

INSPECTION REPORT

SWANMEAD COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Ilminster

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123875

Headteacher: Mr P Birbeck

Lead inspector: Mr D Roberts

Dates of inspection: 24th – 26th January 2005

Inspection number: 268478

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle deemed secondary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 9 to 13 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 334

School address: Ditton Street
Ilminster
Somerset

Postcode: TA19 0BL

Telephone number: 01460 52431

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr N Corbett

Date of previous inspection: November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Swanmead Community School is a middle school which caters for pupils aged 9 to 13 (in Years 5 to 8). There are 334 pupils on roll, making it about average for this type of school. Almost all of the pupils are of white British heritage. Less than three per cent are from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds but there is only one for whom English is not the first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average and the proportion with statements of special educational need is well below. The socio-economic profile of the pupils is broadly in line with national norms, taken overall, but a significant minority experience difficult social circumstances which affect their response to school. Pupils' attainment on entry in Year 5 is about the national average for this age. The school has achieved a number of awards in recent years, including Investor in People, SportsMark and Healthy School.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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19867	M Pettitt	Team inspector	Art and design History
21825	E Kelly	Team inspector	Design and technology
18032	I Randall	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Special educational needs
13155	J Dixon	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
8360	F Peacock	Team inspector	Personal, social and health education and citizenship Music
19295	P Wall	Team inspector	Physical education
22685	N Moss	Team inspector	English Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. Very good leadership from the headteacher has secured a harmonious and forward-looking school which provides a rounded education for the pupils who attend. Pupils respond well to the good teaching the school provides, and they make good progress from a starting point on entry to the school which is about average in some subjects and below in others. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and is very well supported by his deputy and the governors.
- Teaching is good overall and very good in mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), art and design and physical education; only in history is teaching unsatisfactory.
- Pupils in all year groups have good attitudes and achieve well, although there is some unsatisfactory behaviour by a minority of the older boys.
- More needs to be done in all subjects to improve pupils' standards of writing.
- The promotion of equality of opportunity, exemplified by the care provided for pupils with emotional, social and behavioural needs, ensures they make very good progress.
- Specialist staffing, accommodation and resources all support pupils' good progress but one of the classrooms for design and technology is in a very poor state of repair.
- Links with other schools and with the community are very good, and pupils' education benefits; links with parents are good, although parents do not receive all the information they would wish and to which they are entitled.
- The very broad-based and popular extra-curricular programme enriches the experience of many pupils.

The school's effectiveness has improved well since the last inspection. Standards achieved by pupils during their time at the school have improved, although there remains scope for improvement by the end of Year 6. However, there is clear evidence that pupils' four-year period at this school puts them in a position to achieve very well in the next stages of their education. Leadership and management have improved, based on a very clear set of priorities and principles underpinning all developments.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Achievement over the four years is good overall, with evidence that progress accelerates in the final two years at the school. Pupils enter the school at the start of Year 5 with slightly below average standards in most subjects. By the end of Year 6, they have consolidated their earlier achievement, and standards are average or above, except in history. Evidence from the inspection strongly suggests that they make more rapid progress in Years 7/8 and leave well prepared to start Year 9 in an upper secondary school. However, only at the end of Year 6 is there national comparative data available:

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	D	D	B	D
mathematics	E	D	C	E
science	D	C	C	E

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 2.

Boys' performance in the English tests at the end of Year 6 has, over recent years, been consistently below that of girls, by a margin which is wider than average. Pupils' writing skills are not well enough developed across the curriculum and pupils' work has a number of technical inaccuracies which teachers do not systematically address.

Attendance and punctuality at the school are good; the pupils' attitudes are good and behaviour is satisfactory. Most pupils behave well. However, misbehaviour by a minority of older boys does have a negative impact at times, mainly outside of lessons, despite the school's careful attention to the needs of these pupils. Pupils show good interest in school activities and their personal development is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is good. Pupils benefit from good teaching and this ensures that they learn effectively and make good progress. Teaching of history is, however, unsatisfactory, being the one subject where teachers are not specialists in the subject. Teachers' assessment of pupils' progress is well done. The curriculum is satisfactorily broad and well balanced. The specialist staffing, accommodation and resources are generally good, although the classroom where pupils work with resistant materials is in a poor state of repair. There is good provision of curriculum enrichment, and pupils benefit from very productive links with the community and other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management overall is good. The leadership provided by the headteacher is very good and he is very well supported by the deputy headteacher, the management team and other key staff. The school is well managed. Governance of the school is very good and governors have striven to ensure that statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents generally have positive views of the school. Some feel they are not provided with sufficient information about the curriculum and pupils' progress, and the inspection supports this view. Parents consider the school's responses to suggestions or concerns to be generally good. They welcome the school's open door approach and the accessibility of the headteacher and all members of the staff. Parents agree that the transfer processes, into and on from this school, are handled very well.

Pupils similarly have generally positive views. However, the behaviour of a minority outside of lessons is rightly of concern to a majority of them, although very little learning is affected by unsatisfactory behaviour. Each is able to identify a staff member to go to for help. Pupils feel trusted, and those who are members of the school council agree that it is worthwhile and they feel valued and involved.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the teaching of writing across the curriculum, and of history.
- Address issues which would lead to more positive behaviour by the identified minority of older boys.
- Improve the teaching accommodation for aspects of design and technology.
- Improve curriculum information and pupils' progress reporting to parents.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that parents receive all the information to which they are entitled in the governors' annual report and the school prospectus.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Pupils' achievement is **good** in all Years 5 to 8. Standards of work seen by inspectors were broadly **average** by Year 6 and **above average** by Year 8. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 last year were above the national average in English and average in mathematics and science. Boys' performance in the English tests has been consistently below that of girls by a margin which is wider than average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by Year 6 are average in most subjects but are above average (and remain so by Year 8) in mathematics, ICT, religious education and physical education; in history, they are below.
- By Year 8, standards in English, science, geography, design and technology and art and design have improved to an above average level, while in history they remain below. In French, music and citizenship, they are average.
- Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 are improving faster than the national rate and are now at or above the national average, but not yet as good as in similar schools.
- The school is working effectively to secure more rapid improvement, including in boys' English, although the standard of writing across the curriculum remains too low for many pupils.
- Pupils with special educational needs are achieving as well as other pupils.

Commentary

1. Pupils' achievement is good. They make good progress over the four years they spend at this middle school. The standards of work seen in lessons and in their exercise books by inspectors were above average by Year 6 and Year 8 in all subjects except music and, by Year 6, English, geography and art, where they were average. In history, standards were below average.
2. Only at the end of their second year at the school is it possible to compare the standards which they attain in national tests with those of pupils in other schools. The school works very conscientiously with its main feeder school and with the upper school, to which pupils progress after Year 8, to track the progress each pupil is making as they progress through the key stages. When they enter this school, the profile of pupils' attainment is slightly below the national average. Pupils progress steadily through Years 5 and 6 and, by the time they take the national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6, their performance continues to be broadly in line with the national average profile. The results in 2004 showed a good improvement in all three subjects over similar results in the previous three years. The average scores of pupils at the school were above the national level in English and broadly in line in mathematics and science. In both English and science, the proportion of pupils reaching Levels 4+ and 5+ at least met the national average and exceeded the targets set by the school (particularly at the higher levels). In mathematics, the targets were almost reached.
3. When compared with other schools where pupils attained similar results in their tests at the end of Year 2, the average scores in the 2004 tests were below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. While this was an improvement on previous years, the school is rightly far from satisfied that better progress was not made. However, the underlying trend of improvement in the school's results is now above the national trend, although boys' performance in English in 2004 remained too far below that of girls. Evidence from this inspection suggests that improvement should continue in future years, given the very

good quality of provision the school now makes in mathematics and science, and the good provision in English.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.1 (26.4)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.9 (25.6)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.0 (28.8)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 84 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Pupils are judged by inspectors to continue to achieve well and make good progress through the remaining two years at the school. Evidence from the partner upper school indicates that, in most years, pupils from this school have gone on to perform very well in the tests at the end of Year 9 and in GCSE examinations.
5. While overall improvement is taking place, the inspection revealed that standards of technical accuracy in many pupils' writing, including that of some higher attainers, are too low. In general, too little attention is being paid to securing improvement in this aspect of pupils' achievement across the curriculum.
6. Achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school, in line with that of other pupils in all subjects. The majority achieve well in the development of their literacy and numeracy in group or individual sessions with learning support assistants. Some pupils who enter the school with very low prior attainment make very good progress. All pupils make good progress in lessons where they are supported by learning support assistants.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance and punctuality at the school are **good**, the pupils' attitudes are **good** and behaviour is **satisfactory**, taken overall. Pupils show **good** interest in school activities and the school provides **good** personal development for pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' positive attitudes make significant contributions to their progress as learners.
- The school's strategies for pupils' personal development are good.
- Arrangements for the school to improve attendance and punctuality are good.
- A small number of pupils have low levels of attendance.
- The behaviour outside of lessons of a minority of older boys is sometimes inappropriate.

