too difficult for some pupils. When this happens, pupils do not do as well as they should. In addition, day-to-day marking is often not constructive enough to inform pupils with special educational needs what they need to do to improve.

The curriculum

The curriculum provision for pupils is unsatisfactory because the provision for citizenship does not meet statutory requirements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The programmes of study in English, mathematics and science encourage high achievement.
- The design and technology curriculum has a particular strength through its use of computer-aided drawing software.
- Extra-curricular provision in PE develops pupils' skills at all levels but accommodation in PE constrains pupil and teacher opportunity for skill development, extra-curricular activities and curriculum delivery.
- The provision for citizenship education is unsatisfactory.
- The use of ICT across the curriculum is under-developed.

Commentary

13. In Years 7, 8 and 9, the curriculum meets pupil needs; all subjects required by law are taught. All core subjects cover the curriculum well, as does design and technology. The English curriculum is well taught and by making good use of good resources provides challenging literacy experiences for pupils - despite several members of staff holding part-time posts. Mathematics covers the curriculum well. The science curriculum is also good, learning is firmly based on practical work and science learning is set in context. Design technology has particular strengths in CAD (computer aided design) and CAM (computer aided manufacture) areas. Foundation subject curriculum subject provision is in the main satisfactory. The National Curriculum is covered but there is little extension through visits or innovative content or approaches. The physical education curriculum is enhanced by good participation in sports clubs and teams, almost half of the school participating in sporting activity of some kind. These activities are constrained however due to the lack of an indoor gymnasium and outdoor all-weather-pitches. The school fields are poorly drained and the combination of these three factors restricts opportunities for visiting teams and pupils in bad weather. Whilst there is a school orchestra, a recorder group and a choir of around 50 pupils which enhance the musical experience of pupils, the taught curriculum includes an insufficiently broad range of musical styles.
14. At the last inspection, a key issue was to improve the quality of curriculum provision by developing the scheme of work for personal, social and health education (PSHE). The school has now a co-ordinator for PSHE and a structured programme is included in the timetable and delivered by form tutors. There has been an audit to consider the delivery of the citizenship curriculum but currently coverage is inadequate. There is no assessment of pupils' capabilities in this area and provision is unsatisfactory.
15. The curriculum offers equal opportunity of access to all subjects to all pupils including those with special educational needs or those identified as gifted and talented. Support teachers are well used especially with pupils with special educational needs. Voluntary supplementary classes are offered to help pupils raise the standard of their work and many gifted and talented pupils attend these. There is scope to target more specifically opportunities for challenging and extending gifted and talented pupils - who already achieve well. The school curriculum statement provides a clear statement of the general aims of the curriculum, its ethos and the approaches to be adopted. It does not explain how this is to be achieved. There are plans to roll out taught ICT from Year 7 and Year 8 into Year 9 but there is uncertainty where the time is to come from. Similarly, the future time allocations for a foreign language and PE is an area of uncertainty. These are curriculum issues which are currently being addressed by senior staff and governors.
16. Parents at the parents' meeting indicated that the provision for pupils with special educational needs school was good and the inspection team would agree with them. All pupils with special educational needs have access to all activities that the school offers. Individual education plans are in place and these plans identify the areas the pupils have difficulty with. In addition, there are good opportunities for subject staff to add their own subject specific targets. This is good practice. Reviews are held regularly and all adults who work with these

pupils are involved in this process. Parents are satisfactorily informed about how well their children are doing and the co-ordinators keep well-organised documentation on all pupils. The previous inspection stated that the accommodation was unsatisfactory. This is no longer an issue. There are two, newly built learning support rooms plus an office, which are used effectively for small group teaching, and the special educational needs administration.

17. The provision for pupils who are gifted and talented is in its early stages of development and there is too little evidence to make a judgement on the quality of provision. However, there are good identification procedures and the co-ordinator has worked hard at developing staff awareness and has started to introduce extra activities for these pupils.
18. Extra-curricular activities are highly valued in drama, sport and music. These activities have a high take up. Many pupils travel some distance into school by bus from rural areas and so have some difficulty in participating in activities after school. Lunch hour is a relatively short period for clubs. In spite of these constraints a higher than average proportion of pupils take part in extra-curricular activities which helps them to further develop skills learned in their timetabled lessons.
19. The school has an adequate number of teachers to meet requirements in all subject areas. The majority of teachers are experienced subject specialists and this contributes to the high levels of attainment of pupils. There are sufficient learning support assistants to meet pupils' needs.
20. Accommodation is satisfactory. It is good in science, which benefits from high quality laboratories, and ICT has a purpose-built suite accessible to all subjects. However, whilst there is excellent specialist accommodation for food and textiles, the design and technology workshop area is in need of refurbishment. This work is going ahead at the beginning of summer 2005. There are insufficient practice rooms for music, and inadequate indoor accommodation restricts the range of activities in physical education.
21. Resources for learning are generally satisfactory. A new computer suite has added significantly to the capacity to deliver the ICT curriculum. Design and technology have good CAD/CAM provision an improvement since the last inspection. Text resources and use of ICT are good in English, geography and history.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides good care for its pupils. The provision of advice and guidance is good and is based on good monitoring of achievement and personal development. Pupils' involvement in the life and work of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Form tutors provide good support for pupils' personal development.
- There are good systems to enable pupils and parents to make informed decisions about the next stage of their education.
- Good induction procedures ensure that pupils settle quickly into the school.
- Risk assessment is used effectively to ensure pupil safety.

