

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

Salisbury, Wiltshire

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126473

Headteacher: Mr Paul Hughes

Lead inspector: Dr Faysal Mikdadi

Dates of inspection: 11<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> October 2004

Inspection number: 268464

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Modern (non selective)
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	11 - 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	344
School address:	Church Road Laverstock Salisbury Wiltshire
Postcode:	SP1 1QY
Telephone number:	(01722) 335 380
Fax number:	(01722) 410 741
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Paul Hooper
Date of previous inspection:	1 <sup>st</sup> February 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

St Joseph's Catholic School is a small secondary modern mixed school in Laverstock, which is a small town situated on the edge of Salisbury City. There are 344 pupils on roll with a few more girls than boys. A large number travel into school by bus from outlying areas. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average. The majority of these pupils are white with a very small number coming from an ethnic minority background. There are a few pupils for whom English is an additional language and four of those pupils receive extra help from the local education authority's Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant service. Pupils' prior attainment on entry is well below the national average with only one third of new pupils attaining the national average of Level 4 or more in their Year 6 National Curriculum tests. A third of higher attaining pupils from St Joseph's feeder schools go to the local grammar schools after passing their 11 plus in Year 6. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is in line with the national average although the proportion of those pupils with statements for special educational needs is more than double the national average. The school has recently introduced a Year 11 work related curriculum, which is currently followed by eight pupils.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2447	Dr Faysal Mikdadi	Lead inspector	Citizenship
13762	Norman Shelley	Lay inspector	
31385	Neil Gillespie	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
34161	Pat Haddon	Team inspector	Art and design
4605	Michael Lormor	Team inspector	Music Physical education
27368	Michael Merchant	Team inspector	Science
15576	David Nebesnuick	Team inspector	Geography History
18886	Francesco Ruggiero	Team inspector	Mathematics
30648	Brian Skelton	Team inspector	English
22491	Lorraine Small	Team inspector	Design and technology
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The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a school that provides **good quality education** in a caring and warm environment. It has made significant improvements since its last inspection especially in teaching and learning. There are some weaknesses in complying with the National Curriculum, enhancing attainment in science, assessment and attendance. Pupils' achievement is good. The new headteacher, his senior team, subject leaders and others all share the school's desire to improve. Governors are keen to see further improvements in academic achievement to equal the school's pastoral provision. The school provides good value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' achievement is good because of the good quality teaching they receive.
- Provision in science and music is unsatisfactory.
- Results in national tests and GCSE examinations are broadly below the national averages.
- Everyone in the school is united in pursuing an agenda for improvement.
- Provision is very good in geography, physical education and work related learning and it is good in mathematics, art and design, design and technology, history and information and communication technology (ICT).
- The school does not comply with the statutory requirements to provide the full National Curriculum entitlement in citizenship, design and technology, music and science.
- Pupils are well cared for and given effective guidance. This, along with good teaching, ensures pupils' positive attitudes. Pupils are not offered many opportunities to work independently.
- Pupils are well behaved and keen to achieve. They enjoy very good relationships with each other and with their caring teachers.
- Assessment does not always contain advice to pupils on how to improve their work further.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.

Improvements since the last inspection have been good. There has been a strong focus on teaching which has caused it to become good. The monitoring of teaching and learning has become a normal part of school life. Improvements in ICT provision have been very good. There is a daily act of worship. Assessment still does not give sufficient indicators to pupils on how to improve their work.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

**Pupils' achievement is good overall.** Pupils enter the school with prior attainment that is well below the national average. By the end of Year 9 National Curriculum and Teacher Assessment Test results are well above average in ICT, in line with the national averages in

art, design and technology and music and below the national averages in mathematics, geography, history, French and physical education. They are well below the national average in English and science. By the time that the pupils leave the school, their attainment in the GCSE examination is above the national average in art and design and technology; in line with the national averages in English, history and ICT and below the national averages in mathematics, modern foreign languages, music and physical education. GCSE attainment is well below the national averages in science, English literature and geography. Pupils' achievement, including those with special educational needs and the few with English as an additional language, is good. Literacy and numeracy skills are underdeveloped. Literacy is enhanced across subjects whereas numeracy is not. ICT skills are good although ICT is not used sufficiently across subjects. By Year 11, standards seen during the inspection were comparable to the GCSE results in most subjects and better in geography, ICT and physical education.

**Pupils' personal qualities are good. Their social, moral and spiritual development is good. Their cultural development is satisfactory.** Pupils have few opportunities for understanding the nature of cultural diversity. They behave well and enjoy good relationships. Their attitudes to learning are good as a result of the largely good teaching. Attendance is unsatisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of the pupils' education is good** despite some weaknesses in complying with National Curriculum requirements, enhancing attainment in science, assessment and attendance. Almost all lessons seen were satisfactory or better. Two out of every three lessons were good. Pupils respond well to the good teaching and all make good progress. The alternative Year 11 work related learning curriculum is very good although it is limited to a very small number of pupils and there are few vocational courses on offer. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to work independently. Pupils receive good guidance and advice within a warm and caring environment. They are offered opportunities to take responsible tasks outside the classroom. They show strong loyalty to their house and make great efforts to gain awards on its behalf. Links with parents are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The headteacher's leadership is good.** Governors, senior and other staff and parents share his vision for improvement. Leadership in English, science and music is unsatisfactory. The improvements in teaching are a direct result of the head's focus on enhancing teaching and learning. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses. They offer good support and challenge to the headteacher. There are some areas of non-compliance with statutory requirements listed below.

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

**Parents and pupils speak well of the school.** Parents feel that the school has improved significantly. Inspectors agree with the parents' positive views of the education provided and of the good quality of care. Some parents expressed concern about minority disruption and the high levels of exclusions. The school has successfully set up strategies to improve behaviour and to reduce the rate of exclusions. Pupils said that they were happy and felt safe in the school. The inspectors agree with the concern they expressed about marking being irregular.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- raise attainment in science and in the use of numeracy across subjects;
- ensure that assessment is consistent both in terms of teachers' marking as well as their advice to pupils on how to improve their work;
- increase opportunities for independent learning by enriching cross curricular ICT provision in all subjects and by offering pupils opportunities to acquire study skills aimed at enhancing their independent learning;
- improve attendance rates;

**and, to meet statutory requirements, ensure that provision is made for all pupils to receive:**

- a full National Curriculum entitlement to citizenship;
- sufficient use of ICT in music, of electronics in design and technology and of data logging equipment in science in Years 7 to 9; and
- the use of computer aided design in design and technology in Years 10 and 11.



## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in subjects and courses**

In 2003 the National Curriculum test results were well below the national averages in English and science and below average in mathematics. The GCSE results were close to the national average in English, below it in mathematics and well below it in science. The proportion of pupils attaining five or more GCSE grades A\*-C was below the national average. When pupils arrive in Year 7, their prior attainment is well below the national average. These results represent good achievement overall. Pupils in Year 11 following the work related programme of study achieve very well. Standards seen in Years 7 to 9 were average in art, citizenship, design and technology and ICT. They were below average in French, geography, history, music and physical education and well below average in English and poor in science. Standards seen in Years 10 and 11 were above average in art and design and ICT and average in citizenship, design and technology, geography, history and physical education. Standards were below average in English, mathematics, French and music and poor in science.

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

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress in most subjects.
- Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory in science and music.
- Pupils' achievement is very good in work related learning.

#### **Commentary**

1. When pupils join Year 7 their prior attainment is very low. Only one third of all those admitted have reached the national average Level 4 or above by the end of their Year 6 in primary school. The school's own annual cognitive ability tests show pupils' prior attainment to be significantly lower than would be expected nationally. This picture has changed slightly in the last two years as parents begun to express a preference for this school over others in the local area and the average level of attainment of pupils on entry has risen while still remaining below the national expectation. Pupils' National Curriculum test results by the end of Year 9 are below the national average in mathematics and well below the national average in English and science.
2. Standards observed in Years 7 to 9 during the inspection were in line with national expectations in art and design, citizenship, design and technology and ICT. They were below the national expectations in mathematics, French, geography, history, music and physical education. Standards seen were well below national expectations in English. They were poor in science.
3. Standards seen in Years 10 and 11 were above the national expectations in art and design and ICT and in line with national expectations in citizenship, design and technology, geography, history and physical education. They were below the national expectations in English, mathematics, French and music. Standards were poor in science.
4. When pupils arrive in the school their standards of literacy are well below average. They make satisfactory progress and achieve well because the school places a strong focus

on literacy skills across all subjects. The result is that pupils quickly acquire sufficient language skills to allow them to take part in the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs make particularly good progress in acquiring sufficient literacy skills to allow them to achieve well in most of their subjects. Pupils can discuss issues well and coherently. Their weakness lies in their written work although this improves significantly each year.