Commentary

7. Pupils throughout the school have positive attitudes to learning. Punctuality is good, with few pupils late for school. Pupils' behaviour overall is satisfactory and in Years 5, 6 and 7 it is good. However, in Year 8, while behaviour is satisfactory overall, there are instances where it is unsatisfactory, most especially amongst the boys. A minority of parents and a majority of pupils, in their pre-inspection questionnaires, expressed some concern about the quality of behaviour and instances of bullying. Parents and pupils confirm that the school is generally good at following up specific instances of bullying, which are rare. A minority of pupils and parents did express concerns about the overly robust behaviour of older boys towards younger pupils, who sometimes feel threatened by older pupils on the school buses, in the playground and around the locker and cloakroom areas. In class, at assemblies and around the school, the great majority of pupils behave well.

8. The school's strategies for addressing unacceptable behaviour are detailed and well documented and generally good, using a variety of sanctions and rewards, including house points and merits. These measures successfully support the school's inclusive ethos. However, pupils do report inconsistencies in class teachers' strategies in dealing with behaviour, indicating that the school's behaviour management strategies have not been fully explained to them. All pupils co-operate well with adults as well as their peers. The great majority co-operate in a variety of work situations and their positive attitude supports learning and progress well. The school has very good arrangements to deal with any instances of racial harassment and there are very few recorded instances in the school.
9. Pupils of all abilities work hard, remain on task and concentrate well. Pupils with special educational needs work well in lessons where they are supported by learning assistants, to whom they relate well. They are well integrated into the life of the school and well accepted by other pupils. Those who are less confident feel secure in their specialist area which has facilities for them to work and play outside lesson times.
10. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development through opportunities in lessons to be curious, ask questions and to present ideas, which are valued by the teacher and others. During the inspection week, although some opportunities were missed, pupils were given time in assemblies and tutor periods to reflect on and understand the human feelings and emotions engendered by the Holocaust. Through the whole-school 'going global' initiative and the planned religious education programme which helps pupils to understand and respect other faiths, pupils are able to gain an insight into wider notions of spirituality.
11. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. There is a clear moral code and the school is very keen to promote equality in everything it does. Good behaviour is the norm and where pupils deviate (as with some of the older boys), teachers take the opportunity to ensure that they understand why their behaviour is unsatisfactory and how it affects the lives of others. The PSHE and citizenship programmes, and the 'thought for the week', give very good insight into relationships, conflict resolution and personal responsibilities and, in the majority of cases where these are well taught, pupils generally respond well to these elements of the curriculum.
12. The school makes good provision for pupils' social development. In all subjects there are regular opportunities for pupils to develop their negotiating skills, especially in physical education. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good. Links with the community are strong.
13. Opportunities for cultural development are good. Pupils explore a wide range of world cultures through work in art, religious education, music, history, geography and English. Their understanding is further enriched by the opportunities provided by the 'going global' initiative. This helps ensure that pupils are learning about the cultural and religious diversity in modern British society, although there is scope to extend this. Relations between pupils of different ethnic heritage at the school are good and all pupils are making similar rates of progress. The one pupil for whom English is not the first language has made very good progress in learning the language and is now well able to access the full curriculum. A wide and varied programme of cultural enrichment is available to pupils, including visits to galleries and theatres.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.5	School data	0.2
National data	6.0	National data	0.3

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

14. Attendance and punctuality are good. Attendance in the year 2003/4 at 93.3 per cent was just below the national median at 93.6 per cent. Unauthorised absences were in line with the national median for middle schools. The school is very aware of those pupils whose attendance raises concerns and is working hard with the Educational Welfare Service to improve pupils' performances. The school makes first day calls for all pupils where the reasons for absence are not known and the number of instances where the school needs to challenge parents to establish why pupils are absent or late into school is decreasing. Detailed and prompt analysis of attendance data is made of any individuals and groups of pupils whose attendance is low and the school takes action to support and improve performance. The rate of exclusion of pupils is very low.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	322	2	1
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is good. Pupils benefit from good teaching and this ensures that they learn effectively and make good progress. Teachers' assessment of pupils' progress is well done. The curriculum is satisfactorily broad and well balanced. The specialist staffing, accommodation and resources are generally good. There is good provision of curriculum enrichment. The care and welfare of pupils are good and the guidance they receive is satisfactory. Pupils are involved well in the development of the school. There are good links with parents and very good links with the community and other schools, all of which benefit pupils' education.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **good** throughout the four years which pupils spend at this school. This ensures effective learning on pupils' behalf, leading to good progress being made. Teachers' assessment of pupils' progress is **well done**, making good use of data.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good or better in three out of every four lessons, never poor and only unsatisfactory in a small number of lessons in Years 5/6.

- Teaching is best in mathematics, science, ICT, art and design and physical education but unsatisfactory in history.
- A high proportion of lessons benefit from teachers' very good enthusiasm for and knowledge of their subject, backed up with good planning and a good range of resources.
- There are very good relationships between the teacher and pupils in lessons.
- ICT is well used to support teaching and learning in most subjects but not in French, history and physical education.
- Behaviour management is generally good and teachers continue to develop further strategies.
- There is a need for better teaching of writing across the curriculum.
- Teachers and learning support assistants work productively together.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 67 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	25 (37%)	26 (39%)	12 (18%)	4 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

- Teaching overall is of good quality for pupils in all age groups. It is very good in mathematics, science, art, physical education and, in Years 5/6, in ICT. In history it is unsatisfactory. Except in history, teachers have very good subject knowledge, and excellent in science and art and design. This, combined with well-planned lessons, helps to ensure that pupils engage very well with the learning and make good progress. In most subjects, the objectives of the lessons are shared with pupils and in physical education particularly good care is taken to explain these to pupils. In science, as yet too little emphasis is placed on sharing lesson objectives with pupils.
- Learning in most lessons benefits from very good relationships between the teacher and the pupils. Teachers' enthusiasm for their subject helps to ensure that lessons have a good pace. In the best cases, for instance in English, the planned work stretches the highest attainers while teachers are also careful to ensure that the learning of lower attainers is well supported. However, in some subjects, for instance in geography and history, there is too narrow a range of activities and resources used in some lessons, especially with large classes of younger pupils, to ensure that all pupils can make appropriate progress. In a number of subjects, for instance in mathematics, science, ICT and art, teachers' questioning and challenging of pupils are well targeted and well received. In these subjects too, lessons are very well planned to provide regular opportunities for pupils to work effectively in groups, and this benefits their learning. Modern technology is well used in many subjects, including the imaginative use of interactive whiteboards in mathematics. However, use of computers is underdeveloped in French, history and physical education.
- While there is evidence of a whole-school strategy for improving pupils' literacy skills, the approach to this across the curriculum is too variable. In a number of subjects, lists of key words are displayed but not always is adequate reference made to these during lessons. Teachers' marking does not generally pay sufficient attention to inaccuracy in spelling, grammar and punctuation in pupils' work. Too seldom are literacy skills taught to pupils in lessons other than English and appropriate opportunities for extended writing are not always provided. Homework is used well to reinforce or extend pupils' learning in too few subjects – this is best in mathematics, science and ICT.
- Teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs are good. Teachers are very well informed about their needs and are given good quality practical advice about tactics to deal with them. Their development is well monitored through communication between the special educational needs staff and subject teachers. Teachers and learning assistants work

very well together. Where there is no support assistant, teachers match the level of work well to the needs of the pupils.

19. Teachers' assessment of pupils' progress is generally well done. The school's policy for assessment, recording and reporting has been worked out with other local schools and there is moderation among the partner schools. Attainment data is now readily available to all staff and they have been given training in the use of this data. However, the use of this data to review pupil performance and inform teachers' planning is inconsistent. There is very good use of assessment by teachers in some subjects, based on regular marking and a secure knowledge of national expectations. Particularly in English, mathematics and ICT, assessment is used to set targets with the pupils and to inform planning. In some subjects, for example history, music, design and technology and modern foreign languages, assessment procedures need to give pupils a better understanding of what they should do to improve and be used more to inform planning. Targets are set with staff as part of the performance management cycle and all departments are taking part in self-evaluation. The work of the school's assessment for learning group is developing an ethos of sharing best practice and is developing the use of self-assessment and peer assessment, particularly in geography.

The curriculum

The school provides a range of curriculum opportunities which is **good** in Years 5/6 and **satisfactory** in Years 7/8. It provides **good** enrichment for the curriculum, including a range of extra-curricular activities. The quality of specialist staffing, accommodation and resources is generally **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject-based curriculum in Years 5/6 works well for pupils of that age.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The curriculum prepares pupils very well for their move to an upper school at the start of Year 9.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, some of which are of an especially good quality.
- For all year groups, the curriculum is now almost entirely taught by subject specialists.

