

INSPECTION REPORT

THE HAYLING SCHOOL

Hayling Island

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116423

Headteacher: Mr Max Bullough

Lead inspector: Mr Anthony Shield

Dates of inspection: 20 – 23 September 2004

Inspection number: 268487

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11-16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	715
School address:	Church Road Hayling Island Hampshire
Postcode:	PO11 0NU
Telephone number:	023 9246 6241
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Coates-Jones

Date of previous inspection: May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Hayling School is a mixed community school for pupils aged 11 – 16, situated on Hayling Island in Hampshire. It is the only secondary school on the island and pupils are largely drawn from Hayling Island itself, though with increasing numbers from further afield on the mainland. Attainment on entry is below average, although it has been improving and in the most recent years is around average. Pupils of all abilities are represented. The socio-economic background of pupils is mixed but is below average overall, and there are pockets of social and economic deprivation on the island. There are currently 715 pupils on roll. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is average, with 133 pupils having identified needs. Most have learning difficulties but a significant number have emotional and behavioural problems. Nine pupils have statements of special educational needs. Pupils are mostly white British, but with small numbers from a range of other ethnic heritages. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. The school has been awarded Investors in People.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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9974	Daljit Singh	Lay inspector	
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28106	Michelle Majid	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
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22491	Lorraine Small	Team inspector	Design and technology
17522	Nigel Stiles	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
22458	Gilbert McGinn	Team inspector	History
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an improving school. **Its effectiveness is satisfactory**, but in a number of areas the school is increasingly effective. Teaching in particular has improved, and as a result of the school's determined efforts to improve pupils' attitudes and behaviour, the school's climate for learning is now significantly better. Standards in most subjects are average, and the achievement of most pupils is satisfactory, and good in some subjects. The school offers satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Good teaching is leading to increasingly good achievement in a number of subjects.
- The leadership of governors, the headteacher and the senior team has created a clear vision and a strong sense of moving forward.
- Despite an improvement in performance at GCSE in 2004, improvements overall in GCSE results have not kept pace with improvements nationally.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to exercise responsibility and take part in enrichment activities.
- Productive and increasingly effective links with local businesses and the wider community help to promote achievement.
- The monitoring of provision and self-evaluation procedures at middle management level are not consistently effective.
- Achievement in science is not as good as in English or mathematics.
- The school's good provision for the arts and sports is helping to promote pupils' confidence in their ability to achieve well.
- Attendance is below average.

Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection in 1999. Standards overall in Year 9 tests have improved faster than the national trend, but in GCSE examinations, improvements have been less marked. The quality of teaching has improved and this is leading to increasingly good achievement. Key issues at the time of the last inspection have been tackled effectively, most importantly those relating to improving the climate for learning and the quality of teaching.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Performance in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
	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 9.*

Achievement is satisfactory overall, given the pupils' attainment on entry in Year 7, but good in some subjects, notably English, information and communication technology (ICT), art and physical education. Standards are average at the end of both Years 9 and 11 in most subjects. GCSE results improved in 2004, reflecting the improving climate for learning in the school. As yet however, pupils' long-term achievements, particularly at GCSE level, do not match the good