5. Pupils arrive with equally low skills in using numbers. The majority are able to make basic calculations accurately either with or without a calculator. Higher attaining pupils can solve fairly complex problems. Pupils make less progress in this area outside of mathematics because other subjects do not give the same focus to numeracy as is given to literacy.
6. Pupils achieve well in ICT. Their attainment is above average in discrete ICT lessons. However, there are few opportunities to use ICT in other subjects and this has a detrimental effect on pupils' opportunities to achieve well in this area of their work.
7. Pupils' achievement is very good in Years 7 to 9 in English and design and technology. It is consistently good in mathematics, art and design, citizenship, geography, history, ICT and physical education and satisfactory in French. Achievement is unsatisfactory in science and music.
8. Pupils' achievement is very good in Years 10 and 11 in geography, ICT, physical education and work related learning. It is good in English, art and design, design and technology and history and satisfactory in mathematics, citizenship and French. Achievement is unsatisfactory in science and music.
9. Pupils' achievement overall is good by the time they finish Year 11. The average point score per pupil in the school's best eight GCSE subjects is higher than the national average. This indicates that pupils make good progress over their five years at the school.
10. Pupils with special educational needs as well as those with English as an additional language achieve as well as other pupils. Gifted and talented pupils who are clearly identified achieve satisfactorily although some subjects do not challenge these pupils sufficiently. Both boys and girls achieve well. There is also no difference in achievement between pupils of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.8 (30.6)	33.4 (33.3)
mathematics	31.2 (32.9)	35.4 (34.7)
science	31.0 (30.7)	33.6 (33.3)

*There were 69 in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	29% (36%)	52% (50%)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	84% (74%)	91% (91%)

Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	91% (88%)	96% (96%)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	28.3 (34.7)	26.3 (34.7)

*There were 56 in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

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

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are **good**. Pupils' behaviour is good. Their awareness of social, moral and spiritual issues is good. Their cultural development is satisfactory though it lacks an understanding of cultural diversity. Attendance is unsatisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Relationships between pupils are very good.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and their conduct is mostly responsible.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils' cultural awareness is under developed.

## **Commentary**

11. Pupils' positive attitudes towards school are confirmed by the school's own survey which matches inspectors' findings. Pupils appreciate their diet of lessons and activities and the good quality of teaching. The large majority are pleased with the way they are treated, are happy in the school and participate well in their lessons and activities. They are particularly impressed with computer facilities.
12. Pupils get on very well together, are tolerant and mutually supportive. Most behave well but a minority are disruptive in some lessons, particularly with inexperienced teachers and when teaching and activities are insufficiently stimulating. Incidents of bullying are few and are almost always effectively dealt with. During the inspection, conduct and movement around the school were orderly. The number of exclusions last year was high as a result of efforts to raise standards. The strategies employed to improve behaviour and reduce exclusions are steadily succeeding.
13. Pupils accept responsibility well. The roles of prefects, house captains and school council representatives are undertaken with pride and maturity.
14. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are less well developed and mostly attributable to inadequacy of provision for the development of learning skills, for example, teaching pupils how best to learn, although this has been realised and plans are in place for it to be included in the curriculum. Pupils have too few opportunities to perform in public, for example in music and drama.
15. Attendance is below the average for secondary schools, although it has improved compared to the previous two years. Authorised absence is higher than usual. However, being a smaller than average school, relatively few absences can have a significant impact on overall percentages. Some older pupils fail to maintain good attendance because they feel that the curriculum does not suit their needs. In some instances parents

condone absence. Most pupils arrive on time for the start of school but lateness occurs at times owing to unreliable bus services.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year was 90.2 per cent**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	8.5	School data:	1.3
National data:	7.2	National data:	1.1

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Other
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – any other background
Any other ethnic group

**Exclusions in the last school year**

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
330	94	2
6	0	0
2	0	0
4	2	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0

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

16. Pupils' awareness of spiritual values is well developed. In English, art and design, information and communication technology, music, retreats and assemblies pupils consider a range of issues and encounter experiences that promote reflection and responsible maturity. The habit of prayer is well formed. Pupils develop well their appreciation of friends and community and their respect for property. Self-evaluation is a practice that is developing effectively.
17. The provision for moral development is good. The programme for personal, social and health education contributes well as does the way in which behavioural expectations are communicated and reinforced.
18. Opportunities for responsibility are good and are well taken. Whilst pupils' involvement in being partly responsible for their own community through a council is good, the programme for citizenship does not adequately inform them regarding social and political structures and human and democratic rights.
19. Pupils learn about their own heritage and environment through their studies in English, history and geography. Art and design and music cover further cultural themes. Pupils'

awareness of the lifestyles of others is under developed because places of worship of other religions are not visited and opportunities to visit other countries are limited.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

Overall, the quality of education is good overall. Consistent good teaching in most subjects means that pupils have an equally good learning experience and achieve well. This is not the case in science where unsatisfactory teaching leads to pupils under-achieving. Pupils with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and pupils following the alternative curriculum in Years 10 and 11 all achieve as well as the other pupils and often better. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and satisfactorily catered for. Marking is inconsistent with the result that some pupils do not know what they need to do next in order to improve their work further. Pupils are well cared for and guided and, in the last two years, they have had the benefit of the school's strong focus on teaching and learning.

### **Teaching and learning**

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Almost all lessons seen were at least satisfactory and most were good or better. Assessment strategies are not very effective in getting pupils to improve their performance further and teachers do not always use them to plan their work.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- As a result of the school's focus on teaching and learning, teaching is good overall.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory in science.
- Assessment does not always tell pupils what to do next to improve their work further.
- Teaching is very good in the work related learning programme.

### **Commentary**

20. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. It is now good in over two thirds of lessons. As a result pupils' attitudes to learning are equally good. They are keen to do well and they respond well to good teaching. In the few cases where teaching was less than good, pupils' behaviour reflected this and their achievement suffered. Pupils are relatively compliant but they are not given sufficient opportunities to work independently.
21. In Years 7 to 9 teaching is good in English, mathematics, art and design, design and technology, citizenship, geography, history, ICT and music. It is satisfactory in modern foreign languages and unsatisfactory in science.
22. The quality of teaching was very good in Year 11 work related learning. In Years 10 and 11 it is good in English, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, modern foreign languages and music. It is satisfactory in mathematics and citizenship. Teaching is unsatisfactory in science.
23. Marking is regular and punctual. Inspectors agree with the pupils' expressed concern that its quality varies. Teachers do not always indicate exactly what a pupil must do in order to improve his or her performance. At its best assessment is excellent as in ICT where pupils have a very clear idea of the level that they are working at and what they need to do to make further progress. Assessment is very good in art and design and physical education. Pupils are closely monitored in order to set them clear targets although they do not necessarily receive sufficient help and advice on how to achieve these targets quickly.

24. Inspectors agree with the parents' concern that the homework timetable is not always adhered to. They also agree with the parents' positive view that there have been significant improvements in teaching and learning since the last inspection.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 92 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (2%)	16 (17%)	43 (47%)	27 (29%)	3 (3%)	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.*

**The curriculum**

The school curriculum is mainly broad and balanced. There is non-compliance with National Curriculum requirements in some components within science, citizenship, design and technology and music. There is a **satisfactory** range of opportunities for enrichment. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

**Main strengths and areas of weakness**

- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Personal relationships education is covered well.
- The curriculum for 14 to 16 year old pupils is largely academic and does not include enough vocational opportunities.
- There are statutory infringements because pupils do not receive their full National Curriculum entitlement in citizenship, music, design and technology and science.

**Commentary**

25. The curriculum for Years 7 to 9 caters satisfactorily for the different needs of particular groups of pupils and is broad and balanced. All pupils study French in Years 7 to 9. However, there is insufficient use of ICT in music, no electronics in design and technology and no data logging equipment in science. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have access to a suitable range of academic courses. The timetable is arranged to enable most pupils to study their preferred choice of subjects but there are insufficient vocational courses for less academically able pupils and no computer-aided design in design and technology. In all years citizenship is covered across subjects but certain statutory components are missed out and assessment is not properly undertaken. Provision for citizenship does not adequately cover social and political structures and human and democratic rights.
26. The allocation of time to English, mathematics and science is satisfactory. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have access to a range of academic courses and the timetable is arranged so that most pupils can study their preferred courses. In Years 10 and 11, a large number of pupils opt to continue French to GCSE.
27. The school has good arrangements for a daily act of collective worship. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and the provision is satisfactory but some subjects do not provide many opportunities for these pupils to excel.
28. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs, through a suitable combination of in-class support and withdrawal in small groups. Eight pupils with special

educational needs in Year 11 have been successfully offered an alternative work related curriculum. They attend the local college and all speak highly of the provision made. Their progress has been remarkable with accompanying improvements in their attitude to learning and in their self-esteem. Individual educational plans are well prepared with clear and helpful targets. Good links with feeder primary schools facilitate effective early identification of needs and disabilities. Good links with the local education authority and other external agencies have led to improvements in the additional help needed for a range of learning, physical or emotional difficulties. The school has alternative curricular provision and partnerships with local colleges but this is at an early stage of development.