Commentary

22. At the time of the last inspection a number of health and safety issues were raised and it was judged to be unsatisfactory. The school has taken action to address these issues and health and safety procedures are now good. Risk assessment for external trips is very thorough and they are also carried out for activities within the school where additional risks exist, such as design and technology and science. Child protection procedures are firmly in place. Two

members of staff are nominated child protection officers and all staff have received recent training. A number of staff are trained in first aid and the school has effective systems for the control of medicines. The site is well maintained and virtually litter free.

23. This is a relatively small school where staff know their pupils well. Form tutors usually stay with a form during their time at the school. This enables them to monitor pupils' personal development well over their stay at the school and provide good advice and support. Tutors liaise well with the special needs coordinators and learning support assistants to ensure that additional support is provided where needed. The school nurse runs a confidential drop-in session each week where pupils can get advice on any health or personal matter. Through this they have access to counselling services unconnected to the school. There is satisfactory monitoring of academic progress. In the best practice, pupils understand their targets and how they can improve their work. The school has good links with the local upper school which funds a learning mentor who is available to assist pupils with issues regarding behaviour or attitudes to learning.
24. Pupils in the main school with special educational needs are generally well supported by the adults who work with them in their classes. They are very well supported when they work with the specialist teachers in small groups in the learning support rooms. The school has good links with external agencies and uses them well when necessary to support pupils with special educational needs. Clear documentation is kept on all children that shows the good achievement they are making.
25. Within the school library there is a small but well stocked section providing information on further study and career opportunities. Final year pupils receive good guidance from the librarian and a representative from the local Connexions service on how to access information through the section or on-line via the Careers Information Database. Parents and pupils are invited to a number of meetings and a road-show run by local upper schools. The local college of further education runs taster days to inform pupils of vocational opportunities. This together with discussions with staff enables them to make informed decisions on their next stage in education.
26. Pupils' views are sought well, mainly through the school council. This consists of two representatives of each form and meets regularly with a member of staff who liaises on their behalf with the head teacher and other staff. Most pupils understand the role and effectiveness of the school council and believe that their views are listened to by the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents, other schools and the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Parent Teacher Association provides very good support to the school.
- Parents find it easy to approach the school and as a result any problems are quickly dealt with.
- The strong link with the local Catholic church enhances pupils' personal development very well.
- Good links with local primary and upper schools ensure that pupils' induction and transfer are handled well.

Commentary

27. As at the last inspection the school has strong links with parents who support their children's learning well. Parents are supportive of the school and believe that the school is well led and managed and that their children enjoy attending. They find it easy to contact the head teacher and other staff and there are clear guidelines for the time taken to respond to parents' enquiries. As a result any problems are quickly and effectively dealt with. Parents receive detailed annual reports plus termly progress indicators which provide parents with useful

information about their child's progress. Pupil diaries are carried by all pupils and are an effective communication between home and school. Regular newsletters and general correspondence keep them informed of matters affecting their child and general activities around the school. However, a significant minority of parents feel that they do not receive sufficient information about their child's progress.

28. Parents of pupils who are gifted or talented are informed satisfactorily by letter about the identification procedures and about the activities that are offered to their children.
29. The school has the confidence of all communities. There is a very active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the Chair is a regular visitor to the school. The PTA provides substantial financial support to the school and is currently involved in providing funds for the recent new building. Links with neighbouring school PTAs have enhanced their effectiveness and enhanced the school's own links.
30. There are good links with local primary and upper schools. The head teacher visits the primary schools to take assemblies and meet pupils who will be transferring the following term. Strong links have been established with the local upper school to which the majority of pupils transfer. Pupils in their final year undertake bridging projects which they carry forward into their secondary schools. There is effective liaison between teachers to ensure the transfer of information about pupils' academic and personal skills. The local college of further education runs "Taster days" to introduce pupils to the range of vocational courses on offer.
31. The school is firmly established as part of the local and diocesan Catholic community. The local Catholic priest acts as chaplain to the school and regularly visits the school to take assemblies and services on key days and at the beginning and end of term. These links extend to other Catholic schools locally and, through the diocese in Nottingham, to a much wider group. This gives pupils additional opportunities for sports and other activities and also gives staff the chance to exchange information and best practice.
32. Pupils are involved in a variety of fund-raising activities. In addition to a number of national and international charities pupils voted to donate money to local charities including the local village memorial appeal. Local people use the school hall for keep fit classes. The local heritage society has used the school hall to put on a recent performance.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership is good and management is satisfactory. Governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear vision and sense of purpose for the development of the school.
- The headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team lead and manage well.
- Monitoring and evaluation is not carried out consistently across all departments.
- Effective structures for financial management have been put in place.
- Longer term strategic plans have been devised to improve the delivery of the curriculum and to raise standards.
- There remain issues concerning communication between the Senior Management Team and teaching staff.