teaching and learning now evident. Performance in national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003 was below average, but value added measures suggest that pupils' achievements were at least satisfactory. Results in English and mathematics also improved in 2004, although science results dipped. Standards in the current Year 9 are average in English and mathematics, but below average in science. Pupils' achievements in all subjects are at least satisfactory, except in religious education, where achievement is unsatisfactory, due to inadequate curricular provision last year.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good overall. Pupils have good attitudes to work and most are keen to do well. However attendance is below average, largely because of higher than average unauthorised absence. Behaviour is satisfactory overall; although most behave thoughtfully and sensibly, a small number are less considerate of others. The school provides a strong moral, social and cultural framework for pupils' development, and pupils respond with increasing maturity and sense of responsibility.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education** provided by the school is **good. Teaching and learning are good** overall, and in most subjects. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge, and plan lessons and activities carefully to involve and motivate the pupils. Most pupils know how well they are doing and how to improve, although marking is not used consistently well to plan for improvements. The curriculum is satisfactory and increasingly geared to individual pupils' needs, particularly in Years 10 and 11. It is enriched by a good range of out-of-school clubs and activities. The school's tutorial arrangements for the guidance and support of pupils are good. Extensive links with the community and partner schools make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Effective leadership by the headteacher is giving the school a clear sense of purpose and direction. He is well supported by his deputies and senior team. Governors are committed and much involved in the school. They know the school well. Management is satisfactory. The school is increasingly thoughtful and reflective in its approach, and management procedures for the monitoring and review of its work are in place. However not all monitoring systems are implemented with consistent rigour, particularly at middle management level. Statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The school's partnership with its parents is satisfactory. Parents are supportive and by and large, the school has their confidence. In particular they are pleased that their children like school and that staff are approachable and friendly. A minority of parents is critical of the information they receive about progress, and of the behaviour of some pupils. Inspectors largely agree with the views of parents, although they judge annual reports of progress to be satisfactory. Pupils are very loyal and express considerable support for the school. They participate in all activities with enthusiasm, and take their responsibilities seriously. The vast majority thinks the school is good. Whilst many pupils are critical of the behaviour of a minority, they feel that any bullying is dealt with quickly and effectively.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue to improve standards and achievement at GCSE.
- Improve achievement in science to match that in English and mathematics.
- Ensure a more consistent approach to the monitoring and self-evaluation of provision.
- Continue to work towards reducing unauthorised absence.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Standards of work seen overall during the inspection are average in both Year 9 and Year 11. Most pupils' achievements are satisfactory throughout the school, although in some subjects, achievement is good. There is no significant difference between the achievements of boys and girls, although where in the past there has been underachievement, particularly at GCSE, this tended to be amongst boys.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE performance improved in 2004, but has been consistently below average in recent years.
- Results overall in national tests taken at the end of Year 9 in English, mathematics and science have been rising faster than the national trend.
- Pupils achieve well in English, information and communication technology (ICT), drama, art and physical education.
- Standards in science are below average, and pupils do not achieve as well as they could.
- Achievement in religious education is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

1. Although attainment on entry is below average overall, it has been improving and the attainment of current Year 7 and 8 pupils was broadly average on intake.
2. In national tests taken at the end of Year 9 in 2003, the pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science was below average. Given the attainment of these pupils on entry in Year 7, this represents satisfactory achievement. Although results in English dipped in 2003, performance in both mathematics and science has been improving steadily in recent years. Results in all subjects overall have been rising faster than the national trend since 1999. This improvement has continued into 2004, and unvalidated results in both English and mathematics show further improvement and are likely to be close to the national average. Results in science in 2004 dipped. In comparison with similar schools - that is, those with pupils who achieved similarly in Year 6 national tests - performance in English and science in 2003 was average, and in mathematics, it was above average. Inspectors' observations indicate that current standards are average in English and mathematics and below average in science. Improving standards in Years 7-9 was a key issue at the time of the last inspection. The school's strategies to improve attainment at this level have proved effective. Pupils' achievements in English and mathematics are good, but are satisfactory and not as good in science. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls at this level.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
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English	31.9 (34.4)	33.4 (33.3)
Mathematics	34.3 (33.3)	35.4 (34.7)
Science	32.5 (31.7)	33.6 (33.3)

There were 137 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- At the end of Year 11, the proportion of pupils gaining five or more A*-C grades in 2003 was 42 per cent, below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. The average GCSE points score per pupil of their best eight subjects in 2003 was 32.8, which was in line with the national average and in line with the average of schools which performed similarly in Year 9 tests in 2001. This reflects in particular the very good achievement of some lower attaining pupils, 98 per cent of whom achieved at least one pass grade at GCSE. This is well above the national average.
- Nevertheless, these results were a disappointment for the school and were well below the targets set. The school's own analysis indicates that there was some underachievement amongst this group of pupils, particularly of middle to below average ability boys, who just failed to achieve C grades in many of the subjects which they took at GCSE. However, able pupils did well and in a number of subjects, notably English (both language and literature), art and drama, the percentage of pupils who gained the highest grades A or A* matched or exceeded the national figure.
- GCSE results in recent years have been consistently below average and have not matched the improving national trend. Boys have generally not performed as well as girls. However, there was an improvement overall in 2004 when 46 per cent of pupils achieved five or more A*-C grade passes. The school worked hard with a particular group of potentially underachieving pupils, mostly boys, to ensure they achieved their targets. This was largely successful in ensuring that the results in 2004 are closer to the national average.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	42 (41)	52 (50)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	84 (92)	91 (91)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	98 (99)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	32.8 (32.8)	34.7 (34.7)

There were 146 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Performance in different subjects has varied. Good results in English and drama in 2003 were not matched by results in mathematics, science and history. It was the underachievement in these subjects which undermined the school's overall performance.
- Pupils' achievement, that is how high standards are in relation to their ability and prior attainment, is generally satisfactory throughout Years 7 – 11. Inspectors noted no significant difference between the achievements of boys and girls. In work seen during the inspection in both Years 9 and 11, standards were average, higher than most results in 2003, and a reflection of improving achievement. However, as yet, pupils' achievements do not match the good teaching and learning now evident.