29. The personal, social and health education programme is very well taught. Some pupils in Years 10 and 11 are working towards an ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) qualification. This makes a major contribution to the very good work related learning programme. Year 9 pupils have lessons on learning to learn which include enhancing independent learning skills. Some subjects encourage pupils to work within their own learning styles.
30. Careers education is good because management is effective and has a clear vision for improvement. The programme is well taught by a specialist teacher. Pupils attend a careers convention and placements for work experience are supported well by local employers. However, employers are not yet involved in providing mock interviews for pupils or business building experiences. Mentors will be assigned to pupils so that they receive personalised advice and guidance about their aspirations. The school is supported well by the Connexions careers advisory service.
31. Sex and relationships, along with related health issues, as well as the themes of drugs awareness and alcohol are covered well in the school's personal, social and health education programme, as well as in science and religious education.
32. The school seeks to develop the curriculum. Senior managers take account of the effect of recent teaching strategies, particularly in Years 7 to 9. Changes to examination arrangements are considered where pupils' requirements are not fully met.
33. Pupils enjoy and benefit from a satisfactory range of enrichment activities. Physical education activities for all pupils are good and there are satisfactory musical opportunities. However, there are no drama productions and there is only a limited range of visits to places of interest in different parts of the country and abroad. Pupils can participate in a satisfactory range of lunchtime and after-school activities. Individuals have opportunities to work toward the bronze level of the Duke of Edinburgh Award and participate in ski trips.
34. The school has sufficient well-qualified and experienced staff to teach the curriculum. It is well supported by trained teaching support staff. Support in ICT is outstanding.
35. Generally, accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The school is aware of the accommodation problems it faces and is building some new facilities to improve the provision. However, there are a small number of classrooms that are too cramped to provide a good learning environment. ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory due to poor access to facilities such as digital interactive whiteboards and the lack of suitable ICT equipment outside of the ICT suites.

## Care, guidance and support

Pupils are **well** cared for, guided and supported. Monitoring is effective. Pupils' views are sought and listened to.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pastoral care is very good.
- Pupils have a good understanding of their progress.
- Vocational courses are not offered to all pupils as curricular options, which diminishes support for a group that could best benefit from such opportunities.

### Commentary

36. Pupils enjoy constructive and trusting relationships with their teachers and helpers. They feel valued and secure because of the way that they are treated. The procedures for health, safety and child protection are well implemented. The arrangements for transfer from primary schools and induction into Year 7 are good and enable pupils to make a well-informed and confident start. Pupils' views are actively sought and acted upon and they are given good opportunities for self-evaluation and to take responsibility for themselves.
37. The school monitors pupils' progress well and keeps good records. Pupils know the levels and grades at which they are working and their predicted and targeted levels and grades. Guidance about how to improve is satisfactory though inconsistent as it varies between subjects. Currently annual targetting days for Years 9 to 11 are well established. Plans to extend them to Years 7 and 8 are in place. Extra support is provided through homework clubs, additional tuition and revision sessions. The number of support assistants is insufficient to meet pupils' needs. Specialist support is effectively provided for traveller children.
38. Appropriate advice and guidance are provided about optional courses in Years 10 and 11 but these do not include the opportunity for parents and pupils to choose sufficient alternative vocational experiences. The school selects pupils whom they consider will benefit from such provision and, therefore, some pupils who would choose the vocational option are denied the opportunity. The school's long-term development plan includes the expansion of such opportunities.
39. Careers education and guidance are good overall and are well augmented by a careers advisory service. Colleges of further education give presentations to pupils and taster visits to the colleges and other post-16 educational institutions are organised and pupils also visit a careers convention. Work experience is good but mock interviews by employers and opportunities for young enterprise are not yet in place.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **good** partnership with parents. Links with other schools and the community are **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information for parents is good.
- Parents' views are sought and acted upon.



- The arrangements for pupils' transfer from primary schools and post-16 education are good.

## **Commentary**

40. Parents are right to express satisfaction with the standard of education provided and to be pleased with the quality of care. Their confidence in the school is growing. They are generally supportive of the school's strategies. Parents' views are actively sought and changes have been introduced as a result of the views expressed.
41. Some parents are concerned that a minority of pupils are disruptive at times and the number of exclusions last year was high. However, strategies to reduce incidents of disruption are steadily succeeding and most pupils behave well.
42. Parents are now generally well informed. The improved annual school reports clearly indicate how pupils are progressing. The traditional parents' evening, which had not been well attended, is being augmented by an annual targeting day when parents can discuss with each subject teacher how their children can improve. Pupils with statements of special educational needs have effective annual reviews involving parents and relevant support agencies.
43. The friends of school association raises funds to support the school. Parents occasionally help in school, for example during activities week. The school encourages parents to be more involved in their children's learning. A guidance booklet, about how to help with homework, is currently being issued. An information evening about coursework was recently arranged for parents of pupils in Years 10 and 11.
44. The arrangements with primary schools enable pupils to transfer to the school in an informed manner and with confidence. Some paired reading takes place with primary school pupils but curricular links to promote continuity of education between the schools are not in place and secondary school pupils do not visit primaries, for example, to help Year 6 pupils understand something of what life will be like at secondary school.
45. The school has established good relationships with local post-16 providers. Pupils are given opportunities to visit post-16 institutions. They are given good advice through visits to the school by post-16 providers. Some Year 11 pupils attend the local college as part of their work related learning programme. Most of these pupils stay on after 16 to continue their studies.
46. A small number of pupils undertake work related courses and attend taster sessions at a college of further education. Both work related courses and taster sessions are highly successful and have a clear impact on pupils' attitudes to the school and on enhancing their self-esteem. The school provides placements for teachers in training through its links with a training institution.
47. The community is used well for field trips by some subject departments. Employers provide work experience placements for pupils. A Christian project trains pupils to be mentors. Pupils support Catholic charities well. Opportunities to visit other countries and other places of worship and to understand more clearly what it is like to live in a culturally diverse society are insufficient.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The quality of the headteacher's leadership is good. The leadership of key staff is also good. Governance is good. School management is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is good leadership by the headteacher, senior managers and most key staff.
- The newly constituted governing body knows the school's strengths and weaknesses well.
- The recent focus on monitoring teaching and learning and on enhancing their quality has begun to produce positive results.
- Management is satisfactory.

### **Commentary**

48. The school's headteacher took up the headship in September 2004. His predecessor was in post for two years during which time he placed considerable focus on teaching and learning. As a result, there have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. The new headteacher's main priority has been to continue these strategies for enhancing teaching and learning, to improve middle leadership quality to a more consistently good one in all subjects, to introduce an alternative curriculum aimed at ensuring that all pupils have opportunities to achieve and to keep improving the image of the school in the community. Staff are strongly behind the headteacher's improvement agenda. Other senior leaders, including new appointments, share his and the governors' vision for continued improvements.
49. Governance is good. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. The newly reconstituted governing body has a clear agenda for improvement. Governors met during the inspection visit showed a high level of knowledge of the school. They shared the headteacher's vision for improvement and fully understood that academically the school lagged behind its good and often very good pastoral provision. There is clear evidence that governors are capable of challenging senior managers and that they are willing to do so when necessary. Governors fail in their statutory duty of ensuring full coverage of the National Curriculum in science, citizenship, design and technology and music.
50. Subject leadership is outstanding in the work related learning curriculum where it is visionary and constantly seeks improvements. Leadership is very good in geography, ICT and physical education and good in mathematics, art and design, design and technology and modern foreign languages. It is satisfactory in citizenship and history. Leadership is unsatisfactory in English, science and music. The head of science has responded well to a recent local education authority review and he and his colleagues are set to make the improvements necessary to the department's provision. Leadership in music has been unsatisfactory because of the lack of long term strategic planning and because there are no opportunities in music for pupils to use ICT as is required by statute. The new head of music has begun to improve this situation. Leadership in English is unsatisfactory because the National Literacy Strategy has not been successfully incorporated into lessons, tasks set for pupils do not take into account their differing individual capabilities and improvements since the last inspection have been unsatisfactory.

51. Senior staff monitor teaching and learning well. They give effective support to subject areas. The focus over the last two years has been on monitoring teaching and learning and this has paid off. Each senior manager is linked to a few subjects and has the responsibility of observing teaching and learning. This monitoring programme embraces subject leaders' own responsibility for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in their department.
52. The leadership of the special educational needs provision is good. Those working in this area are housed in a small bungalow on the school grounds. They have made a very good job of creating an attractive learning environment which pupils like attending when they need to be withdrawn. Most support takes place in classrooms although there is an insufficient number of teaching assistants to give full coverage to pupils' needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator works closely with all relevant agencies including partner primary schools. This enables her and her colleagues to diagnose needs early on and therefore allow for a smooth transition into the secondary school. Teaching assistants give good and often very good, support in the classroom. Individual education plans (IEPs) are well used by them and by most teachers. There were some teachers who did not receive pupils' IEPs sufficiently early in this first term to use them in planning lessons. The result of this good leadership and of the good special educational needs provision is that the pupils concerned feel safe and well cared for. They consequently make good progress.
53. The school's financial management is good and the principles of best value are well applied. Careful analyses of financial data allow governors to be well informed to make strategic decisions. Other means of raising funds are being consistently and effectively sought. Given the school's good quality education, this clearly indicates that the school provides good value for money.
54. Improvements since the last inspection have been good. Teachers' expectations are now higher than they were then. Teaching and learning have improved from being satisfactory to being good. This improvement has been as a result of the more focused monitoring of teaching and learning as recommended in the last report. The drive to improve ICT provision has paid off although there are still insufficient opportunities for the use of ICT across the curriculum. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and literacy skills are now well provided for. There is a daily act of collective worship. The only area where there has not been sufficient progress has been in assessment where there is still insufficient advice by some teachers on how pupils can improve their work.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,481,085
Total expenditure	1,473,092
Expenditure per pupil	4,424

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	52,003
Balance carried forward to the next year	59,996

# 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 **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 9 are well below national standards but pupils have made very good progress in relation to their prior attainment at age 11.
- Lessons in Years 7 to 9 do not fully meet the different needs of pupils of a wide range of capabilities.
- In Years 10 and 11 pupils achieve well and standards at GCSE are close to the national median for all schools.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Well below average	Below average
Achievement	Very good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Unsatisfactory
Management	Good
Progress since last inspection	Unsatisfactory

#### Commentary

##### *Examination results*

55. Results in national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were well below the national average, but given their very low attainment in English on entry to the school the pupils had made very good progress. By the end of Year 11 the GCSE examination results in English were close to the national average for all schools and this indicates good achievement by pupils. In English literature in 2003 results slipped badly to be well below the national average, but in 2004 they rose significantly. The good results in English literature were achieved with just over half of the year group being entered for the examination.