Commentary

20. The school provides a curriculum which is broadly appropriate to all the pupils who attend the school. Unusually, the subjects of the curriculum for pupils in Years 5/6 are now each taught by a separate teacher. A clear majority of pupils enjoy this arrangement and benefit from the deeper subject expertise thus available to them across the curriculum. This development has brought about a significant improvement in the quality of provision in a number of subjects which were not found satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. This pattern continues into Years 7/8 and this prepares pupils very well for their move on to the Upper School at the start of Year 9, at the end of which the standards they achieve are well above average.
21. There is no opportunity to study a second foreign language in Years 7/8 but arrangements are secured with the Upper School for this to be introduced in Year 9. In design and technology, the range of materials with which pupils can work is somewhat limited. Arrangements for the teaching of drama in Years 7/8 have some inconsistency, but most pupils benefit from opportunities to engage with drama as part of their work in other subjects, particularly in English and in personal, social and health education. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, although the provision for a daily act of collective worship gives too little opportunity for pupils to reflect on the issues presented to them in assemblies and during form periods. The curriculum model is the subject of an annual review by a group of senior staff and this has ensured that the needs of all pupils are addressed, and that pupils leave the school very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

22. A well-structured programme of study for personal, social and health education (PSHE) covers a good range of topics relevant to pupils' developing maturity. The sex, health and drugs-related issues are especially well supported by links with community services. The school has recently gained the healthy school award. The PSHE lessons sampled were of mixed quality. Where teachers had mastered the topics and were prepared for pupils to work collaboratively, achievement was good. Less successful lessons relied on worksheets and colouring in, which meant that achievement suffered. Currently, teaching is done by form teachers, but modification of this arrangement is being considered to enhance delivery of the topics.
23. There is mainly good provision for pupils with special educational needs. They benefit from good quality support both when they are withdrawn to the learning support centre and when they receive in-class support. There is a good quality of liaison between the various staff supporting these pupils, which helps ensure they make good progress. In some larger classes where in-class support is not provided, class teachers do experience difficulty in meeting the needs of these pupils adequately.
24. The provision for gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory. The school has improved its work with higher attaining pupils and now recognises that gifted and talented pupils have particular learning requirements. A comprehensive policy has been recently introduced, and a co-ordinator appointed who is undergoing training. Whole-school in-service training is planned for the summer term. The programme is still in the early stages of development and a provisional list of gifted and talented pupils has been produced. Many subject areas need guidance in defining the criteria and procedures for identifying, working with and monitoring these pupils. Some subject areas have already identified their talented pupils and provide well-planned and challenging work. In science, higher ability pupils are entered for external competitions, achieving a marked degree of success. A programme of activity is specially devised for those pupils who are talented in physical education. The school also has many talented musicians who are involved in local education authority ensembles.
25. The curriculum is enriched in a number of ways and particularly effectively through the school's 'going global' project. There are additional opportunities for pupils in many subject areas and the quality of these is especially good in science, art and design, geography and physical education and for pupils who receive learning support. The range of extra-curricular activities on offer is extensive and the school's analysis of the level and nature of participation shows it to be very popular. Involvement in these activities often culminates in broader learning experiences away from school, for example by visiting art galleries or enjoying opportunities for specialist coaching in sports. In science, pupils in both key stages have participated with considerable success in external competitions. Some Years 7/8 pupils were entered for the Lord Mayor of Bristol's Science and Innovation Awards last year and achieved well. These activities provide a new dimension of challenge for the more able pupils.
26. Overall, the quality of provision relating to specialist staff, accommodation and resources for learning is good. There is clearly a sufficiency of specialist rooms for Years 7/8 pupils, and for those in Years 5/6 this provision is better than in many other schools. The quality of the specialist accommodation is variable. For example, in geography, pupils enjoy a very attractive learning environment. By contrast, the room for working in resistant materials is in a very poor state of repair, although the teacher has developed a very good learning environment there. In the majority of subject areas there are specialist subject teachers and the overall match of teachers to the curriculum is good. There are particular strengths in mathematics, science, art and design and geography. The school has done well to attract good quality specialist teachers in most areas and this has had a clear impact on standards. Resources to support teaching and learning are limited in religious education and citizenship. Some classes outside the core subjects are relatively large; while teachers' professional development, lesson planning and assessment of pupils' work all benefit from a relatively low contact ratio, the impact on class size needs to be kept under review.

27. Some areas of the school are not at present accessible to pupils with restricted mobility, but the school has planned well for the provision of access for such pupils in the future. The new specialist area for the provision of learning support is well designed, centrally placed in the school and well equipped with resources including computers. The number of learning support assistants does not allow for coverage of all classes where they would provide positive assistance, but they are well deployed to meet the greatest needs. They have good access to specialist training to improve their effectiveness and to provide good career routes for them.

Care, guidance and support

Overall, the care and welfare of pupils are good and the support, advice and guidance they receive are satisfactory. Pupils' involvement in the work and development of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff know the pupils and their specific welfare, medical and social needs well.
- The school cares very well for pupils' individual special needs and liaises very well with external agencies.
- Transition processes from first and into upper schools are very well organised.
- Child protection arrangements are very good.
- There are issues of health and safety which remain to be addressed.

Commentary

28. From the time of their entry into the school from their first school until they move into their secondary school, pupils are cared for well. Parents agree that these transfer processes are handled very well. Members of the staff are aware of pupils' specific needs. The monitoring of their pastoral progress through the school is good, owing to staff's extensive and detailed knowledge of pupils. However, the monitoring and assessment of their academic progress are satisfactory. Targets set do not always inform pupils well enough about how they can progress and there is little evidence that they are engaged in the process. For example, the targets identified in their annual reports are not specific and there are no notes in the reports that indicate that they or their parents are involved in the process.
29. Support for pupils from within the school or from outside agencies is well organized and targeted. The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are detailed and are regularly reviewed in consultation with all relevant parties. The school provides very well for pupils who may need to be reintegrated back into school after periods of absence. Their individual education programmes are detailed and regularly reviewed in consultation with all interested parties. Parents are well consulted and informed. As a result, pupils with emotional and behavioural problems make good progress towards their targets. Their progress is well tracked so that issues are quickly identified and dealt with.
30. Pupils are able to identify a member of staff whom they would feel confident to approach if they needed help or guidance. Pupils are provided with opportunities to take responsibility and are encouraged well to develop as active and involved citizens. As well as working as monitors in a variety of roles, pupils assist office staff during the course of the day and take these responsibilities seriously. Pupils are appointed as games and house captains for three houses. Pupils who are members of the school council agreed that it is worthwhile and that they feel valued and involved and they confirm that they are able to influence life within school and are listened to. The school council has been involved in the school's healthy eating initiative, design of the revised play area and changes to the school uniform. Not all pupils are elected using the same democratic process.
31. Pupils' welfare is very well provided for and the school is very aware of individual pupils' medical and welfare needs. Health and safety arrangements in school are satisfactory. All statutory requirements are met and the school has required procedures in place. However,

there are features that caused inspectors concern, and a list of these has been handed to the headteacher. Most of these items have previously been identified by the school, but have not yet been rectified. Child protection procedures are very well managed and the school complies fully with local requirements; the school works very well with the local caring and emergency services.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **good** and links with the community and other schools and colleges are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have positive views of the school.
- Newsletters home for parents are good, although parents are not provided with all the information about the curriculum and pupils' progress they would like.
- Very good links with the primary and first schools and the receiving upper schools and other local schools provide many benefits for pupils.
- Communications with parents of pupils with special educational needs are good.

Commentary

32. In the previous inspection the school had strong links with the community. These aspects have continued to be strengths of the school. Parents and carers have generally positive views of the school and the progress their children are making. The school works well with parents, encouraging them to support the school through the school association and to help their children at home. The school provides good quality information in newsletters and on day-to-day events. Some of the parents, however, would like to receive more information from the school on the curriculum and how they can assist their children at home. The school has involved the parents well in decision-making processes and has frequently canvassed the parents' opinions through the use of questionnaires. The school's prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are very informative but do not include all the minimum statutory information. For instance, these documents do not inform parents about governors' terms of office, about action taken since the last inspection, about the complaints procedure or the home/school agreement, or about pupils' destinations on leaving the school.
33. Most parents are positive about the efforts made by the school to minimise disruption for the pupils moving into school and going on to upper school, although some parents are concerned that younger pupils find the change from class teachers to subject teachers quite daunting. The arrangements made by the school for information transfer ensure that members of staff are well informed of the achievements and support needs of pupils about to join. Parents consider the school's responses to suggestions or concerns to be generally good. Parents find the formal opportunities to meet staff and discuss their children's progress are not always as productive as they would like. Written annual and interim reports for parents on pupils' progress do not always provide enough useful information on how their children can improve towards the improvement targets identified. Parents welcome the open-door approach adopted by the school and the fact that the headteacher is approachable and welcomes the opportunity to meet with parents at a discussion forum. Parents also welcome the accessibility of all members of the staff.
34. Links with other schools are very good and are strengths of the school. The headteacher has played a pivotal role in the organization of links between clusters and groups of local schools. These links have enabled significant exchanges of information, resources, expertise, moderation and training initiatives between schools. Pupils have benefited from these links at all levels and throughout the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. The pupils have been very successful in a wide range of sporting events and competitions.