8. This is due to a number of factors. Firstly, this is an improving school in which the improving quality of teaching and learning has not yet impacted on the long-term achievements of pupils. Secondly, the school has focused in recent years on improving the climate for learning, in particular standards of behaviour. This has been successful and pupils' attitudes to learning are now good. However the achievement of some pupils, particularly those in Years 10 and 11, has been affected by the less positive climate in the earlier years of their schooling. Assessment for learning is increasingly effective in monitoring individual pupils' progress, setting targets and planning the next learning step. Its impact on achievement is now beginning to be felt. Finally, some inconsistencies remains in the way in which subject teams monitor marking, homework and the quality of teaching and learning. As yet, monitoring by some heads of department is not consistently rigorous enough to ensure good achievement by all pupils.
9. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily and generally make the same progress as others in their classes, having overcome the barriers to their learning through the support they receive, both from learning support assistants and their well informed and committed teachers.
10. In work seen in English during the inspection, standards were average in Years 9 and 11. Given their attainment on entry, pupils achieve well. Speaking skills are less well developed than reading and writing skills. In mathematics, standards were average in Years 9 and 11 and pupils' achievements are good overall. Most pupils accurately use and apply numeracy skills in different contexts and are reasonably confident in performing mental calculations.
11. Standards in science are below average in Years 9 and 11, although pupils' achievements are satisfactory given their attainment on entry. Most pupils have a reasonable grasp of scientific principles and are learning to apply them in a range of contexts.
12. Another area of weakness is the standard of pupils' work in religious education, which is below average, and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. This is because timetabling arrangements last year failed to allow sufficient time for the proper teaching of the locally agreed syllabus. This has now been rectified.
13. In other subjects in Years 7 - 9, pupils' achievements are good in art, drama, ICT and physical education, and satisfactory in all other subjects. In Years 10 and 11, pupils' achievements continue to be good in art, physical education and ICT, but are also good in design and technology. They are satisfactory in all other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' good attitudes contribute strongly to their achievement. Pupils' personal development is also good, fostered by good opportunities for social, moral, and cultural development. Their spiritual development is satisfactory. Attendance is below average. Behaviour is satisfactory overall although most pupils behave sensibly and with increasing maturity.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have positive attitudes and are keen to learn.

- Behaviour has improved and most pupils behave well, but the challenging behaviour of a small number of pupils impacts at times on progress in some lessons.
- Pupils respond with maturity to good opportunities to take responsibility.
- The levels of unauthorised absence are too high.

Commentary

14. Attendance is below average, although it is the relatively high levels of unauthorised absence which are particularly marked. Much of this is the consequence of holidays taken during term time. The school has adopted some effective strategies to encourage better attendance and as a result, overall figures are improving. Absences are fully investigated and rewards offered for regular and improved attendance. The school has particularly supported disaffected pupils and the increasingly wide curriculum offered in Years 10 and 11 is designed to include all pupils.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	7.2
National data	7.2

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.8
National data	1.1

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the last complete reporting year (2002-3).

15. Most pupils have good attitudes to learning. As a result of the school's determined efforts to establish a more positive climate for learning, attitudes have improved since the last inspection. Many pupils have a thirst for knowledge and can see a purpose in working hard. They respond well to getting actively involved and expressing themselves through discussion, group work and role play. In a Year 7 drama lesson, during which pupils built considerable trust and a sense of team, they displayed many positive characteristics, using their imagination to explore new ideas and working effectively in pairs. Good attitudes are also displayed by pupils who enthusiastically support activities beyond lessons, particularly in the arts and sports areas, but are also evident in such activities as the after-school homework club. A small minority of pupils are less positive and sometimes present a challenge to some teachers.
16. Behaviour is satisfactory overall; most pupils behave with care and consideration for others. This is an improvement since the last inspection when behaviour was judged unsatisfactory. The school has worked hard and with considerable success to create a more positive ethos. The merit/reward system is designed to celebrate and acknowledge good behaviour and affirm the school's values of *pride through success*. The great majority of pupils displays good standards of behaviour in and around the school, reflecting the good relationships that exist within the school community. In a few lessons, a minority of less motivated pupils distracts the attention of others and this can have a negative impact on learning. Although pupils acknowledge that bullying occurs, they point out that the school deals quickly and effectively with any reported instances.
17. The numbers of exclusions have been reducing significantly, tangible evidence of improving standards of behaviour.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Chinese
Parent/pupil preferred not to say