##### *Standards and achievement*

56. Pupils' skills in English language are below national standards in Year 11, but are much closer to the expected level than they were when pupils entered the school at age 11. The pupils make very good progress in Years 7 to 9, but could do better with lessons that were better planned to meet the needs of all pupils. Boys do not achieve as well as girls. Pupils with special educational needs make the same progress as other pupils. The very few for whom English is an additional language are well supported in the early stages of

learning the language and make satisfactory progress. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is good.

### *Teaching and learning*

57. The quality of teaching and learning is good in all years and has improved over the last two years. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject but the department is not using the most appropriate methods to ensure that all pupils achieve as fully as they can. The least successful teaching in Years 7 to 9 was characterised by an insufficient range of activities planned to meet the needs of all of the pupils with different levels of capability. Even in lessons that were brisk and good in other respects all the pupils were given the same tasks and the same homework. The aims of the lesson at the start and the evaluation at the end of the lesson were not presented to the pupils in ways that made them understand the task or appreciate the skills and knowledge they were gaining from the activities.
58. Teaching is good in Years 10 and 11 because teachers understand very well the requirements of the courses and focus on the skills that pupils need. The scrutiny of their assignments confirmed that the highest attaining pupils produce outstanding coursework, combining deep knowledge and mature judgement, flair and imagination. Low attaining pupils who will not reach average GCSE standards were observed achieving very well in a challenging lesson finding the words to discuss the difficult questions surrounding terrorists and hostages. There are clinics planned to improve the performance of the large proportion of middle attaining pupils and borderline candidates.

### *Leadership and management*

59. Leadership of the subject is unsatisfactory especially in the area of curriculum development. Some progress has been made to improve the programmes of study for Years 7 to 9, but the National Literacy Strategy has not been successfully incorporated into lessons. The lesson plans themselves do not describe adequately the different activities needed for pupils with a wide range of abilities to make gains in skills and knowledge. This area lacks strong leadership.
60. The day-to-day management of the subject is good. Teachers are well deployed and morale is good. Accommodation is adequate but there is no place where teachers can meet or leave work in progress safely. Resources are adequate but pupils do not benefit from the gains for homework and independent study that would come from being able to take books home.
61. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. Standards have declined in the National Curriculum tests at the age of 14, especially in relation to the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels. Standards at GCSE have remained steady over the period but there have been significant fluctuations in results in both English language and English literature. Morale is better; expectations are higher and the quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection. The curriculum overall has shown some improvement as a consequence of the school's emphasis on literacy and on national strategies for teaching but requires sustained development if all pupils are to achieve their best.

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

62. Pupils' literacy skills when they enter the school are well below the national average for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress although literacy skills remain below the national expectations. The school has recognised in its development plans the need to improve reading and writing skills as a means of raising pupils' attainment. All teachers have received training in the teaching of literacy skills and all subject departments include literacy in their lesson plans. A literacy co-ordinator and a literacy action group monitor the effectiveness of the teaching of reading and writing skills in all subjects. Dictionaries have been purchased for all classrooms. An audit is being made of the progress made so far so that future developments can be based on the successes of different departments. Key words are effectively emphasised in many subjects. The humanities department has identified as two targets the need to think about the use of questions in lessons and how to develop pupils' listening skills so that they work better together in groups and discussions. Examples of good practice were observed in many departments. For example a Year 8 mathematics class was exploring the meaning of difficult terms like 'continuous', 'modes', 'averages' and 'median'. In geography lessons there was a strong emphasis on speaking and listening skills. Physical education lessons emphasise the importance of the correct use of specific terminology. Good practice is not evident in all areas of the curriculum. For example writing tasks in science consist predominantly of short answers or labelling, with no opportunities for extended writing. The next stage of development will include steps for each department to build on what has been achieved so far.

### *English as an additional language*

63. The Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant currently supports four children at an early stage of learning English and the funding is well used. An Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant teacher works with these and other pupils. She liaises effectively with form tutors, heads of house and with the special needs co-ordinator.
64. The school receives good support from the LEA's Ethnic Minority Achievement service. A good feature of the ethos of the school is the positive way that children form friendship groups, which support new arrivals in their early days of learning English. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in lessons because of the support that they receive. The school does not do enough to raise the self-esteem of pupils for whom English is an additional language by celebrating the culturally diverse nature of our society.

### **Modern foreign languages**

The provision for French is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers have good subject knowledge but rely too heavily on English in teaching.
- Lessons are well prepared and contain a variety of activities designed to keep pupils motivated.
- Pupils' speaking and reading skills are weak.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is not used sufficiently to support teaching and learning.

- Pupils, especially the higher attainers, are given few opportunities to develop and use more complex language structure and expression.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Below average	Below average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Good
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since last inspection	Satisfactory

## Commentary

### *Examination results*

65. The National Curriculum teacher assessments for the end of Year 9 in 2003 were below average. They were similar in 2004. In 2003, 42 pupils were entered for French GCSE, nearly 75 per cent of the cohort. Results were below national averages. Girls performed better than boys but the difference was in line with the national picture. In 2004 results were not as good because of staffing difficulties in previous years.

### *Standards and achievement*

66. Standards observed in the inspection in Years 7 to 9 were below average. This represents satisfactory achievement, however, since pupils enter the school with attainment levels well below average. By the end of Year 9 pupils have a fairly wide range of vocabulary at their disposal and are starting to use a variety of tenses, although many struggle for accuracy in their formation. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall but their oral skills are underdeveloped.
67. Standards observed in Years 10 and 11 were below average. However, this still represents good achievement overall. At this stage pupils are more confident in using a variety of tenses but still struggle to form them with accuracy, including the present tense. They have a fairly wide range of vocabulary. Their spoken French is, however, weak and they struggle to produce more complex sentences or to express their ideas and emotions with clarity or spontaneity.

### *Teaching and learning*

68. Teaching and learning were satisfactory in all years with better teaching seen in Years 10 and 11. Teachers are fluent French speakers but rely too heavily on English in lessons and this encourages the pupils to translate rather than use French creatively. Pupils are presented with too few opportunities to use French independently and rely heavily on prompts and frameworks beyond which they do not have the confidence to go. Teaching is well prepared, contains a variety of activities to keep pupils interested and is usually delivered at a lively pace. The result is that pupils, including those with special educational needs, are interested most of the time. Where the pace of teaching drops, however, the pupils' interest soon wanes and the quality of learning rapidly drops. In

Years 7 to 9, class work and written work are not consistently linked to National Curriculum levels with the result that pupils do not have a clear idea of their performance level, nor of what they need to do to improve. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good overall but where low level disruption is allowed to go unchecked learning suffers. During the inspection, apart from some flash cards, few audio-visual aids were used such as overhead projectors, tape recorders, video tapes and so forth, although they are readily available in the languages room. ICT is not used regularly or sufficiently to support and enhance teaching and learning.