35. Parents of all pupils who have special educational needs are well consulted and informed, and are fully involved in the writing of their children's individual education plans. There is very effective contact with the special needs staff of the first schools and the upper school, thus helping to ensure smooth transition from one stage to another. The school has a very positive link with a local special school that is helping specific pupils while providing valuable training for teachers and learning assistants.
36. The school prides itself on its links with the town, adult education providers and the adjacent Community Centre. All these facets are strengths of the school and are very good. The school association contributes significant funds for the school through a variety of fund-raising events and members organize social events for parents and for children. The school is involved locally with businesses in gaining sponsorship, the local Rotary club, local churches and charities. The school is involved in a global initiative to link with schools in New Zealand and Zambia.
37. During the school day and after school, the school's resources are used extensively by the community. The school organises many visits by community groups and visitors to enrich the curriculum as part of lessons and assemblies. The school has very good relationships with support agencies in helping the school maintain care and support for its pupils. The school is heavily involved in a joint area project to improve the multi-agency input into schools associated with the care of children.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is **good**. Governance of the school is **very good**. The leadership provided by the headteacher is **very good** and he is well supported by the deputy head, the management team and other key staff. The school is **well** managed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's leadership ensures an inclusive school with an emphasis on raising achievement and the effective personal development of pupils; he is well established and his priorities and principles are respected by staff, pupils and parents alike.
- Those staff with responsibilities across the school are effective in their roles.
- Governors understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and help to keep the school under review.
- Staff's continuing professional development is generally done well and is clearly related to the needs identified through monitoring by the headteacher and deputy.
- The collation and analysis of pupil performance data is developing well and continues to be refined to improve its accessibility.

Commentary

38. The headteacher has become a very well established leader of the school. He has a clear and firm commitment to the school being thoroughly inclusive. Under his leadership, productive relationships have been established with the community and with the schools from which pupils arrive and onto which they progress. Staff respect their headteacher and they are well motivated by his enthusiasm and commitment. He has high aspirations for the achievement of all pupils. The effective and committed support of the deputy head helps to assure success and to generate effective teamwork. With his senior colleagues, the headteacher keeps the curriculum and teaching under regular review. Current arrangements, many of which are quite recent innovations, are working well, including the new school management team.
39. The school's strategic planning is firmly orientated around raising standards further and providing pupils with a broad education which attends also to their personal development. While the documentation is somewhat complex for a school of this size, procedures have ensured that development priorities are shared and understood by all staff, and are reflected

in plans for each part of the curriculum. The stringent review undertaken by the head and deputy of each subject area leads to very clear targets for improvement.

40. The leadership provided by subject leaders is good overall, being very good in mathematics, science and ICT and excellent in art. In these subjects, clarity of vision for the role of the subject, sense of purpose and high aspirations are particularly impressive. In mathematics and science, the creation of teams has been very effective.
41. Leadership of the learning support provision is very good and the new specialist area is very well managed. The co-ordinator is clearly committed to the needs of pupils, and plans on the basis of very thorough analysis of the impact of such tactics on the cross-curricular learning of pupils. This includes dealing in detail with pupils' areas of difficulty around the school so that specific problems can be removed, for example where work has been consistently set at the wrong level. The co-ordinator is ably assisted by a special needs teacher, to whom relevant management areas are delegated so that the department is very efficiently run.
42. The quality of management provided by subject leaders is also good overall and, as with leadership, it is very good in mathematics, science, ICT and art. In a number of subjects (mathematics, ICT and physical education in particular), there is a very clear notion of what needs to be done to improve standards further. In mathematics, there is a very secure process for the subject leader's monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, the results of which are used to secure further improvement. Such a process is also to be introduced shortly in English by the new subject leader. In other subject areas, monitoring of quality is performed by the headteacher and his deputy as part of performance management.
43. Very detailed tracking of individual pupils' performance is undertaken and this is well used in a number of areas, although the recording of individual pupils' targets in these databases would enhance their contribution to raising attainment. Currently, the presentation of some of this data is unnecessarily complex and will benefit from further refinement. There is good collaboration with the main feeder school and the partner upper school in ensuring that pupil performance data can be tracked through from one school to another.
44. Staff feel that the school runs smoothly, with effective and straightforward communications and decision-making. The school's financial management arrangements are straightforward and secure. The school has had some success in securing additional funding from other sources, which has benefited the overall provision made, particularly in relation to links with other schools and the community. Funds available to support pupils with special educational needs provide well for the pupils' academic and social development. The school manages its use of external agencies very effectively. They are given opportunities to develop their expertise within the school while also moving towards raising the amount of specialist knowledge within the school.
45. The training and continuing professional development of all its personnel are a very important part of the school's life and culture. There is a clear commitment to provide a quality working environment for all, and to ensure that every opportunity is taken to enhance and develop the professional skills of teaching and support staff. Performance management procedures are well established, and the outcomes of this annual professional review form the basis of the school's forward planning, which is clearly focused on driving up standards and improving the quality of its educational provision. Good use is made of outside agencies, the local community of schools and of the skills and support available from within the school itself to provide ongoing professional development. Staff new to the school are given appropriate support and training where necessary, and there are good links with local training establishment for participation in the initial training of teaching staff. Subject specialist staff who work on their own in some of the foundation subjects do need further opportunities to work alongside specialists in other schools as part of their continuing professional development.

46. Governors have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are very well focused on raising standards via improving teaching and learning. Assessment data analysis challenges some, but governors are very involved in the school's self-evaluation programme.
47. A large group of fully committed governors brings much relevant expertise to helping shape the vision and direction of the school. There is a very effective committee structure and cycle of meetings. Governors have very good links into the school, attend appropriate in-service training and are very well supported. As a result, they are very well informed and are able to perform their duties.
48. Governors have addressed very well the action required following the previous inspection. They have considered at length the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship and have parental consent in support of their policy. However, the school does not always provide pupils with an opportunity for reflection for all pupils as agreed. Policies relating to inclusion, pupils' care and welfare and leadership and management are fully in place and reviewed regularly. The governors' annual report to parents and carers and the school's prospectus do not meet all of the statutory requirements, as exemplified in paragraph 33. Relationships between staff and governors are excellent. Governors both challenge and support senior managers very well.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,182,463	Balance from previous year	85,600
Total expenditure	1,151,839	Balance carried forward to next year	116,224
Expenditure per pupil	3,388		

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 2 AND 3

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **good**.

	Year 6	Year 8
Standards seen	Average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good
Leadership	Good	
Management	Good	
Improvement since previous inspection	Good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 8, pupils have made good progress from when they entered school and standards of attainment are above the national average.
- Good leadership and management have led to improving standards in recent years.
- The work of too many pupils shows much inaccuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Teaching is good but, throughout the school, teaching pays too little attention to the quality of pupils' writing.
- Assessment is used well to provide extra classes and other measures to enable the lower attaining pupils to achieve as well as possible.
- There is insufficient monitoring of teaching and sharing of good practice.
- There is little opportunity for pupils to benefit from the inclusion of drama in the curriculum, especially in Years 7 and 8.

Commentary

49. 2004 national test results at the end of Year 6 rose substantially, to be above the national average. They were higher than the below average results obtained in 2003, although they were still below those attained in similar schools, when measured against earlier attainment. The trend over the last three years is in line with that found nationally. These results are attributable to good teaching and good use of assessment to plan appropriate work for all abilities.
50. Pupils achieve well during Years 5/6. Standards observed by Year 6 are average in the main. Pupils speak fluently and readily; most have good phonic skills and read with ease and a good level of understanding. They write at length and with interest and enthusiasm, but written work is frequently marred by low levels of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Pupils enter the school with broadly average standards in English. Good teaching helps them to reach above average standards in speaking and reading, but only average standards in writing. This represents good achievement. Boys attain less well than girls in national tests, and by a wider margin than nationally, but are improving as the school continues to address the problem. Pupils achieve well during Years 7/8 and by the end of Year 8, pupils are working at levels above those of the national average, except in the technical aspects of their written work, such as spelling and punctuation.
51. Pupils with special educational needs, as well as lower attaining pupils, make good progress, because, in most years, assessment is used well to place them in small sets, in which they

are given work which matches their abilities, while still challenging them to reach their full potential. Levels of individual and group support are good.