Commentary

33. Although the headteacher has only been in post for eighteen months, he has already introduced positive changes. He provides clear direction and a well-defined sense of purpose to the school, whose values are clearly articulated in the Mission Statement which recognises that each individual pupil has the right to develop spiritually, physically, emotionally and academically within a Christian context. The headteacher is very well supported by the deputy

headteacher and two other members of staff who were promoted to become members of a newly formed Senior Leadership Team in July 2004. They were appointed, on a voluntary basis and have supported the headteacher during the long-term illness of the deputy headteacher. The headteacher has succeeded in establishing good links with parents, the overwhelming majority of whom have expressed the view that the school is led and managed well. He has high aspirations for the school and the focus is firmly on pupils' attainment and achievement. This focus is shared by the other members of the Senior Leadership Team who work very closely with the headteacher in setting strategic targets for the future. He is acutely aware of the importance of long-term strategic planning and the current School Improvement Plan extends over a period of three years, from 2004 to 2007. This is an effective document, which clearly indicates the strategic thinking of the headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team. It shows how long-term planning will result in the school realising its ambitions and achieving its goals. Governors monitor on a regular basis as to how the plan is progressing.

34. Management is satisfactory overall. The school has good systems in place for evaluating performance and for developing procedures that enable the monitoring of individual pupil achievement. A baseline database has been created for pupils entering the school in Year 7, which means that appropriate and relevant targets can be set. All departments are given copies of this baseline data, which is used to monitor pupils' progress. A member of the Senior Leadership Team has the responsibility for collecting raw data from several sources, which can subsequently be processed to facilitate the setting of targets. This process has been improved and refined since the start of this academic year. These data are used to raise expectations and to raise attainment. However, the monitoring and evaluation of school policies, including behaviour management, lack consistency; for example, in some subject areas there is a poor understanding of how the school's 'On Call' policy operates.
35. Governance is good. The school has produced a very well defined policy statement on Performance Management, which was adopted by the Governing Body in 2001. Its main aim is to ensure that all staff are given opportunity to develop their skills through effective personal training. This involves a three-stage review process on an annual basis, from planning through monitoring to a final annual review meeting between the team leader and the teacher. During this final meeting emphasis is placed on the realisation of the objectives that were set at the start of the year. This process is designed to help teachers improve their practice, thus ensuring that pupils achieve the highest standards in their work. Governors and senior staff are addressing the unsatisfactory provision for citizenship which does not meet statutory requirements and are implementing an appropriate action plan. The teaching of citizenship has only been identified specifically in one or two department areas and insufficient curriculum time has been allocated to the subject.
36. Financial Management has improved since the creation of the Finance Committee at governor level. This committee met for the first time in January 2004, when it quickly became apparent that there was a budget deficit due to the cost of staffing. The committee took immediate and effective action and in July 2004, fifteen per cent of the teaching staff opted for voluntary redundancy. The budget deficit has been eliminated and the Chair of Governors now prepares a set of monthly reports, which give an accurate picture of expenditure and income. This is a great improvement over previous practices. The Chair of Governors and the Chair of the Finance Committee now play much more active roles in Financial management.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,025,103	Balance from previous year	8,347
Total expenditure	994,206	Balance carried forward to the next	30,898
Expenditure per pupil	3,125		

37. Middle management is satisfactory overall because there is some variation, extending from very good management in the core subjects to unsatisfactory management in modern foreign languages. For the most part, departments are well led and effective teams are in place. They respond positively to the introduction of new initiatives across the whole school. Most heads of departments have a very good vision for the future and are keen to remain informed and up-to date. They continue to play a key role in maintaining the very high standards that pupils achieve in most subject areas.
38. The department for pupils with special educational needs is well led and managed. The co-ordinators speak knowledgeably about the pupils they work with and the systems they have developed. They both have a clear idea of the provision these pupils need in order to learn. As a result, the day-to-day systems run smoothly. Both co-ordinators are aware of the need to develop the monitoring system that is in place so that they can clearly see how well all pupils are doing in all areas of the curriculum. In addition, there has been no effective monitoring of the quality of the support given by the learning support assistants. Inspection evidence shows that this varies considerably.
39. Since the previous inspection there has been improvement in leadership and management. Targets are now clearly set in the School Improvement Plan and strategic planning plays a much more significant role in bringing the whole school into line with modern educational thinking. Financial management is now very good and governors are more closely involved in budgetary planning.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 3

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9 are consistently well above average.
- The work of a few higher attaining boys is less precise than it should be but is still well above national expectations.
- Teaching is very good so pupils achieve very well.
- The department is very well led and managed: teachers are firmly committed to raising the already high standards.

Commentary

40. In 2003, results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9 were well above average, as they were in previous years. This represents good achievement. In 2004, results were well above average and this represents very good achievement. Girls perform better than boys, especially at the higher Levels 6 and 7, though boys' results are still well above national expectations.
41. In work seen during the inspection, standards are well above average in all years. Pupils, including the gifted and talented and those with special educational needs, achieve very well. By the end of Year 9, pupils speak confidently when giving a presentation to the class and listen attentively to others. Pupils read aloud with clarity and accuracy, showing a firm understanding of implicit meaning. They comment sensitively on how a writer's language achieves its effect when discussing a scene from *Macbeth*. Pupils write fluently and accurately in a variety of styles, though a few higher attaining boys write with less precision than they should. The department is aware of this and has strategies to address the problem. Written work is characterised by wide vocabulary, varied sentence structures and careful use of punctuation within a sentence. Pupils' own poetry is imaginative and their prose writing is well structured, with a logical development of ideas. Computers are effectively employed to improve the presentation of file and project work.
42. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers have a wide subject knowledge, which enables them to ask searching questions to check how much pupils have understood. The pace of lessons is very brisk, though occasionally poor behaviour by a minority of boys slows the learning of the whole class. Teachers plan a variety of activities, which helps pupils to sustain concentration. Relationships are very good and teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are high. As a result, pupils work hard and have very good attitudes to their studies. Assessment is good. Marking is thorough and comments point out strengths and weaknesses. Pupils say they are clear about what they need to do to reach a higher level of achievement. Data is analysed well to pinpoint shortcomings in pupils' work and schemes of work are subsequently modified to raise standards.
43. Leadership and management are very good. Consistently high expectations within the department contribute to the consistently high standards pupils achieve. Teachers are firmly committed to raising standards even further. Schemes of work give pupils a breadth of experience. There is appropriate emphasis on good literature and on writing critical essays to prepare pupils in Year 9 for their GCSE courses. Drama is an integral part of English lessons