### *Leadership and management*

69. Leadership is good. It promotes teamwork and presents a caring and concerned role model for the success of the languages department in the school. There is a developing vision for the future but this is not yet articulated with sufficient clarity to have its full impact.
70. Management is satisfactory. There are comprehensive and useful schemes of work for all years and there are sufficient resources to support the teaching. Data is used effectively to analyse and evaluate the department's results and effectiveness, but the quality of teaching and learning is not sufficiently well or frequently monitored to identify areas for development or to share good practice.
71. Overall there has been satisfactory progress since the previous inspection. In most areas, the standards identified at that time have been maintained and the issues identified have been tackled. However, insufficient progress has been made in the areas of teaching and learning, which are now satisfactory overall rather than being consistently good, as described in the earlier report.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Overall, the quality of provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching are raising pupils' attainment.
- Teachers use inclusive strategies to encourage and engage pupils to learn effectively.
- The good day-to-day assessment provides useful feedback for pupils of how well they are doing.
- Pupils' progress is followed regularly and results in setting pupils challenging and motivating targets.
- There is limited use of computers, which restricts the achievement of pupils.
- There is insufficient use and co-ordination of numeracy in other subjects.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Below Average	Below average
Achievement	Good	Satisfactory
Teaching and learning	Good	Satisfactory

Leadership	Good
Management	Good



Progress since inspection	since previous	Good
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## Commentary

### *Examination results*

72. In 2003, National Curriculum test results were well below the national average when compared with all schools but very high when compared with the results in similar schools based on pupils' attainment on entry. They were a little lower than the school's results in both English and science but have improved steadily over time, except for the drop in 2003. Since 2001, girls' results have been higher than those of boys. The GCSE results for 2003 were below average. Pupils did better than in most other subjects including English and science. At the higher grades pupils did better and results were close to the national average compared with all schools and well above average compared to the results in similar schools. The achievement for both year groups was good but the higher attaining pupils achieved more than the lower attaining ones. The results of the small number of pupils who enter GCSE statistics continue to be very good.

### *Standards and achievement*

73. When pupils enter the school, their results are well below average. In work seen, by the end of Year 9, pupils' work in number, algebra, shape, space and measure is below average. The higher-attaining pupils achieve well, for example, when they test for similarity and systematically classify shapes. The lowest-attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, consolidate and extend their skills when finding perimeters of rectangles by using direct measurement and by calculations. By the end of Year 11, the overall standard of work seen was below average. Higher-attaining pupils achieve well when they factorise quadratic expressions methodically. The average-attaining pupils achieve very well when they generate algebraic formulae from number sequences. The lower-attaining pupils concentrate on oral methods, for example, when they calculate areas of simple shapes, but their written work is very limited, sometimes poorly presented and indicates lower achievement than the other pupils. Throughout the school, boys and girls, and pupils of different ethnic backgrounds, are achieving similarly. Lower-attaining pupils are, however, sometimes achieving least, mainly as a result of the teaching not being well matched to their needs and ability.

### *Teaching and learning*

74. The quality of teaching is predominantly good with most lessons taught well or better. There are several good features of teaching. The good level of almost all the teachers' specialisation enables them to make good use of the Mathematics Enhancement Project (MEP); teachers plan well, encourage pupils to learn and to engage by using starter activities and interactive question and answer sessions well. This generates interest and also provides pupils with useful feedback, complementing mostly helpful marking. This approach is almost always inclusive and results in most pupils knowing how well they are doing, what they are aiming to achieve and achieving well. Teachers also always emphasise key words and develop literacy skills well though discussion that requires explanations. Achievement is best when teachers also have high expectations and

provide additional challenge through pace or activities. The quality of support for pupils with special educational needs is almost always effective.

75. There are also some weaknesses. Some teaching of lower-attaining pupils is not of high enough quality; some activities are not well-matched to pupils' differing needs; some methods of class management used to respond to a few low-level disruptions are ineffective. There is also insufficient emphasis on the review of learning at the end of most lessons and pupils are insufficiently encouraged to work independently.

### *Leadership and management*

76. The head of department provides good drive and direction, which are well supported by senior management and the local education authority numeracy consultant in improving teaching. She provides a good role model for her colleagues, who also work well in the team and share good practice, sometimes leading to initiatives or innovations that contribute to raising standards. The effective monitoring of the department's performance enables well-founded departmental self-reviews and planning and the very good tracking of pupils' progress which also involves pupils in their own setting and reviewing of targets. The good improvement since the last inspection also includes better accommodation, better use of individual educational plans (IEPs) for pupils with special educational needs and significantly raising entry levels for the GCSE exam.
77. There are, however, still some weaknesses. The lack of ICT resources in classrooms and the limited access to specialist computer rooms prevent pupils' understanding deepening in certain areas and also restrict the pace and presentation of lessons. Monitoring pupils' work across groups is not yet fully embedded and gives rise to some inconsistencies in presentation and marking. There is insufficient consultation with the department when setting IEP numeracy targets although the use of teaching assistants is good in supporting pupils with special educational needs.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

78. Overall, standards are below average. Most pupils can perform at least basic calculations accurately without using calculators and sometimes using mental methods. Most higher attaining and average attaining pupils can substitute into formulae and problem-solve to expectation. Some lower-attaining pupils have difficulty with the recall of basic multiplication facts, such as  $7 \times 8$  in Year 10. The school's framework to promote and improve numeracy is not fully implemented. Planning for numeracy in lessons of other subjects is uncommon, resulting in missed opportunities in learning and by subjects to help develop numeracy skills. There are, nevertheless, a few good examples of using mathematics in other subjects: pupils in geography lessons access the school weather station and measure cloud cover and wind speed, analysing and graphing their results very well. In physical education, Year 11 pupils analyse their own performance and use the line of best fit to graph and present their findings well. In one science laboratory, there is a well-produced wall chart that promotes a useful and common approach to drawing graphs.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well below average and represent unsatisfactory achievement by Year 11.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory overall and this leads to underachievement.
- In the best lessons, good relationships and careful planning promote good learning.
- Many pupils have positive attitudes and want to do well.
- The new science block provides good accommodation for the subject.
- Progress since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Well below average	Well below average
Achievement	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Teaching and learning	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory

Leadership	Unsatisfactory
Management	Unsatisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Unsatisfactory

## Commentary

### *Examination results*

79. In 2003, standards in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9 were well below the national average. The test results in 2004 showed a slight decline over those of 2003 and the subject did not meet its modest targets. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher National Curriculum levels in 2003 was very low. Test results were lower than in mathematics but a little higher than those in English. Standards have improved slightly since the previous inspection and there was no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls. Achievement was unsatisfactory overall, especially for higher attaining pupils who did not make the progress that they should have. The trend in National Curriculum test results over time has been in line with the national average but in 2004, science was the only core subject not to have improved over its 2003 results.
80. GCSE results in 2003 were well below the national average and indicate unsatisfactory achievement. Girls did slightly better than boys. Higher attaining pupils did not do well; there have been no A or A\* grades at GCSE in the department for a number of years. Pupils do less well in science than they do in most of their other subjects. The 2004 GCSE results show a slight decline from the well below average figures for 2003. Fewer pupils follow the double award science programme at GCSE than at most other schools.

### *Standards and achievement*

81. The majority of pupils enter the school with well below average levels of attainment. This low attainment persists in many classes in Years 7 to 9, though in a minority of lessons attainment is close to national expectations. For example, a Year 9 class could explain the effects of alcohol abuse on major organs in the body in terms of the main underlying chemical changes. In Years 10 and 11 pupils gain a wider knowledge of materials and of physical and biological processes but their weak knowledge of basic science holds back their learning. For instance, a high attaining Year 10 class found difficulty in understanding ions because of a weak knowledge of atomic structure. Where teaching is good the pupils make reasoned predictions and interpret results qualitatively. However,

in most lessons attainment is below or well below national expectations across all aspects of science. Throughout Years 7 to 11, pupils' knowledge is slightly better than their understanding of underlying concepts.

82. Pupils' progress varies as they go through the school. In the middle and lower sets, pupils often make good progress. In successful lessons achievement is good because the teacher provides interesting and demanding activities which are well matched to pupils' differing capabilities, including opportunities to work independently of the teacher. By contrast, some higher attaining groups underachieve because the work does not build quickly enough on their knowledge and understanding of science. In a significant number of lessons in Years 7 to 11, pupils are not sufficiently stimulated or challenged and they lose interest. Pupils with special educational needs do not always achieve as well as they could because teachers do not always plan carefully enough for their individual needs.

### *Teaching and learning*

83. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory, overall. Teaching ranges from good to unsatisfactory. The most successful lessons are characterised by: high expectations of behaviour and effective management of pupils; planning that is detailed with a wide range of interesting activities; careful intervention to support and encourage independent learning; and briskly paced lessons with clear objectives shared with pupils. In these lessons pupils show interest, ask questions, work co-operatively and concentrate for long periods.
84. Where teaching is just satisfactory, teachers talk too much. Pupils do not always fully understand what the teacher expects them to do. Consequently lessons progress more slowly and higher attaining pupils in particular accomplish too little. Pupils are denied the more demanding tasks and activities that are necessary to extend their understanding and develop their knowledge, understanding and skills properly.
85. In the high proportion of lessons where teaching is less than satisfactory, the pace is slow. Planning in these lessons is weak and the level of difficulty is inappropriate to the needs of pupils of differing attainment levels. Consequently pupils become uninterested and most commonly behaviour deteriorates. The standard of marking is inconsistent and comments frequently do not show how well pupils are doing or what they need to do to improve their work.

### *Leadership and management*

86. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory but show signs of improving. The head of department has responded well to the recent review of the department's work by the local education authority and has the capacity and the commitment to be effective in raising standards. Significant changes have taken place very recently, indicating that necessary improvements can be made. A good awareness of the department's strengths and weaknesses has already resulted in suitable and new plans to tackle underachievement and improve the quality of teaching and learning. Planning and checking the work in science have been ineffective in recent times to raise standards to a sufficiently high level. These are now changing for the better. More pupils are now showing interest in science. The new scheme of work, though requiring further refinement, provides a good basis for delivering the requirements of the National Curriculum. The

department recognises the need to improve the ways in which pupils' work and progress are assessed, tracked and checked for improvement.