52. Teaching and learning are good across all years. Teachers use their thorough assessment of pupils to plan relevant and interesting work, which is well tailored to meet the national strategies for literacy. Pupils enjoy the lessons and respond positively, so that they learn well. Teachers give pupils good encouragement and ensure that higher attaining pupils are well stretched and that lower attaining pupils are given as much help as possible to develop skills in literacy. Behaviour is generally well managed, so that pupils remain on task, without distraction. Occasionally, the pace of a lesson can be a little slow when work proves to be too easy for the pupils, and homework is not always used to best advantage, especially in developing accuracy in writing skills. Marking is consistently detailed and helpful in making pupils aware of their progress against national standards and how they can improve their work. Opportunities for pupils to extend their learning outside the classroom are good. Pupils are beginning to make good use of ICT to research and to present their work.
53. Leadership and management are good. Standards of work have improved steadily since the previous inspection through the introduction of good schemes of work for all years, although these do not contain sufficient opportunities for drama. Assessment is used well to organise the setting of classes to give the optimum help to pupils of all abilities. The progress of individual pupils is closely tracked. There is, as yet, insufficient monitoring of teaching quality and hence opportunities to share what works well are limited. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. Standards of attainment have improved from average to above average by the end of Year 8 and pupils achieve well both during Years 5/6 and Years 7/8.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. Support for improving literacy is planned throughout the school, but has yet to be fully implemented. The new co-ordinator for literacy is very clear on the priorities for the further development of literacy teaching, but there is much left to do to train all teachers in being teachers of literacy, as well as of their own specialist subjects. In many lessons, pupils are given good opportunities to develop oral skills. They speak confidently to each other and in front of the class. They read well, in the main, and are able to use skills of comprehension and deduction effectively by the end of Year 8. Many subjects have recognised the need for emphasis on different styles of writing for particular purposes, such as reporting in science, and are giving pupils good quality writing frames to encourage this initiative. Writing is often well encouraged, particularly in English, science and history, but not in other subjects. Marking for accuracy in spelling, grammar and punctuation is not evident across all subjects. As a result, teaching and marking do not help pupils to improve their skills in writing with consistency.

Modern foreign languages

French

Provision in French is **satisfactory**.

	Year 6	Year 8
Standards seen	Not applicable	Average
Achievement	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Leadership	Satisfactory	
Management	Satisfactory	
Improvement since previous inspection	Unsatisfactory	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Abler pupils in Year 8 achieve well.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their languages learning.
- Achievement is not as good as it might be in Years 5/6.
- There is insufficient formal rehearsal of language in French lessons.
- Improvement since the previous inspection has not been satisfactory.

Commentary

55. The achievement of younger children is not as good as it might be because they have insufficient opportunities as a matter of course to use and practise the language. A Year 5 lesson seen had practically no foreign language content, and in Year 6, pupils were hesitant to speak and had some difficulties with simple numbers and telling the time. Despite beginning to study French in Year 5, pupils in Year 7 are no further on with French than their counterparts in other schools who only have just over one term's learning. Pupils consequently are underachieving in Years 5/6. Their speaking is hesitant and their writing is often inaccurate. By Year 8, however, abler pupils show good skills in the manipulation of tenses, and language knowledge is good, although speaking remains less well developed.
56. Teaching and learning take place in a good atmosphere, and pupils respond well to language learning. Relationships are good and the teacher has some interesting and unusual ideas to encourage pupils' learning. However, these need considerably more control and refinement before they can be considered to be effective. There is a tendency to set open-ended tasks over which there is insufficient control and which as a consequence lead to misapprehensions and poor learning. In none of the lessons seen were pupils given the opportunity to practise the spoken language through question and answer or situational dialogues, and this showed very clearly in pupils' lack of confidence and ability to speak.
57. Leadership is satisfactory: there are suitable plans in line with whole-school priorities to take the subject forward, and the school provides appropriate support for this one-teacher department. Links with other middle schools and upper schools are appropriate, although opportunities for more sharing of specialist-language teaching expertise are not sufficient. Work in French is monitored by the school, and the scheme of work is based on sound principles which, however, are not always carried out in practice. Assessment procedures, and the development which takes place based on how well the pupils are progressing, need to be tighter and based upon more rigorous judgements.
58. There are a number of areas where the department does not perform as well as at the time of the previous inspection, especially in terms of the use of the target language and the perceived attainment of the pupils in Key Stage 2. Abler pupils in Year 8 continue to have levels of understanding in French which meet the national expectation and sometimes exceed it. Pupils' attitudes to language learning continue to be good, but the rehearsal of language noted at the previous inspection is no longer as consistent a feature of the department's work as it should be.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

	Year 6	Year 8
Standards seen	Above average	Above average
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good	Very good
Leadership	Very good	
Management	Very good	
Improvement since previous	Good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and promotes effective learning.
- The enthusiasm and commitment of the mathematics co-ordinator and the team of teachers.
- Relationships in lessons are very good and the pupils behave very well and work very hard.
- Assessment is very good and this has helped to improve results in national tests.
- More opportunities for the pupils to use the computers need to be written into the schemes of work for Year 7 and 8.

Commentary

59. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004 show the proportion of pupils reaching the nationally expected level is at the national average for all schools. When compared to similar schools the proportion is also at the average but is marginally below the average for the higher levels. Boys and girls perform equally well. There has been an improvement in standards achieved over the last few years, particularly the boys' standards. When the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 8, they are working at levels appropriate to their capability and are well placed to perform well in the national tests at the end of Year 9.
60. Standards of work seen in lessons and in the pupils' books throughout the school were above the expected level for many pupils. The work of the pupils in Year 6 would indicate a further improvement in the standards to be achieved in the national tests. Most pupils have good number skills and draw accurate graphs but some find difficulty in directed number work and in estimation. Calculators are used appropriately and the pupils display competent mental arithmetic skills. Attainment on entry is below the national average. Achievement by the majority of pupils across Years 5 to 8 is now very good. The resolution of the previous staffing problems and the new schemes of work driven by the National Numeracy Strategy are mainly responsible for this. In all years, pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
61. Teaching is very good overall. Almost all lessons seen were very good and apart from one, the rest were good. The satisfactory lesson was by the learning support assistant who is receiving good training within the department. Lessons are well planned, with clear learning objectives which are shared with pupils. In the best lessons, the teachers have high expectations of the pupils, the pace is good and a variety of tasks has been prepared to challenge the pupils. The interactive whiteboards are being used imaginatively. In a lesson for high attaining pupils in Year 8 the teacher was using the interactive whiteboard well to ensure the good understanding by the pupils of the relationship between straight lines and their equations. Very good use of information and communication technology was seen in a lesson for middle attaining Year 5 pupils where the teacher had prepared some excellent work on large numbers in real-life situations. Given the information, the pupils found the numbers from a variety of sources and then wrote the numbers in words. Starter exercises seen were mainly developing the pupils' mental mathematical skills effectively, using the interactive whiteboard and the mini-whiteboards. For example, in a Year 5 lesson of low attainers, the pupils were practising multiplication by 10 and 2 in preparation for the main part of the lesson on long multiplication. The endings of lessons are very good, consolidating learning appropriately. Teachers make effective use of questioning, encouraging pupils to explain their answers and solutions to the rest of the class.
62. As a result of effective teaching, most pupils acquire knowledge of basic skills and concepts, which enables them to work on their own to improve their understanding. Literacy skills are improved by the good emphasis on key words, the insistence of teachers on the correct use of mathematical language and the good oral work in lessons. Pupils have a positive attitude to mathematics, they behave very well in lessons and relationships between pupils and with their teachers are very good.

63. Leadership and management of the department are very good. The mathematics co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has worked very hard to improve standards. She has a clear vision of what needs to be done to raise standards further and has an organised approach to the monitoring and evaluating of teaching and learning. The schemes of work for Year 5 and 6 are now more detailed and helpful. She is well supported by the other teachers who are enthusiastic, committed and hard working. Together they respond very positively to the National Numeracy Strategy with confidence and enjoyment and this is raising standards. Assessment procedures and use of data are very good; pupils are tested regularly, are aware of national curriculum levels and know what they need to do to improve. Day-to-day marking is both encouraging and informative. Appropriate and regular homework is set. The department development plan is linked to the school improvement plan. Liaison with the first and upper schools is regular and purposeful.
64. Improvement since the previous inspection is good. Teaching has improved and so standards of attainment have also improved. Leadership and management of the department have improved. There still need to be more opportunities for the pupils to use computers in Year 7 and 8 to support their learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. The key features of the National Numeracy Strategy have been shared with all staff in the school. Aspects of mathematics have been identified in most subject schemes of work. Pupils are using their mathematical knowledge and skills well in other subjects across the curriculum, though in science the lower attainers' level of numeracy is, on occasions, limiting their achievement. In science, pupils were collecting, interpreting and representing data competently. Pupils in information and communication technology were using their mathematical skills to write formulae to use in spreadsheets. Good graph drawing skills were observed in geography. A co-ordinator for developing the work of mathematics across the curriculum has now been appointed.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

	Year 6	Year 8
Standards seen	Average	Above average
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good	Very good
Leadership	Very good	
Management	Very good	
Improvement since previous inspection	Very good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management of the faculty are significant factors in most pupils now achieving very well and in rising standards.
- Teachers work hard, and very well as a team that has a desire to raise standards and has a capacity to succeed.
- Teaching strategies do not yet place enough emphasis on to sharing the learning objectives with pupils, key words and plenary sessions.