and helps pupils to develop very good speaking and listening skills, as well as providing a lively stimulus for writing. The work of the department is very well co-ordinated, with suitable resources for lessons taught by non-specialists. Since the last inspection teaching and achievement are better and improvement is good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

44. Standards in literacy are well above average. Teachers give good attention to key words in lessons and this enables pupils to increase their vocabulary and to express themselves with greater precision. Pupils are highly articulate and read with firm understanding of the text. Written work is fluent, accurate and well presented. There are many opportunities for extended writing in English, history and geography, though this is an area for further development in science. Pupils are good at writing for different audiences. In English they present projects on advertising, write creatively and compose their own poems. Pupils in Year 7 prepare a school brochure in ICT lessons, learning to use appropriate language and structure information.

Modern foreign languages

The main focus of the inspection was on French. Two lessons of **German** in Years 8 and 9 were observed; in both teaching and learning were satisfactory.

French

Provision in French is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use French well in teaching.
- The pace of too many lessons is slow and fails to engage the pupils' interest for the whole lesson.
- Staffing difficulties are having an adverse effect on progress and achievement in some groups.
- Lessons are well prepared but there is a limited variety of learning activities.

Commentary

45. Teacher assessments for Year 9 pupils in 2004 were above average. Standards observed during the inspection varied considerably from well above to below average but were average overall. Achievement was satisfactory overall in lessons but scrutiny of pupils' written work over time indicated some unsatisfactory achievement, especially for those groups who have experienced disruption in their teaching caused by staffing difficulties. By the end of Year 9 pupils have a reasonable range of vocabulary at their disposal and are using a variety of tenses in their written work, although they struggle for accuracy. Pupils have good pronunciation and well developed listening skills. However, oral skills are underdeveloped and pupils are not confident in using anything but simple sentence structure.
46. Both teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers use French well in lessons to promote good listening skills and present a good role model for language learning. Lessons are well prepared but are conducted at a very leisurely pace and have a limited variety of activity to keep pupils motivated and interested; this can lead to pupils becoming bored and frustrated on occasion and, when this is the case, their behaviour deteriorates significantly. While teaching encourages listening and reading skills, it gives few opportunities or challenges for pupils to develop their oral skills; for example, pair and group activities are not exploited to encourage oral practice and extension. Pupils' written work is marked regularly. However, teachers' comments are not helpful in providing pupils with information about what they need to do to improve and not clearly linked to National Curriculum levels.

47. Leadership is satisfactory. There is a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses. The vision for the future of modern foreign languages is somewhat limited because of difficulties surrounding the future place of languages in the school's curriculum. Management is unsatisfactory. Effective use is made of data to set targets and track pupil progress. However, departmental documents and policies are not sufficiently detailed and do not offer sufficient guidance as, for example, in the departmental policy on marking and assessment. The scheme of work is thorough and useful. The departmental development plan does not concentrate on strategies to raise standards and levels of achievement; success criteria are not sufficiently developed to guide monitoring and evaluation. Formal evaluation of teaching and learning does not take place with the result that strengths and weaknesses are not identified. Staffing difficulties are having a detrimental effect on achievement. There are no extra-curricular activities to add extra motivation to pupils' learning.
48. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Below average standards in French at the time of the previous inspection have improved to average now. The quality of lesson planning has improved and is now satisfactory. Achievement for higher attaining pupils is now satisfactory. Although progress has been made on introducing the National Strategy in Years 7 to 9, pupils' work is not clearly related to National Curriculum Levels. Systematic and formal monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is still not undertaken. Despite these improvements, pupils are still not achieving as well in French as in most other subjects in the school.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching and high expectations leads to high standards.
- Management and leadership are very good.
- Assessment effectively supports the department in the evaluation process.
- The use of ICT is insufficient to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

49. Pupils' standards when they enter school are well above average. National test results at the end of Year 9 are consistently well above national average. In 2004 the proportion achieving the very highest grades are well above national figures. In comparison to similar schools results are above average. The overall trend in test results is one of improvement. Inspection evidence confirms the recent results. By the end of Year 9 higher attainers use standard form well can explain its underlying principles and application. Similarly the use of index notation including negative and fractional indices is understood and applied effectively. The work of low attainers in Year 7 shows clear competency in using mathematical routines but remains less well developed when it is needed to interpret a systematic route for solving problems. However, imaginative investigative work forms a regular feature of pupils' work although the use of ICT is currently less well developed in supporting pupils' learning. The coverage of the Key Stage 3 framework is largely very thorough and pace is such that ample time can be devoted to preparation for national tests. The needs of pupils of all abilities and all backgrounds are well met. Education plans for those pupils with special educational needs contain mathematical targets, which are regularly monitored and amended. Appropriate work is devised and the school effectively supports training needs of support assistants.
50. Achievement is good by the end of Year 9. It is generally good in national tests and examinations because there are good systems in the department for providing examination support to pupils. Members of staff offer additional sessions designed to support pupils. These strategies are well supported by a blend of high quality test material and retention of

pupils' portfolios, which effectively monitor progress. Pupils know current levels of performance and future targets; however, improvement by identifying specific mathematical skill and understanding is less well acknowledged.