87. The new science block provides good accommodation for the subject but resources are only satisfactory. Too many lessons each week take place in ordinary classrooms. There is insufficient software for pupils to use ICT as a tool for scientific and investigative work. These aspects restrict the progress pupils make in science lessons. The technician provides good support for the teaching of science, but the hours available are low for a school of this size.
88. Overall, there has been unsatisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. Standards remain well below average and too many pupils are not achieving as well as they could.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good strategies for learning have been implemented by very good leadership.
- The outstanding ICT technician ensures reliable network and effective classroom support.
- Pupils attain higher grades through excellent teachers' assessment of coursework.
- ICT across the curriculum is underdeveloped and denies pupils extended ICT skills.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Good
Progress since last inspection	Very good

## Commentary

### *Examination results*

89. Year 9 National Curriculum teacher assessments are in line with national expectations for similar schools. GCSE results in 2003 were well above average. These standards were maintained in 2004 and classroom observations confirm that all pupils acquire good skills and knowledge by Year 11. One third of pupils take GCSE; the rest take computer literacy Levels 1 and 2 awards. A few do both.

### *Standards and achievement*

90. Achievement is good by Year 9 and very good by Year 11 and good overall because pupils enter school with ICT skills and knowledge well below those expected nationally. They leave with standards well above expectations in GCSE. Boys and girls achieve

equally well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in most lessons due to well-directed support.

### *Teaching and learning*

91. Teaching is good. Teachers understand how to get the best from their classes particularly through the encouragement of pupils' independent learning. The assessment of pupils' GCSE coursework is excellent. It informs them of the steps they need to take to improve. Teachers' command of subject knowledge is adequate but it is not extensive enough to challenge the gifted and talented pupils sufficiently. Lesson planning is very good. Clear objectives and very good learning strategies are identified. Teachers expect high standards of behaviour and they encourage pupils to achieve well. As a result, pupils make good progress and produce good work.

### *Leadership and management*

92. Leadership is very good and management is good. The head of department clearly understands and works tirelessly to improve learning and standards within the department. The discrete ICT curriculum is regularly reviewed and improvements made to the provision of examined courses. However, Years 10 and 11 classes have mixed examination groups resulting in classes being taught three different courses. This is having an adverse effect on the progress of some pupils. The head of department has built a very good team spirit. Leadership is very knowledgeable and innovative and has led to very good improvement since the last inspection. The head of department provides a good role model for other staff and gives effective training and support through effective self-evaluation. Although the management of ICT as a subject is very good, the management of ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory.
93. Accommodation is satisfactory. Rooms are bright and wall displays are very good. Although there are sufficient computers for individual pupil use, the computers are packed into rooms that are rather too small to accommodate them, leaving little room for teachers to move from desk to desk. This has slowed the speed with which teachers can assist pupils. There is a satisfactory range of books in the learning resource centre, but there are no self-study guides for pupils to borrow so that they can extend their skills in web design for example. The technician is outstanding. She ensures that the computer network is well maintained and reliable. She has built the school web site and she assists in classrooms where her knowledge and support are invaluable.
94. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good. There are now discrete ICT lessons for all pupils. This, together with good teaching and improved pupils' attitudes, has raised standards. Pupils now make good progress.

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

95. ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Most subjects have underdeveloped ICT provision because there are not enough banks of computers or interactive digital whiteboards throughout the school to fulfil cross-curricular ICT requirements. The range of software is good but insufficient to meet some subjects' needs. For example, there are only simple graphic packages for use in art and design. Staff training needs are identified and implemented well.

## HUMANITIES

### Geography

Provision in geography is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership ensures that pupils' achievement is rapidly improving.
- Very good and excellent teaching supports very good learning in Years 10 and 11.
- There are very good relationships that encourage and support effective paired work.
- Some of the schemes of work need to be updated; those that have been, provide a very good framework for teaching and learning.
- There is a very effective and comprehensive assessment strategy that provides all pupils with a clear framework for further improvement.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Below Average	Average
Achievement	Good	Very Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Very good

Leadership	Very Good
Management	Very good
Progress since last inspection	Very good

### Commentary

#### *Examination results*

96. National Curriculum teacher assessment results for pupils in Year 9 in 2003 were below average. GCSE examination results in 2003 were significantly below national expectations with no pupils securing the higher A\* and A grades; this followed a period of staffing turbulence. In 2004 an additional 17 per cent secured A\* to C grades with pupils achieving the higher grades.

#### *Standards and achievement*

97. Standards are below average in Year 9 but this represents good achievement for pupils in relation to their standards when they entered the school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the strong support given by the teacher. By Year 11 standards are at the national expectation and this represents very good achievement. Pupils are more confident in their learning by Year 11 because of the very good and excellent teaching they receive.

#### *Teaching and learning*

98. Teaching and learning are good overall and very good in Years 10 and 11. An example of excellent teaching was seen in a Year 10 class where the very high level of challenge and very fast pace ensured that all pupils made very substantial gains in their understanding.

The whole class picked up the teacher's enthusiasm and energy and their attitudes and responses were exemplary throughout the lesson.

99. Learning is very good because of the very good and excellent teaching. Lesson planning and organisation are well thought out to provide a very structured learning environment. There is a very high expectation of the pupils, who are very keen to learn and as a result they show very positive attitudes towards their work and work very effectively in pairs. There are some very good question and answer sessions, which place a very strong emphasis on key words and concepts with the full range of pupils making significant contributions, particularly in Years 10 and 11. There is a good range of fieldwork activities where pupils can develop their skills and there are firm plans to extend these opportunities. Pupils use weather instruments very effectively to measure climate conditions around the school. There is a very effective assessment strategy that provides pupils with a very clear pathway for further improvement; this strategy underpins and supports the good learning taking place in all years. Pupils' work is marked thoroughly with clear targets, which are thoroughly understood.

#### *Leadership and management*

100. Leadership and management of the department are very good. The department experienced staffing turbulence three years ago but since the appointment of a new teacher in charge, pupils' achievement has improved rapidly. Improvements include a new development plan, more effective coursework marking, a revision of some of the schemes of work, much higher expectations of pupil success and a marked improvement in pupils' attitudes towards the subject. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good because achievement, teaching and learning, assessment and leadership and management have all strengthened.

#### **History**

Provision in history is **good**.

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

- Good teaching supports good learning.
- There are good relationships that encourage and support strong and effective attitudes to learning.
- There is insufficient interpretation and analysis of pupil data to ensure that the work is matched closely to the needs of all pupils.
- The assessment strategy does not provide pupils with a sufficient framework for further improvement.
- Achievement in recent GCSE examinations was excellent.
- The schemes of work are incomplete.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Below Average	Average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Satisfactory
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Management			Satisfactory
Progress since inspection	since	last	Satisfactory

## Commentary

### *Examination results*

101. The National Curriculum teacher assessment results for pupils in Year 9 in 2003 were below the national average. Results in the 2003 GCSE examination were at the national expectation. Pupils secured the sole A\* grade and 25 per cent of all A grades in the school. Pupils achieved grades over a grade higher than expected, the highest difference in the school. In 2004 the pupils achieved an outstanding 83 per cent A\* to C grades which was an improvement of 20 per cent on the previous year.

### *Standards and achievement*

102. By Year 9 pupils' knowledge and understanding of history are below average. However as pupils enter with well below average subject understanding, this represents good achievement. Those with special educational needs achieve well. There is some underachievement by more able pupils in Year 8 because the work does not provide sufficient challenge. By Year 11 pupils are reaching the national expectation and this represents good achievement. Pupils have a good understanding of source evidence and their oral skills are well developed.

### *Teaching and learning*

103. Pupils learn well because of good teaching. Most lessons are planned well and have pace and a suitable level of challenge. As a result of the good lessons, relationships are strong and pupils have a positive attitude towards their studies. Teachers make good use of the available resources, including historical artefacts. Worksheets are carefully designed to ensure that most pupils make good progress. There is a wide variety of learning styles and pupils respond well to these by working with enthusiasm. The imaginative use of family history ensures that the subject is relevant and interesting to the pupils. Although marking is encouraging, there are few clear targets for improvement and books are not always marked regularly. Currently because of a recent change of teachers, the ongoing pupil records are patchy and incomplete and have yet to be evaluated systematically. As a result, neither teachers nor pupils have a firm idea of the pupils' progress.

### *Leadership and management*

104. The department is led and managed satisfactorily. The newly appointed head of humanities inherited an uncertain situation in September. Already the gaps have been identified and an improvement plan is in place. Currently there is no separate history development plan, many of the schemes of work are incomplete and marking is inconsistent across the department. A wider range of fieldwork and improved opportunities for using ICT are identified for development.

105. The improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. There has been a strong improvement in the achievement of most pupils; however there is still evidence that some more able pupils are not being given sufficient challenge in their work. Standards are higher because a much higher percentage of pupils is now securing A\* to C grades. Assessment issues, including the quality of marking and the setting of targets, remain from the previous report.