Commentary

66. The Year 6 results in the 2004 National Curriculum tests were above the national average for the expected Level 4 and average for the higher level 5 when compared with those in all

schools. These results continue a pattern of improving standards, well above the national trend. Level 4 results were below, and Level 5 well below average when compared with those of similar schools based upon prior attainment. In recent years girls have done marginally better than boys. The performance of girls is in line with, and of boys below, their respective national averages. Targets set for science have been met.

67. The standards of work seen by Year 6 are in line with the improved test results over recent years. By Year 8, standards are now above average. In most lessons pupils achieve very well. They respond very well to being challenged. Most are keeping a very good record of their work. They describe what they see and label diagrams very well. They are confident discussing their work, when asking and answering questions and when reporting back on their findings. Most pupils plan investigations very well, make predictions and evaluate their practical work. They work accurately and safely. Most research very well, selecting from a variety of sources only relevant information. This is particularly the case in Years 7 and 8. Higher attaining pupils willingly accept the challenge to extend their knowledge and understanding. Their writing, descriptive and creative, is excellent. They share very well how they can improve their investigations and offer intuitive alternative suggestions. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with special education needs achieve very well, the result of the very good support they get from their teachers and from learning support assistants. Many of them experience difficulties when writing and when using number. Very positive attitudes to work and very good behaviour are helping pupils to improve their achievements. When working together, they support each other very well.
68. In a very good lesson in Year 6, planning provided a variety of challenging activities. There was very good use made of ICT; pupils read aloud and shared their prior knowledge and experiences of recycling. Excellent organisation and very clear expectations resulted in each pupil successfully carrying out a role of responsibility within the investigation. As a result of some very good teaching in Year 8, all pupils were increasing their knowledge and understanding of the spread of diseases at a very good pace. A very well constructed question sheet enabled pupils to extract only relevant information when using video and text as sources for their research. In both lessons pupils were being challenged to investigate and to think, with an emphasis on group work and on exchanging ideas. In most lessons pupils were focused on the topic from the start but not always through sharing learning objectives. Key words were not always emphasised. There is very good, diagnostic marking of work in Years 7 and 8. Assessment data is shared very well but as yet, not all pupils are skilled at self-evaluation.
69. Leadership and management are very good. Self-evaluation triggers appropriate action. Improvement planning indicates clarity of purpose that is based upon raising standards. Very knowledgeable and innovative leadership of teaching and of the curriculum promotes the values and ethos of the whole school. Specialist teachers are very well deployed but timetabling arrangements do not allow their good practices to be shared. Action required by the last inspection has been addressed very well along with further improvements, particularly in teaching and learning and of the curriculum. Future developments are being addressed systematically by a team of teachers that has a capacity to succeed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision for ICT is **very good**.

	Year 6	Year 8
Standards seen	Above average	Above average
Achievement	Very good	Good
Teaching and learning	Very good	Good
Leadership	Very good	
Management	Very good	
Improvement since previous	Very good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching inspires pupils' interest and makes them want to learn.
- Very good assessment practices provide information to support planning.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good.
- Good resources for ICT lessons meet all of the demands of the national curriculum.
- ICT is used well to promote learning in mathematics, science, geography, art and design and resistant materials and to promote the learning of pupils with special educational needs.
- The use of ICT is not fully exploited in history, French and physical education.

Commentary

70. By Year 6, standards are above average, which shows very good achievement from a starting point where pupils' standards are below average on entry to the school. They make good progress during Year 5 in terms of technical skills and awareness of the purpose of ICT. Standards in Year 8 remain above average, so that pupils are achieving well to maintain the above average standards they reach by Year 6. All pupils are accustomed to assessing their own work and that of other pupils in relation to specific criteria, with the highest attaining pupils doing so in the light of the purpose of the task. The majority produce clear documents and presentations with good consistency of style but without full explanations of their reasons. Lower attainers also do this, but with less accuracy and usually less completeness. Pupils use their literacy and numeracy well to help their work, so that standards in mathematical modelling using spreadsheets are a strength.
71. All pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching and achieve particularly well in Years 5 and 6 as a result of the consistently very good teaching there. Teachers' very good relationships with pupils result from celebration of their effort and achievement through a system of frequent small rewards for good effort. Teachers' good subject knowledge shows in effective lesson plans that develop learning well for every pupil. They have very good knowledge of the needs of individual pupils. A very good pace and focus to questioning challenges the higher attainers to think hard about the principles underpinning their planning while encouraging others at appropriate levels to develop thinking as well as technical skills. On those few occasions when teaching is less good, the teacher's explanations do not clearly draw out the messages to be learned from well-planned active sessions. Teachers use assessment very well to plan for individuals and to require pupils to reinforce their learning of the key principles by evaluating their own work and that of others.
72. The department is very well led and very well managed. The head of department is a very good role model for teachers teaching and using ICT. His clear view of the place of ICT in the whole curriculum helps him to set a very good example by using and developing literacy and numeracy. The management of the curriculum is very good, with the head of department having very good links with local middle and upper schools. Improvement since the last inspection is very good in that ICT is now taught to all pupils, standards have risen very well and the school is well equipped with good quality resources.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. Provision for ICT across the curriculum is good. ICT is well used in the majority of subjects, with the requirements for data-logging being met in science and controlling physical movement being learned in the resistant materials area of design and technology. The use of spreadsheets is well developed in geography and mathematics, while pupils are taught the appropriate use of computers in art. The use of ICT is not thoroughly developed as yet in history, French or physical education, although teachers have begun to use it. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when the use of ICT was very patchy.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

	Year 6	Year 8
Standards seen	Average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Good
Leadership	Very good	
Management	Good	
Improvement since previous inspection	Very good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Much teaching is very good and is better with middle and higher attaining pupils.
- The thorough scheme of work helps ensure that appropriate attention is given to the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.
- Teaching and learning resources, and the specialist accommodation, are very good.
- The use of ICT by both teachers and pupils is a strength.

Commentary

74. Standards of work seen range from below the national average when pupils arrive at the start of Year 5 to above by the time they leave at the end of Year 8. By this time middle and higher-attaining pupils have developed into very skilled and competent geographers who look forward eagerly to continuing their studies in the subject. By the time they reach Year 7, most pupils are able to produce diagrams, maps, models and graphs of good quality. Pupils can confidently discuss the work in hand, although this sometimes reveals areas where their geographical knowledge is weaker, for instance in relation to the location of places being studied. Achievement generally is good. Most pupils make good progress in the subject through the four years they spend at this school, and this progress is more rapid in Years 7/8.
75. Teaching is good overall, ranging from mainly satisfactory teaching in Years 5/6 to often very good teaching in Years 7/8. Teachers have very good subject knowledge. They plan lessons well and share the intended outcomes with the pupils. Lessons present a good level of challenge to most pupils, although at times the work set for lower attainers is too difficult while some higher attainers would benefit from extension activity. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to hone their numeracy and ICT skills. While the development of literacy skills is embedded in the scheme of work, too little specific teaching of literacy skills is done. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs, with good use made of their individual education plans. Teaching makes good use of the latest computer technology. Lessons maintain a good pace which sustains pupils' interest. In some Years 5/6 classes, there is a need for firmer expectations of appropriate behaviour. There is a good programme of fieldwork in most years. Pupils respond generally well to the teaching, the response of higher and middle attainers being better because teaching and resources are more effectively matched to their needs. Marking in Years 7/8 is thorough and helpful to pupils, while a little sketchy in Years 5/6. Teaching makes frequent reference to what pupils need to do to improve the outcomes of their work, including reference to work at GCSE level at their next school. The current trialling of peer assessment by pupils is working well, although it needs further refinement to ensure that it leads consistently to improvement in pupils' geographical knowledge, understanding and skills. Homework tasks are generally well devised to reinforce and extend pupils' understanding.