51. Teaching and learning are very good overall. In the best lessons clear explanations, teachers' very good rapport with pupils and their probing questions support very high expectations. The balance between oral and written work is well-judged and collaborative work when linked to thinking skills encourages pupils to appreciate mathematics beyond just acquiring techniques. As a result pupils respond very positively and when on the rare occasions attitudes were potentially challenging, it was dealt with very effectively. In a Year 9 high attaining set, pupils collectively and maturely responded to probing questions about probability seeking to understand concepts beyond a numerical exercise. As a result pupils were effective in identifying the very different models for solving and understanding probability. Similarly, in a middle attaining Year 8 set, a lively practical demonstration of transformations linked to excellent relationships ensured that pupils understood and enjoyed their mathematics. On a few occasions opportunities were missed for wider discussion in support of pupils testing, sharing and developing their own mathematical ideas.
52. Leadership and management are very good. Documentation is sharp in detail; however, within the scheme of work there is limited reference to teaching strategies. Rigorous analysis of test and examination data gives very good support to an already effective whole school provision. This provides an informed basis for reflection and amendments to planning and represents an improvement since the last inspection. The head of department displays vision, is open minded to change and advice and provides a very good role model for all colleagues.

Mathematics across the curriculum

53. The school policy provides a secure guideline to mathematical application within subject areas. In science data collection and interpretation is very good. Work on accurate measurement of burning magnesium and resultant weight change is competent and conclusions are sound. Coordinates are used effectively well in geography and data interpretation on climatic and population graphs are well understood. The uses of modelling units in ICT spreadsheets were competently used and simple formulae accurately applied. In history graphs were in evidence to explain and represent population change. In technology, pupils were expected to weigh, measure, estimate and calculate unit costs. Overall the standards seen matched the high attainment pupils achieve in the school and underlines the role mathematics shares as a service skill.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High quality teaching of relevant, contextualised, practically based science leads to very good learning and high standards of attainment.
- There is very good departmental leadership and management.
- The development of consistent marking practices, based on a clear assessment for learning policy, provides feedback to pupils on how to improve their levels of attainment.
- Well-motivated pupils are eager learners.
- A comprehensive database of pupil attainment is used effectively in target setting and in monitoring pupils' progress.
- The accurate use of technical language is effectively highlighted and emphasised but there are limited opportunities for extended written work to help in consolidation of ideas.
- Improve the use of ICT in teaching and learning.

Commentary

54. The attainment of pupils on entry is well above national average and by the end of Year 9 is very high compared to national averages and well above that of similar schools. This standard of attainment has been sustained over the last few years; the predicted attainment for 2005 remains well above national standards. Value added performance is very high and pupils achieve above expectations. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
55. Overall teaching and learning are good and include a number of very good aspects. Teachers have very good subject knowledge. Teaching strength was illustrated in a Year 9 revision lesson about electrical circuits. The lesson was well planned and high quality resources were used well. Pupil management was good, learning well paced and the lesson included challenge appropriate to the attainment levels of pupil. Pupils were encouraged to test hypotheses by practical investigation and data collection. A Year 8 lesson for lower attainers included an effective use of interactive ICT material. Progression was logical and pupils made good gains in their learning aided by the effective classroom assistant. Very good teaching was seen in Year 7. Lessons showed very clear teacher introductions, very good use was made of challenging directed questions and teachers ensured that pupils clearly understood key words such as soluble. Development of ideas was very good in lessons. Pupils showed interest and sustained concentration throughout and as a result learning was good. Other strengths in teaching are the inclusion of work on historical development of ideas such as the phlogiston theory, the use of the National Health Service web site and recent press articles. On occasions, teachers provide answers too quickly. When conclusions are drawn, the numerical evidence is not sufficiently clearly used and a few pupils offer conclusions in conflict with their own experimental values. Work is matched to individual needs although assessment data is not always used as well it could be to raise achievement.
56. Pupils' understanding is above the average expected for pupils of their age. Talented Year 9 pupils show very good understanding of series and parallel circuits, have good practical skills and a good understanding of hypothesis development and testing. Pupils' books show good coverage of the National Curriculum programme. Practical work is extensive and well integrated into learning. Investigatory science skills are well developed. Data collection and tabulation of results is frequent. Numerical analysis is limited to basic manipulation and graph work. Year 7 lower ability pupils readily calculate averages and Year 9 pupils use formulae to calculate speed and pressure. Pupils' written and spelling skills are good. Lower achieving pupils show a higher incidence of spelling errors. The use of extended written work for presentation of ideas should be developed further. Marking is regular but its quality and style is inconsistent. The use of comments to help pupils make progress is limited.
57. Leadership and management are very good; the very hard working head of department inspires confidence and support within the team. An extensive database on pupil attainment provides all staff with access to information on an individual pupil's progress. A comprehensive handbook confirms effective monitoring of the work of the department. The three-year rolling development plan is based on an annual audit but currently only as far as 2005. ICT resources are improving and provision of science-based computers is imminent. Links with the upper school are developing but links with primary schools are not well developed. Technical support is very good.
58. Improvement since the last inspection has been good; the department has maintained the very good attainment and achievement patterns. There has been significant improvement in target setting, value-added awareness and monitoring of pupil progress. There are plans to improve the ICT provision but the use of ICT in experimental work remains very limited.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standard of teaching and learning in discrete ICT lessons is very good.
- There is very good new ICT hardware and specialist accommodation.
- There is no audit of ICT provision across all subjects.
- The application of ICT in science, art and music is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