## TECHNOLOGY

### Design and technology

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

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in Years 7 to 9.
- Teachers prepare well and provide good resources to support pupils in their learning.
- Insufficient ICT resources restrict opportunities for pupils to experience work in computer aided manufacture and, in the case of lower attaining pupils, to improve the quality of their work.
- Teachers use only a limited range of differentiated teaching resources to meet the individual learning needs of pupils.
- Pupils show good attitudes to their work in the majority of lessons.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Average	Average
Achievement	Very Good	Good
Quality of teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership of the subject	Good
Progress since the last inspection	Good

### Commentary

#### *Examination results*

106. The National Curriculum teacher assessment results in 2003 for pupils in Year 9 were in line with the national average. GCSE examination results in 2003 were above the national average. Results dropped in 2004. In 2003, girls achieved better grades than the boys. Pupils achieve better results in GCSE resistant materials than they do in food technology. The school enters fewer pupils for GCSE design and technology courses compared to schools nationally.

#### *Standards and achievement*

107. By the end of Year 9, standards are average compared to national expectations. This means that pupils achieve very well as they enter the school in Year 7 with well below average skills in design and technology. Teachers' own assessments of pupils' work in Year 9 suggest that standards are lower than the average standard of work seen during the inspection. In Years 7 to 9 pupils are introduced to the simplified stages of the design

process through carefully prepared teaching resources. For example, in a Year 7 resistant materials group, pupils were already researching and analysing products and formulating specifications and ideas for designing products of their own. All pupils master a satisfactory range of basic skills in making and they follow methods and processes well to achieve satisfactory end products. Good achievement at the end of Year 9 is evident in pupils' design work. However, there are fewer opportunities for them to experience work in computer aided design, computer aided manufacture and electronics due to insufficient resources. They are less independent than they should be and rely on the support of teachers because their writing and drawing skills are weak. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils in lessons especially lower attaining pupils, to use computers to upgrade the quality of their work.

108. Standards by the end of Year 11 are close to the national average. Pupils increase their skills well but they are less confident with the more open ended GCSE coursework. They apply basic skills and their work broadly matches average standards. At this stage, pupils use ICT well to research and present their design work. Overall, they achieve well because a significant number of pupils who do design and technology at GCSE level, start the course with below average skills in the subject. The majority of pupils master the more complex design process well. However, a significant proportion of pupils do not analyse their research well enough before writing a specification for design. This lowers their overall standard. Pupils with special educational needs progress well, although in groups where there is a higher proportion of special needs pupils, achievement is less than satisfactory because they are not sufficiently independent and need a lot of teacher support. All pupils show good attitudes to their work and are keen to do well.

#### *Teaching and learning*

109. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In Years 7 to 9, teaching is focused on establishing a range of basic skills and teachers provide a good range of guidance materials to support pupils with the design process. Pupils gain from good individual teacher support, although teachers use only a limited range of resources to meet the individual learning needs of pupils. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop skills in numeracy, to extend their vocabulary and to develop their writing skills.
110. In Years 10 and 11, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use the full design process. They promote good quality and accuracy and ensure that pupils follow the examination marking criteria and as a result, they gain marks at various stages. Lessons are well structured and teachers ensure that pupils' learning is reinforced with appropriate knowledge. This supports pupils well in their learning and enables them to include the relevant knowledge when they develop products of their own. ICT is used well for presenting design work and to process the data pupils collect when conducting surveys. Good relationships between teachers and pupils create good learning conditions.

#### *Leadership and management*

111. Leadership and management are good. The head of department has established good working relationships within the department. Teaching and learning are now good overall. Achievement is very good in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 and 11. Examination results are now at the national average. Although the monitoring of teaching and learning is established, strategies to share good practice are less well developed. The range of

materials pupils work with in Years 7 to 9 and at GCSE level is limited. There are also insufficient ICT resources in the department to provide the opportunity for pupils to experience work in computer aided manufacturing and for pupils to improve the quality of their work. Overall, there has been good progress since the previous inspection. The department benefits from good technician support, which complements the work of the department well.

## VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

### Art and design

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching in all years is good.
- Attainment has improved since the last inspection and is above the national average in Years 10 and 11.
- High standards at GCSE have been maintained in the last three years.
- The assessment of pupils' work has developed to include a review and target setting.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to support learning.
- Independent learning should be encouraged.

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

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since last inspection	Good

### Commentary

#### *Examination results*

112. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Year 9. The 2004 GCSE results showed good improvement from the previous year when standards were above the national average overall. Great emphasis is placed on the development of

basic skills. As a result, many pupils learn to improve their drawing techniques, to use various forms of colour and produce sculpture effectively.

### *Standards and achievement*

113. Pupils enter the school with standards in art and design that are below average. By the end of Year 9 they have made good gains in knowledge, skills and understanding of the subject. Observational drawing and design processes are well developed. Pupils show a strong interest in the subject and accept challenge readily. A Year 10 class, looking at shape to represent figures in preparation for sculpture work, found the initial stages very demanding. They were encouraged to persevere by the teacher, who praised their efforts and showed them how to improve by using a number of overlapping lines. Pupils made good progress, especially lower attaining pupils. Behaviour is good because pupils enjoy their lessons and they will often return at lunchtime to complete their work.

### *Teaching and learning*

114. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and occasionally it is very good. Clear teaching and learning objectives are shared with the pupils. Lessons are well planned and the teacher has high expectations and has built strong relationships with the pupils based on mutual respect. Pupils benefit from knowing the lessons' objectives and the use of modelling to help them understand what is expected. Plenaries are used effectively to reinforce how much pupils have learnt. The very good teacher/pupil relationships enable pupils to work in a productive atmosphere enhanced by touches of humour. Planning is very thorough. Assessment procedures are helpful and applied to coursework and homework. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the art technician, who has built very good relationships with the pupils. Higher attaining pupils are identified and encouraged to extend their learning beyond the classroom.
115. The teacher has a good knowledge of the pupils and their work particularly in Years 10 and 11. This enables her to provide good quality of individually focused teaching. Too much individual support, however, sometimes leads to the tendency to "spoon feed" the pupils, whereas they may be better served by being pressed to develop a more independent approach to their research and study.
116. Art and design makes a contribution to the pupils' social, moral and cultural development. Raising multicultural awareness does not currently have any great impact. Art and design makes a good contribution to the school's ethos through a range of attractive displays in the art room and public areas. There is a real sense of celebration of good artwork around the school involving all year groups.

### *Leadership and management*

117. The head of department leads and manages the department well. She has good subject knowledge and reference is made to the work of artists and craftsmen and the influence this has on pupils' work. Pupils make a good response to homework tasks, which are monitored with comments recorded in sketchbooks. There is a good scheme of work and the development plan has clear objectives to move the department forward. The head of department has invested in good quality sketchbooks for all pupils and a good range of materials. Pupils have responded to this and take pride in their work. Some excellent examples of homework based on the work of Gustav Klimt were seen in a Year 10

lesson. The day-to-day running of the department is efficient. The art room is visually interesting with stimulating displays.

## Music

Provision in music is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall, teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to music.
- Pupils have no access to ICT and the curriculum in Years 7 and 9 does not meet statutory requirements.
- Accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory and limit the progress that pupils make.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Below average	Below average
Achievement	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Unsatisfactory
Management	Good
Progress since last inspection	Unsatisfactory

## Commentary

### *Examination results*

118. The National Curriculum teacher assessments results in 2004 for pupils in Year 9 indicate that standards were approaching national averages. However, analysis of end of year tests for these pupils reveals significant gaps in pupils' musical knowledge and consequently, standards are judged to be below average. The numbers entering GCSE examinations in music in recent years are too small to compare with national statistics. Of those entering, only about a quarter attain A\*-C grades.

### *Standards and achievement*

119. Pupils' attainment on entry is well below average, although a small number of pupils play musical instruments when they arrive at school. In both key stages, standards overall are below average. Pupils in Year 9 reach satisfactory standards in understanding how music is constructed and can identify the principal features of variation form. However, their practical skills are below average and in lessons seen during the inspection, the standards of performance in Year 9 were similar to the standards being achieved by

pupils in Year 7. Discussion with pupils reveals that, until recently, they have had little opportunity to use the limited number of available keyboards. The standards being reached by pupils in Year 11, who are studying for the GCSE examination, are below those expected for this stage in the course. Pupils' progress is therefore unsatisfactory.

### *Teaching and learning*

120. Overall, teaching and learning are good. Teaching is lively and enthusiastic, encouraging pupils to respond with equally positive attitudes. Lessons are generally well planned and delivered at a good pace. Most pupils in Years 7 to 9 are now beginning to make good progress in developing performance skills and constructing simple compositions. Equally, pupils in Years 10 and 11, are now beginning to make good progress because teaching is well matched to their aptitudes and interests and significant effort has been put into the production of support materials that will support them in the production of GCSE coursework. However, pupils' achievement to date has been unsatisfactory as the impact of the new teacher's good teaching has not yet fully come through after only a few weeks. There are insufficient keyboards and musical instruments available and in many lessons, this limits the progress pupils make in developing performance skills. Occasionally, some pupils with special educational needs do not make the progress they should because planned activities are not well matched to their needs or because no additional adult support is available to them.