76. Leadership of the subject is enthusiastic and very effective, providing a clear sense of the important contribution that geography can make to pupils' better understanding of the world around them. Management is good, as is demonstrated by the well-chosen and well-presented resources and accommodation and the exemplary scheme of work. Continuing professional development in the subject is ensured, although there are too few opportunities to observe specialist geography teaching in other schools.
77. There has been very significant improvement since the last inspection. The subject now has a real and regular presence in the curriculum for every year group, and standards have improved substantially. An area for improvement is liaison with the feeder schools.

History

Provision in history is **unsatisfactory**.

	Year 6	Year 8
Standards seen	Below average	Below average
Achievement	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Teaching and learning	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Leadership	Unsatisfactory	
Management	Satisfactory	
Improvement since previous inspection	Unsatisfactory	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Weaknesses in teaching restrict pupils' progress.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT.
- Pupils enjoy history lessons and behave well.
- History makes a good contribution to pupils' citizenship and cultural education.

Commentary

78. In Year 6, standards are below average, representing unsatisfactory achievement. Standards in Year 8 remain below average, also representing unsatisfactory achievement. In all years, a minority of higher ability pupils achieve well. There are no significant differences in standards and achievement according to gender or special educational needs. Throughout Years 5 to 8 the majority of pupils show limited development of the key skills of historical enquiry and the interpretation and veracity of sources they use. In work on the Bayeux tapestry most pupils struggled to interpret its usefulness as a historical source. In written work on Henry VIII's break with Rome, few pupils could extend their ideas beyond the key points outlined on a worksheet. Pupils can recall the significance of historical figures they have studied and show some understanding of how life changes through time. Pupils communicate historical topics in a range of mediums with some success, but extended writing is often based on imagination rather than on secure evidence. Few pupils use ICT in their research or presentations. Pupils behave well in lessons and respond enthusiastically when teachers give them the opportunity.
79. Some of the history teaching is done by a temporary non-specialist member of staff. Pupils cannot progress appropriately where teachers' knowledge of the subject is insufficient to address the questions pupils raise, where key terms are inadequately explained and there is an over-reliance on worksheets. In two lessons inspected, pupils' learning was restricted because the lesson lacked clear aims and pupils wasted time having to ask for instructions. Teachers' expectations are set too low and work lacks challenge. Work is not provided to assist the less able pupils. Pupils are unclear how well they are doing or how they need to improve further because standards of marking and assessment are inconsistent amongst teachers. Lessons proceed at a leisurely pace, limiting what pupils might achieve. Resources

are used effectively to stimulate pupils' interest in history. History provides a good forum for pupils to explore aspects of citizenship and extend their cultural education. However, pupils lack the stimulus of visits to historical sites and museum collections. Improvement since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory.

80. Without either specialist co-ordination or teaching, leadership of the subject is unsatisfactory. Nonetheless, the non-specialist co-ordinator has developed a scheme of work which provides a useful framework for the further development of the subject, with an appropriate range of topics and meticulously ordered resources, providing evidence of satisfactory management. Development planning identifies the need to address issues from the recent subject evaluations.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

	Year 6	Year 8
Standards seen	Above average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good
Leadership	Good	
Management	Good	
Improvement since previous inspection	Good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils reach above average standards across the school and they achieve well.
- Teaching is good and most pupils enjoy their learning.
- Religious education contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to their understanding of citizenship.
- There is too little provision for pupils with special educational needs in mixed-ability classes.
- Resources for teaching the subject are limited.

Commentary

81. Standards in Year 6 and Year 8 exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for most pupils. However, pupils with special educational needs in mixed-ability classes achieve less well than their peers, since they do not have the extra support and help of teaching assistants in their lessons.
82. In Years 5 to 8, pupils gain a good understanding of the beliefs and practices of several religions, such as Christianity, Hinduism and Sikhism. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 also learn to explore human relationships, the importance of reflection and thought for others, as well as respect for ways of worship, as in a lesson seen on the Hindu prayer ceremony. They explore the nature of spirituality and of abstract concepts. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils discussed whether human beings are born good or bad, and ways of caring for one another. This enabled them to explore ideas about human nature. The schemes of work do much to supplement and reinforce the importance of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as well as teaching valuable lessons in aspects of good citizenship.
83. The quality of teaching was good in the two lessons seen, characterised by the teacher's good subject knowledge and commitment to helping pupils to understand difficult ideas. Much challenge is offered in lessons, especially to higher attaining pupils. Resources are used to good effect to create a special atmosphere or to stimulate an interesting discussion. Lesson planning includes a good sequence of activities, which keeps pupils engaged and interested.

Occasionally, time is allowed to slip and the correction of a minority of disruptive pupils can mean that learning is not as rapid as it might be. Pupils' work shows that marking is consistent and helpful. Good emphasis is laid on the acquisition of literacy skills in pupils' learning of new vocabulary and in the accuracy asked of them in their written work.

84. Leadership and management are good. The subject is taught by a specialist teacher; the scheme of work is closely related to the requirements of the agreed syllabus. There are detailed lesson plans of good quality, although resources are not always sufficiently plentiful to implement them fully. Growing use is made of ICT to help teaching and learning. Improvement since the last inspection has been good; standards are now above average, achievement is good, teaching is good and pupils are given many opportunities for writing.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

	Year 6	Year 8
Standards seen	Average	Above average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good
Leadership	Good	
Management	Good	
Improvement since previous inspection	Satisfactory	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of teaching are good overall and enable pupils to reach above average standards by Year 8.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Assessment and monitoring are well developed but pupils need to be aware and understand what they need to do to progress further.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is well supported.
- Accommodation for teaching resistant materials is in a very poor state of repair.

Commentary

85. Achievement overall is good. Standards by the end of Year 6 and Year 8 are in line with national averages. Analysis of pupils' work, observations and talking to pupils indicates that achievement is satisfactory in Years 5/6 and good in Years 7/8, when pupils make more progress. Girls achieve better than boys. In particular, higher attaining pupils, mainly girls, reach higher standards because they express their ideas through good quality annotated sketches and apply skills learnt in previous projects. The progress made by lower attaining pupils is good because of the well-targeted support they receive from their teachers.
86. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons were well planned and organised with clear objectives. Teachers are enthusiastic about their subject and demand high standards; these features are used effectively to motivate their pupils. Good relationships between pupils and teacher enable effective teaching and learning. The work presented is appropriately targeted to the relevant age groups and their capability. A real sense of purpose is seen in most lessons, with good support for all. Teachers use skilful, well-targeted question and answer sessions to reinforce pupils' knowledge and maintain a steady pace throughout. Pupils' learning is supported well with appropriate work sheets. In a Year 8 resistant materials lesson, the teacher's good subject knowledge, enthusiasm, humour and class management enabled

pupils to understand technical vocabulary and make progress in designing and recording their work. Pupils' practical skills and use of equipment are generally good, in both food and resistant materials. Pupils are encouraged from Year 5 to be independent learners.

87. Resources used were well chosen to suit the tasks set and ensured pupils had equal access. Pupils in Year 8 used cultural influences well in food technology in their work based on festivals. Pupils demonstrated knowledge and understanding of Indian and Chinese festivals and traditions and were able to make comparisons with their own.
88. Leadership and management are good. The head of department has an effective partnership with his colleague, which contributes well to the subject's further development. The food technology teacher is a non-specialist who copes exceptionally well considering the limited depth of knowledge and no technical support. The department is a committed team with a clear vision for the subject. Pupils now have access to a range of material areas; however, there is no teaching of textiles in Years 5, 6, and 8. An adequate assessment programme is in place but does not always influence the planning. Teachers use levels of attainment to inform pupils how well they are doing but do not explain what they need to do to improve. There has been some improvement since the last inspection, mainly in food technology. The new facilities for food technology have created an improved learning environment. Accommodation for resistant materials is an area of great concern. The room is in a very poor state of repair and is unusable during bad weather conditions. It is essential that regular risk assessments are carried out to monitor further deterioration.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

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

	Year 6	Year 8
Standards seen	Average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good	Very good
Leadership	Very good	
Management	Very good	
Improvement since previous inspection	Very good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching ensures all pupils achieve well.
- Standards in Year 8 are above average.
- Art makes a very good contribution to pupils' cultural education.
- ICT is imaginatively used to stimulate pupils' interest in art and design.

Commentary

89. In Year 6 standards are average, representing good achievement since pupils enter the school with below average standards in art. In Year 8, standards are above average, representing very good achievement. Throughout Years 5 to 8 there are no significant differences in pupils' standards and achievement according to gender or special educational needs. Talented artists achieve very well. Pupils produce vibrant and imaginative work in a range of media, including portrait painting influenced by fauvism, and three-dimensional carnival masks. Pupils use their sketchbooks very well to record images and to develop their ideas through to high quality finished pieces. Observational drawing skills are more variable in quality. Pupils possess a good knowledge of the artists, techniques and styles they study and

can discuss and evaluate art with increasing confidence and accuracy. They are particularly adept at understanding how art can convey mood and meaning. Pupils enjoy art and design and show very good attitudes and behave very well in lessons.