59. Standards are average by the end of Year 9. Pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils studying ICT in Years 7 and 8 have discrete lessons. The school is phasing in nationally recognised units of work and extending discrete ICT lessons into Year 9 to improve provision further. In ICT lessons in Year 7 pupils are competent users of computers to design and manufacture school brochures and give consideration to their intended audience. In Year 8, pupils are able to locate data on the Internet, decide which is appropriate for their needs and manipulate this data to communicate the information clearly.
60. Standards of teaching and learning ICT across the curriculum in Years 7, 8 and 9 are satisfactory. However, teaching is very good in ICT lessons because it is lively and stimulating thus engaging pupils well. Homework is used effectively to reinforce and extend learning. As yet there has been no audit of how much ICT is integrated into subject areas which makes an assessment of pupils' ICT skills and their application difficult.
61. Management and leadership are satisfactory. The ICT co-ordinator has other major responsibilities in the school and this reduces the time that is available to manage this key area of the curriculum. Inevitably, this affects monitoring effectiveness in other subjects. Newly commissioned ICT facilities are already having a positive impact on standards. These facilities are accessible and very popular with pupils at lunchtimes.
62. Interactive white boards are beginning to be used effectively. A dedicated technician provides good support for system maintenance and runs a programming club for pupils.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63. Curriculum plans for using ICT in other subjects are generally under developed because until recently ICT resources have been limited. Highly effective use of computers is made in design and technology for CAD/CAM and there is good use of ICT in geography in the form of spreadsheets used to identify trends in recycling. The Internet is used well in religious education to research information on the Passover. However, in science, art and music, pupils do not have enough opportunity to apply their ICT skills.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching effectively develops pupils' thinking skills and encourages them to become independent learners.
- Motivated pupils achieve well and attain high standards.
- Effective assessment procedures enable pupils to know how well they are achieving.
- Pupils have limited fieldwork opportunities to apply their geographical skills.

Commentary

64. Over the past few years, Year 9 teacher assessment scores show pupils to be performing well above the national average. In work seen, current standards in Year 9 are similarly high. Girls generally have performed better than boys at the higher National Curriculum levels; however, gender differences are below that nationally. Teachers have effective strategies in place to raise standards further; these include improving support for pupils with low literacy and numeracy skills and a more effective use of ICT resources to support learning. Pupils achieve very well. Year 9 pupils have a good grounding in geographical skills. Most use maps competently. Graphical presentation and analyses of statistical data are good. Pupils' knowledge of place is good and their understanding of spatial patterns and processes is above average. Provision for higher attainers is good. Average attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs make good progress because teachers and learning support assistants plan well for their needs. The department's well-structured assessment procedures give pupils of all attainment levels regular updates on how well they are performing. Mapping skills are good and underpin good progress made by pupils in human and physical geography.
65. Teaching and learning are very good. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and contribute significantly to a positive learning environment. A particular strength is that teachers carefully select activities of progressive difficulty which develop and challenge pupils' thinking skills. Pupils of all levels of ability enjoy the challenges and welcome opportunities to use and apply their geographic skills to new problems. They are actively engaged in contributing their ideas, demonstrate understanding, engage in discussion and ask good questions. However, the range of fieldwork and more extended opportunities for carrying out independent investigations are lower than is normally the case for high achieving departments. Learning is supported effectively by homework.
66. Leadership and management are good. Teachers work very well together as a team to share good practice. Assessment for learning is good. The department has made good progress since the last inspection.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well by in response to good teaching.
- Standards are well above expectations.
- There is good leadership and management of a department which has made significant progress since the previous inspection.
- In a minority of lessons, learning and achievement are adversely affected by negative attitudes of pupils and inappropriate behaviour management which restrict the progress of individual pupils.

Commentary

67. The teacher assessments for 2004 showed that standards in Year 9 were well above expectations for this age group. The inspection confirmed that levels of knowledge and understanding are well above expectations. A particular strength is pupils' ability to write effectively, particularly in extended projects. Pupils use their high level of language and literacy skills very well, although a minority of pupils have poor listening skills. There is no significant difference in standards between boys and girls. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils, achieve well, particularly in developing their understanding of concepts such as cause and consequence when examining complex issues such as responsibility for the First World War.
68. Teaching is good, resulting in good learning. The teaching demonstrates good subject knowledge, and is most effective when it involves the pupils in active debate and research, as

seen for example when groups of Year 9 pupils took the part of Great Powers in 1914. Assessment is used well to record pupils' progress over time and to set appropriately challenging targets, although day-to-day marking is not consistently constructive, particularly for lower attaining pupils. Learning and achievement are restricted in the minority of lessons where pupils' attitudes are less positive and classroom management is not effective in keeping pupils on task.