### *Leadership and management*

121. The leadership and management provided by the subject leader, a part-time teacher who was appointed in September, are good. She has identified the strengths and weaknesses of music provision and has a clear vision of how the school's provision for music can be improved but has not had sufficient time to make the necessary improvements. A scheme of work is in place and assessment procedures are being developed. However, issues identified in the last inspection have not been addressed and this has limited pupils' achievement over time, particularly in the development of practical skills and composing. Failure to address these issues means that the strategic leadership of music at a senior level is unsatisfactory and improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. A contributory factor to this situation has been that since the last inspection the school has had six different music teachers.
122. The planned curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 9 covers an appropriate range of topics, including music from other cultures, but does not always identify how activities might be matched to pupils of differing abilities. In addition, because pupils do not have access to music ICT in Years 7 to 9 and because the accommodation is too small to allow effective group work to take place, the curriculum does not meet the National Curriculum requirements for music.
123. Teachers from the local education authority music service provide instrumental and vocal lessons to approximately 60 pupils, including all those who are studying the GCSE course. Lessons are well taught but not always matched to the needs of individual pupils or the demands of the GCSE syllabus. Because she is part time, the subject leader is not always available to monitor this situation. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory.

### **Drama**

124. Drama was sampled. The quality of teaching and learning was barely satisfactory. There is a need for staff training in the teaching of drama. In 2003 standards in drama at GCSE were very low in relation to national standards and eight out of ten pupils did not reach their target grades. Achievement in the lessons seen was poor. A significant factor is that the curriculum for Years 7 to 9 does not include drama. Those who opt for it at GCSE do so at a major disadvantage compared to other candidates nationally because they have received no grounding in drama skills. The drama studio offers good accommodation, but there is no drama club and no annual production and so children do not have opportunities to enjoy learning performance skills together.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are very good.
- Pupils' achievement is good in Years 7 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11.
- Pupils' attitudes are good.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Below average	Average
Achievement	Good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Very good
Progress since last inspection	Good

### Commentary

#### *Examination results*

125. The school's own assessments of the standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 9 in 2004 were below average. Results in GCSE examinations were also below average in 2003 and in 2004 18 pupils gained A\*-G grades but only two pupils gained A\*-C grades.

#### *Standards and achievement*

126. By the time they reach Year 9, the standards reached by most pupils in practical work are below average. However, most pupils reach at least satisfactory standards in reviewing and evaluating their work. When planning a sequence on the trampoline they can analyse and comment on skills and techniques, identifying how their performances can be improved. Given that attainment on entry to the school is well below average, pupils' achievement across Years 7 to 9 is good. Currently the standards being achieved by pupils studying for the GCSE examination are broadly in line with the demands of the



course and some of the coursework seen was of a high standard. The achievement across Years 10 and 11 is very good.

### *Teaching and learning*

127. Overall, teaching is good and a significant proportion of the teaching is very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and employ a wide range of strategies to engage pupils. They are hardworking and an infectious enthusiasm communicates itself to the pupils. At both key stages, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for planning and evaluating their own work. This and the positive attitudes of pupils, contributes significantly to the good progress they make. In many lessons, pupils are organised in ability groups. The support they receive enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress. However, there is limited time in lessons for the development of practical skills and, in bad weather, the limited indoor space means that opportunities for the sustained practice of skills is further restricted.

### *Leadership and management*

128. Leadership and management of physical education are very good. Leadership provides a clear vision for the future development of the subject. There is a good team spirit; teachers work well together and share a common purpose. The department's plans show a clear focus on improving standards. Management structures are very good. Pupils' progress is assessed and monitored on a regular basis and strengths and weaknesses evaluated. Reviews of the quality of provision in physical education are thorough and accurate. Resources are well managed but storage space for large equipment remains a problem. There have been some cosmetic improvements to changing rooms since the last inspection.

129. Teachers give unstintingly of their time to support a good range of extra-curricular activities that enhance the curriculum. Links with other schools are good and 22 pupils in Year 10 are currently working on the Junior Sports Leader Award with a specialist teacher from the neighbouring sports college. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

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

### **Citizenship**

Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Citizenship is delivered through curriculum subjects and through enrichment activities.
- There are aspects of National Curriculum requirements that are not fully covered.
- The school monitors the delivery of citizenship well.
- Pupils' achievement and attainment in citizenship are not properly monitored.
- The good PSHE programme makes a major contribution to citizenship.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Average	Average

Achievement	Good	Satisfactory
Teaching and learning	Good	Satisfactory

Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since last inspection	Not applicable

## Commentary

### *Standards and achievement*

130. By the end of Year 9 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens. Opportunities for pupils to take positions of responsibility in the school enhance this knowledge base. Pupils understand the media and their use. Their good relationships show that they have a clear understanding of themselves and of each other although they do lack skills for independent thought. Pupils lack a clear understanding of forms of government, public services and the legal system. By the end of Year 11, pupils begin to improve their knowledge base in these three areas. However, many do not have the chance to study the European Union and therefore know little about it. Any knowledge of central and local government tends to be incidental. The reason for this lack of a good knowledge base is the fact that citizenship is delivered through subjects and pupils do not all get the same subject diet.

### *Teaching and learning*

131. The quality of teaching in all the lessons seen where citizenship was taught was at least satisfactory and often better. A good Year 8 English lesson tackled issues of racism well and with great sensitivity. Pupils were able to discuss issues intelligently and with considerable maturity with some using their own experiences. An example of pupils gaining appropriate incidental citizenship insights was a Year 10 lesson, which opened with a prayer for the late Ken Bigley and his family. The lesson went on to show in quite an outstanding way how pupils with limited self-confidence can engage in group discussions successfully. In most lessons seen where issues of citizenship arose, teachers took advantage of them. Most lesson plans indicated citizenship issues likely to arise.

### *Leadership and management*

132. Leadership and the management of the subject are satisfactory. A recent audit was carried out giving detailed analysis of where citizenship opportunities arise and are tackled. The net result has been that the person leading this area has produced a plan indicating the areas of citizenship that are not currently being covered. Subject departments have been asked to examine their schemes of work to ensure the delivery of the missing components. As yet, although the school has recognised this shortcoming, there is no whole school process for collecting assessment data. However, each subject leader has been given a set of end of Year 9 expectations in order to start the process of recording attainment and achievement evidence.

## Work-related learning

Provision in work related learning is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils' very good achievement is because of the very good teaching and individual support that they receive.
- Pupils attending the work related learning curriculum provision have very good attitudes and show considerable improvements in their self-esteem.
- Leadership and management are outstanding.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Not applicable	Below average
Achievement	Not applicable	Very good
Teaching and learning	Not applicable	Very good

Leadership	Outstanding
Management	Outstanding
Progress since last inspection	Not applicable

### Commentary

#### *Standards and achievement*

133. Prior attainment on entry to this curriculum programme is well below average. Within half a term of starting their studies, Year 11 pupils make very good progress. They are able to plan their project, make the product and discuss their work. Pupils can speak confidently about what they have done and explain clearly what it is that they need to do next in order to improve their performance. Despite considerable difficulties in maintaining their written work, the pupils are able to respond by writing up a brief evaluation of their work using the teacher's well produced pro forma. Probably the most significant area of progress is in their changed attitudes to their education. From being uninterested, these pupils have responded with enthusiasm to attending college vocational courses.

#### *Teaching and learning*

134. The quality of teaching is very good with some outstanding features. The pupils receive excellent one to one attention from their teachers, their teaching assistants and from the college lecturers whose classes they attend. The result is that all pupils work at a considerable pace in order to earn praise and, as indicated by their responses, to show considerable pride in their work. The school has noticed a significant improvement in the pupils' attendance and attitudes to learning. They all feel that they are doing something worthwhile and no longer feel that their curriculum is inappropriate. Teachers give them effective feedback on their work and set them short-term manageable targets that allow

them to complete tasks successfully. Teachers also give pupils considerable independence to which they respond in quite a mature and sensible way. They clearly see the full benefit of the programme.

### *Leadership and management*

135. Both leadership and management are outstanding. The work related programme is co-ordinated by a person whose enthusiasm and keenness receive very good responses from the pupils. The co-ordinator is helped by several very keen colleagues. Through the personal, social and health education programme, pupils are helped to understand the world of work. Year 10 pupils take part in a work experience programme which is effectively supplemented by their work in the personal, social and health education programme. In Year 11, a few pupils currently receive the benefit of a flexible curriculum allowing them opportunities for work related learning. At this stage, this opportunity is open to a minority of pupils chosen by the school. Plans are in place to expand this in order to allow more opportunities for work related learning as well as vocational education. The few pupils currently involved are managed in an excellent way, which ensures that they attend regularly, take responsibility for their learning as well as their behaviour and complete tasks set. The programme itself has been planned with great care, much detail and excellent relationships with the relevant agencies.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>THE OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
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	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	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).*