90. Pupils are inspired to aim high in art and design because teaching is enthusiastic, expectations are high, and lessons are well planned and always challenging. The teacher possesses excellent subject knowledge, enabling her to provide an exciting and imaginative curriculum that develops pupils' creativity. Teaching is always alert to the potential of each pupil's work and skilful questioning ensures pupils grasp the links between technique and aesthetic intention. Teaching methods are dynamic and imaginative. Each lesson provides a range of activities from which pupils select to develop their skills towards individual projects. ICT is very well used to promote the technical confidence of less able pupils, which they can then translate to conventional media. Effective use is made of a range of assessment strategies to show pupils how well they are doing and how they might further improve.
91. The head of the department has an excellent vision for the subject, based on pupils' self-discovery through visual stimulation and enjoyment. The teacher provides a very good role model to pupils. She has created an excellent curriculum which offers pupils opportunities to explore the beliefs and ideas of other cultures. Very good initiatives have been developed to extend the horizons of the most talented pupils and to promote the achievement of boys. Pupils benefit from trips to galleries, competition work and sessions with visiting artists. Their artistic achievements are attractively celebrated around the school. Improvement since the previous report has been very good.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

	Year 6	Year 8
Standards seen	Average	Average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good
Leadership	Good	
Management	Satisfactory	
Improvement since previous inspection	Satisfactory	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching encourages pupils to learn well.
- The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are generally good.
- There is good co-operation between the neighbouring schools.
- Extra-curricular activities are developing well.
- Assessment is being developed and the scheme of work is being revised.

Commentary

92. Standards by Year 6 and Year 8 are at the levels required nationally and pupils' achievement is good. This is due mainly to the new music teacher who is planning lessons which are full of activities that stimulate pupils' interests. There is no significant difference between the work of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because the teacher gives them good support so that they can play a full part in the lessons. Pupils recognised as talented lead in extra-curricular music activities and play in the county music groups for advanced players. Over 40 pupils learn instruments at school and others learn privately at home. Many pupils are anxious to take part in the school show. All of these activities support work in lessons and contribute towards pupils' personal development.

93. Because teaching in Years 5 and 6 is good overall, pupils enjoy music and are keen to do well. They delight in singing in parts and the pace, challenge and management of lessons ensure that they are motivated and work hard. In a less effective lesson, the task of playing pentatonic tunes was not well matched to Year 5 pupils' knowledge and understanding. In Years 7 and 8, pupils are encouraged to develop their musical ideas and because of the good teaching many succeed in improving their understanding of the life and works of Mussorgsky. No pupils, however, were seen using computers but work seen in some files show good efforts being made at musical research using the Internet. Pupils generally behave well and this supports their learning. Marking and assessment are areas for development and the close co-operation with music teachers in the local middle and high schools is providing good opportunities for joint moderation of pupils' work and exchange of expertise.
94. The department is well led and there is a clear vision of how the subject is to be developed. Management is satisfactory and the focus for improvement is to be on revising the scheme of work and using assessment as a tool to raise standards further.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

	Year 6	Year 8
Standards seen	Above average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Very good	Very good
Leadership	Good	
Management	Good	
Improvement since previous inspection	Good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and consequently of learning is very good.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- The arrangements for assessment are good and the information gathered is well used to promote improvement.
- Almost all pupils achieve well and, over the four years, some achieve very well.
- The scheme of work is much improved to include more emphasis on personal physical fitness and on the pupils' knowledge and understanding of physical education.

Commentary

95. Attainment on entry to the school is generally below average. By Year 6, pupils' overall personal physical fitness is above average and individual skills are well developed, especially in traditional games. In a Year 5 dance class, standards of control and co-ordination of movement have developed well after only a short time. Most pupils can demonstrate a good variety of methods of travelling and have a good understanding of how to change pace and direction in their sequence work. This represents good achievement when set against their capabilities on arrival at the school. By the end of Year 6, these standards have been further improved and most pupils have a good knowledge of specialist vocabulary relating to what happens to the body during vigorous physical exercise. Both girls and boys make good progress and pupils with special educational needs improve at the same rate.
96. When pupils leave the school at the end of Year 8, standards have been similarly improved. Teacher assessments show that many have reached an above average level for age 13. These assessments are accurate and cover an improving and increasing number of physical

activities. In a Year 7 all girls group, pupils demonstrated well their ability to sustain physically challenging activity in a fitness circuit. Almost all pupils reach standards of personal physical fitness that are above average for their age. This represents good achievement. In the extra-curricular session for boys in Years 7 and 8, standards of games playing were similarly above average for their age, especially in individual passing skills and in very effective teamwork. The overall achievement over the four years for some pupils, from below average to above average, is thus very good.

97. These standards are achieved as a result of very good teaching and learning matched together with positive pupil attitudes. The teachers know their subject very well and deliver well-planned lessons in a most engaging and energetic style. The objectives for learning are very well explained at the beginning of all lessons and there is a clear emphasis on ensuring that the pupils not only know what to do in order to improve, but they understand how that improvement can be achieved. The response from most pupils is most positive. They enjoy their lessons and value their teachers' efforts to set tasks where the level of challenge is well pitched in order to promote achievement. The teachers recognise well individual needs and ensure that all contributions are valued equally through appropriate praise and encouragement. Pupils are taught to share in the assessment programme and through this process have developed a good understanding of how well they are doing.
98. The work of the department is well organised and well managed. Particular attention has been rightly given to developing a broader scheme of work, with more emphasis on the pupils' knowledge and understanding of physical education and less emphasis on games skills. The review and development of these features is already proving to be a success in Year 5 and it has obviously contributed to improving standards in Years 5/6. The vision of the head of the department is shown clearly by these improvements. Arrangements for assessment have also been improved and further developments are planned. Pupils are now engaged in self-evaluation processes and this activity further promotes their understanding of the effects of physical exercise on the body. The department makes a very good contribution to the school's extra-curricular programme. Good provision is made for an enrichment of the physical education programme through, in particular, the number of opportunities for additional specialist coaching of sporting activities. Participation levels are high and amongst the most popular in school.
99. Since the last inspection, when standards in games were reported as high, overall standards have improved. This comes as a direct consequence of the improved programme of activities which better meet the needs of more pupils. The strengths in teaching, learning and leadership and management ensure that this department is well placed to make further improvement.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

A well-structured programme of study for personal, social and health education covers a good range of topics relevant to pupils' developing maturity. The sex, health and drugs-related issues are especially well supported by links with community services. The school has recently gained the healthy school award.

The lessons sampled were of mixed quality. Where teachers had mastered the topics and were prepared for pupils to work collaboratively, achievement was good. Less successful lessons relied on worksheets and colouring in which meant that achievement suffered. Whilst teaching is done by form teachers, modification of this arrangement is being considered to enhance delivery of the topics.

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

	Year 6	Year 8
Standards seen	Average	Average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good
Leadership	Satisfactory	
Management	Satisfactory	
Improvement since previous inspection	Not applicable	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching makes lessons interesting and informative.
- The school council is effectively involving pupils in the experience of democracy.
- Assessment is not yet helping to improve pupils' knowledge of their progress.
- The school is not adequately clear about which elements of citizenship are already being taught through other subjects.
- The limited resources preclude development of the subject.

Commentary

100. Citizenship is taught as part of the personal, social and health education programme. Although achievement in the majority of lessons seen was good, the assessment arrangements are not rigorous enough to adequately judge achievement over time. In talking to pupils on the school council, there was a consensus that the good standard of discussion and debate was introducing them to the practice of democratic procedures, but these opportunities are currently open to only a minority.
101. The teaching is good overall in Years 5 and 6 and pupils learn about responsibilities and fairness. In a lesson discussing the care of animals the teacher skilfully turned around the focus to society and how it cares for vulnerable people. The good planning encouraged discussion and debate, which became effective tools for learning. Where teachers have a thorough grasp of the topic and show imagination and flare in presentation, pupils learn much about how the rights of the individual can be eroded. This was clear in a very good Year 7 lesson bringing to life the images of the Holocaust. Discussion of social stereotypes led to separation of pupils by hair or eye colour. By acting as a very hard taskmaster, the teacher highlighted conditions to which innocent Jewish people had been subjected and how they had been denied their basic human rights. In less successful lessons, including one in Year 8, the topics were inadequately explained and worksheets and drawing replaced group work and discussion. As yet, teachers' assessments are not helping pupils enough to know how they can improve in this subject.
102. The overall leadership and management of the new co-ordinator are satisfactory but limited resources affect innovation in the subject. It will be important to carry out an audit to give up-to-date information about what elements of the subject are already being taught through other subjects.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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