69. Leadership and management are good. The head of history has carried out a sound review of provision and has addressed issues raised in the previous inspection. Whilst pupils still make good progress, the quality of assessment has improved and there is now a greater variety of teaching styles. Therefore there has been good improvement overall.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Year 9 are well above the national average.
- Pupils' achievement in food and textiles is very good.
- The standard of teaching and learning in food and textiles areas is very good.
- The leadership and management of the department are very good.
- There is very effective use of computer aided design and manufacturing.
- The workshop is in urgent need of renovation.
- There is insufficient technician support.

Commentary

70. Standards are well above average by the end of Year 9. Achievement by the end of Year 9 is very good because standards on entry in Year 7 are about average and by the end of Year 9 standards are well above average. In resistant materials and electronics achievement is good. In food and textiles achievement is very good. The girls do better than the boys, particularly at the higher levels. The higher attaining pupils achieve higher standards because they can express their ideas through high quality annotated sketches and are perceptive when evaluating and assessing finished products. For example, when pupils begin to develop their knowledge and understanding of foods of the world and design and make clocks in Year 9, there are some exceptional examples of the work of higher attaining pupils. The progress made by lower attaining pupils is good because of the well-targeted support they receive from their teachers.
71. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good, with lessons being very good in food and textiles technology. In the most effective lessons teachers' preparation and classroom management are excellent. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and are enthusiastic about their subject and these features are used to motivate their pupils very effectively. They use skilful, well-targeted question and answer sessions, keeping the pace of lessons brisk and no time is wasted. Pupils' learning is well supported with very good quality work sheets. Pupils receive constructive comments on their work from teachers and therefore know what they have to do to improve.
72. Leadership and management are very good because a highly effective team work hard to further develop departmental provision. The head of department is well aware of areas in need of improvement and plans are in place to further raise pupils' attainment. There has been good improvement made since the last inspection and the food and textiles areas are stimulating environments in which to work, with high quality displays everywhere. Marking of pupils' work has improved significantly and pupils are now clear about their levels of

attainment. Computer aided design and manufacturing is a particular strength of the department and has done much to improve standards. However, the workshop accommodation is cluttered and in desperate need of renovation. There is insufficient technician time and therefore teachers have to use valuable time to prepare specialist equipment for pupils' use.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress from the start of Year 7 to Year 9.
- Standards at the end of Year 9 are in line with national expectations.
- Teachers are well informed and possess good subject knowledge.
- Formal assessment, recording and tracking systems lack rigour.
- Provision of ICT in art and design is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

73. When pupils enter Year 7, their drawing, painting and craft skills are weak. In their initial studies they show that they have very limited understanding of how to use line, tone, shape and colour effectively. Painting skills are also under-developed at this stage. However, there is some evidence of improvement in their drawing skills in this first year, which continues into Year 8, when pupils begin to demonstrate much greater understanding of how to use perspective to create the illusion of three dimensional space on a flat two dimensional surface. By Year 9, pupils have a much better understanding of how to take simple ideas and develop them over time. The pupils have been introduced to the paintings of Paul Klee, from which they work to create their own personal studies. In their visual diaries, there are also interesting examples of pupils' exploration of paintings by Renee Magritte and Salvador Dali. The standard of pupils' work is in line with national expectations and achievement is good from the start of Year 7.
74. The quality of teaching in the department ranges from satisfactory to very good, and is good overall. Teachers are well informed, possess good subject knowledge and usually carry out effective planning before lessons. Organisation is very good in the most successful lessons and less so in others. Management of pupils is good and on occasions is very good and pupils are kept securely on task. Teachers have high expectations that pupils will work to the best of their ability, but homework is not always set during lessons. No pupils were seen making use of modern technology in the form of ICT as a means of producing exciting and interesting visual images. Good schemes of work and individual lesson plans have been prepared by both teachers and were readily available during the inspection. During the course of one lesson, the learning assistant provided very good support for a special educational needs pupil. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, in line with the rest of the group.
75. At present there are two part-time members of staff, one of whom is the current head of department. Leadership and management are good. The head of department is a good role model for both staff and pupils and relationships are good. Planning is carried out thoroughly and organisation of the department is good. However, formal written, assessing, tracking and recording systems are lacking in rigour and much greater detail is required if pupils are to be provided with accurate and relevant feedback that will enable them to improve the quality of their artwork. Teacher assessment at the end of Year 9 is inflated and pupils are actually working at a level that is in line with national expectations.

76. Accommodation is good. Pupils have access to one large spacious art studio, which is reasonably well equipped. However, the furniture is old and the trestle tables are not suitable for groups of four or five pupils working in close proximity. Resources are good, within the context of a narrow traditional model of the curriculum that places emphasis on the acquisition of skills in drawing, painting and craftwork. Provision of ICT in the art department is unsatisfactory and there was no evidence of any use of computers or digital cameras in the production of visual images.
77. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory, although there are now some examples of very good teaching.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching which leads to good achievement.
- Good curriculum leadership.
- The lack of access to computers limits pupils' experiences in music.
- Unsatisfactory accommodation makes group work very difficult.

Commentary

78. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 have been rising for the past few years. In 2004 teacher assessments showed standards to be well above average but during the inspection standards were judged to be above average. Pupils enter the school with below average standards and they achieve well in Years 7 to 9; this represents good achievement. Pupils show good knowledge of musical terms and key words, they are confident performers of their compositions. In a Year 9 lesson, pupils performed their compositions based on chord sequences very effectively showing imagination and creativity in the choice of instruments and counter melodies.
79. Overall, teaching and learning are good. There is good planning, good teacher subject knowledge and learning objectives are shared well with the pupils. Relationships in music are very good and starter and finishing activities give lessons a good structure. Work should be more carefully adapted to meet the needs of all pupils and practical tasks are often too open ended. Assessment is good and pupil self and peer evaluation is well established. Good use of video recording is made to assess pupil work but more opportunities for class discussion using National Curriculum levels needs to be developed so that pupils can clearly see at what level they are working and what they need to do to improve their work.
80. Pupil attitudes are generally good in music and they enjoy their lessons. They work well in pairs and in groups even when not directly supervised. Pupils listen well to each other's views and performances. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is no access to computers at present for music.

81. Curriculum leadership is good. The newly appointed head of department has a clear vision of how the work of the department should develop. There are many extra-curricular activities on offer such as the school choir, orchestra and recorder group but work is often rushed because of the short lunch hour. There are many opportunities for pupils to perform in assemblies, concerts and joint ventures with Leicestershire Arts and with other schools.
82. Accommodation is unsatisfactory as it limits group work and pupils work in corridors around the music room. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory with standards rising. Composing and performing work are now good and extra-curricular music is good; however, issues of access to computers and the constraining nature of the accommodation are still unresolved.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well and standards are well above expectations.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes and learn very well in response to very good teaching.
- Unsatisfactory accommodation restricts the range and quality of activities.
- There is very good leadership and management.
- There is a strong and successful programme of extra-curricular sport.

Commentary

83. Teacher assessments for 2004 showed that standards in Year 9 were well above expectations, particularly for pupils attaining Levels 5 and 6. During the inspection, which was affected by inclement weather, only a limited range of activities was seen. Standards in dance and gymnastics vary between average and above expectations. However, there is extensive evidence that over the full range of sports, including games and athletics, standards are well above expectations in performance skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented, achieve very well, as a result of their very positive attitudes and the very good teaching.
84. Teaching is very good. A particular strength is the quality of feedback given constantly by knowledgeable teachers to pupils throughout lessons. This enables pupils to make significant gains in technique, seen for example when learning accurate passing skills in rugby and stick handling skills in hockey. Team teaching is frequent, and teachers maintain a strong working ethos throughout lessons. Teachers' high expectations to some extent counteract the limitations imposed by deficiencies in accommodation.
85. Leadership and management are very good. The head of department reviews and evaluates progress very well. The department operates very effectively as a team, and has addressed several issues from the previous inspection. The department uses assessment very well to summarise progress and set challenging targets for pupils. Accommodation remains unsatisfactory: the school hall is unsuitable for some activities and for large classes, and is frequently dirty. Despite the best efforts of the teachers, the nature of the accommodation restricts the range of activities and sometimes the quality of learning. Extra-curricular sport is a strength: there is a high rate of participation. Several individuals and teams achieve success. Strengths identified during the previous inspection, such as pupils' progress, attitudes and extra-curricular sport, have been maintained. Other areas such as assessment and the involvement of pupils in planning and evaluation, have been improved. Therefore overall there has been good improvement.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The requirements of National Curriculum citizenship have yet to be fully implemented.
- The time allocation for the teaching of citizenship is insufficient which means that pupils' long term achievements are unsatisfactory.
- Procedures for the assessment, monitoring of pupil work and reporting to parents on pupils' achievements in citizenship are not yet in place.
- The teaching of citizenship is satisfactory with some good features.

Commentary

86. The personal development teaching programme seeks to cover personal, social and health education, careers and citizenship for all pupils in one lesson per week. Allocation of time, therefore, seriously constrains the development of citizenship. It is not possible to efficiently teach the three strands of the subject in sufficient breadth or depth under the current arrangements.
87. Standards of work in citizenship in Year 9 are below average. Inadequate allocation of time and the recent introduction of citizenship mean that pupil achievement over time is unsatisfactory. Pupils are not taught systematically, to sufficient depth. The topics listed in the first strand of the National Curriculum are not linked sufficiently to the second and third strand on enquiry and communication and participation and responsible action. However, pupils do make clear, often good progress within individual lessons.
88. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some good features. In the best lessons, good planning and starter activities and effective organisation meant that pupils could gain good understanding of the role of their Member of Parliament and discuss issues in groups. In a Year 9 lesson, pupils listened well to each other and shared information to develop their understanding and knowledge of government and democratic accountability effectively. In weaker lessons, teaching lacked challenge and work did not sufficiently stretch pupils through teacher led activities in which pupils were not given enough opportunities to express their own views.
89. Curriculum leadership is satisfactory with a newly appointed teacher in charge who has begun an audit of other subjects to map their contributions to the subject. The teaching of citizenship as a discrete area has only recently been introduced. Although the teacher in charge of citizenship has a clear vision of what needs to be done, the subject cannot be developed further if pupils receive only one lesson per week which has to be shared with PSHE and careers education. No citizenship assessments have been made at the end of Year 9 and reported to parents. The monitoring of pupils' work across subjects and the assessment of the different strands of citizenship have not yet been developed. No assessments have been made in Year 9 and pupil achievements have not been reported to parents. Citizenship was not a separate National Curriculum subject at the time of the last inspection. Monitoring and evaluation of the subject are yet to be developed.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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