No of pupils on roll
676
10
4
1
1
3
3
17

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
104	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

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

18. Pupils' personal development is good. There are many opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility. A number of older pupils, for example, work as buddies, supporting younger pupils who encounter bullying. Others act as prefects. This work gives them real responsibility and helps develop their sense of citizenship and understanding of others. They take these responsibilities seriously and with maturity. The work of the year and school councils reinforces social development and an understanding of how to make a difference in the community.
19. The school is firmly committed to raising pupils' confidence and self-esteem through its work. The provision for social development is given a high priority, and a strong moral framework places a high emphasis on valuing each individual. Most pupils respond well, developing a mature and thoughtful appreciation of moral values. Pupils' cultural development is good, encouraged by a number of subjects and particularly by drama, art and music, which draw material from a wide range of cultural influences. Issues such as racism and bullying are dealt with successfully in the school's provision for citizenship. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education provided by the school is good. In particular, the good quality of teaching, the satisfactory breadth of the curriculum, the effective pastoral support given by tutors and year team leaders, the satisfactory partnership with parents and effective links with partner schools and the community are ensuring that most pupils feel cared for and motivated to succeed.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall and in nearly one quarter of lessons the quality is even better. Assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory. Good systems are now in place and assessment data is increasingly being used to inform planning and the pupils themselves on how they might improve. Its impact on pupils' achievement is beginning to be felt.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching is characterised by confident teachers and high expectations.
- Relationships are good and as a result, pupils learn in a relaxed but challenging environment.
- The quality of teaching is good in most subjects, but not all.
- Marking is not consistently of a high quality.

Commentary

20. Around 87 per cent of pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire consider that they are well taught. Most parents also judge the quality of teaching to be good. Inspectors judge the quality of teaching in most subjects, including English and mathematics, to be good. It is satisfactory in science and history.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 114 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (0.9%)	26 (22.8%)	53 (46.5%)	32 (28.1%)	1 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)	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.

21. Since the last inspection, the school has committed itself to improving the quality of teaching and the climate for learning. This has had an impact and the overall quality of teaching and learning is significantly better now than in 1999. Parents expressed some concerns about the teaching of mathematics and science. Inspectors judge the teaching of mathematics to be much improved since the staffing difficulties experienced by the department last year. Teaching in science is satisfactory, but inconsistencies remain, particularly in the expectations that some teachers have of what pupils might achieve, the pace of learning, and the way in which unsatisfactory attitudes and behaviour are managed.
22. Where teaching is most effective, it is led by the teachers with confidence and enthusiasm. Teachers have good subject knowledge and an understanding of how best to present their subject in an interesting manner. Good relationships between pupils and teachers ensure that most lessons are purposeful and that learning takes place within a relaxed but structured way. Many teachers are particularly good at giving encouragement and building pupils' confidence in their ability to learn. Above all, it is the good levels of challenge which ensure that good progress is made.
23. In a very good Year 11 French lesson, pupils made very good progress because of the high expectations and rapid pace of learning. The lessons was characterised by very good relationships, a wealth of confidence inspiring advice from the teacher and tasks thoughtfully planned to meet individual needs. Pupils were enthusiastic in their response. This was a well structured lesson in which all the pupils made very good gains in their learning.
24. In a very good drama lesson, Year 10 pupils were working in groups on physical theatre. Good relationships and a relaxed but challenging atmosphere were again characteristic of the learning. Confident teaching led to assured gains in learning, but probably most impressive was the effective use of the pupils themselves to evaluate each other's performances and suggest refinements.
25. In discussion with the pupils, they felt that they were challenged in lessons to achieve well, confirmation of the questionnaire results, where 97 per cent of pupils thought that teachers expected them to work hard and do their best. Pupils also said how much they liked the friendly manner of most teachers and the helpful way they helped them when they were stuck with a problem in their work. In a number of subjects, but especially so in physical education and drama, the commitment of teachers to providing a wide range of additional enrichment activities is much appreciated by the pupils.
26. Where lessons are less effective, it is usually because expectations are not high enough or because the management of some pupils' behaviour is not effective. A small number of pupils are difficult to motivate and sometimes present difficult behaviour challenges for some teachers. In the overwhelming majority of lessons, good relationships and very secure classroom management strategies ensure that all pupils co-operate fully and are engaged productively in their learning. In a small number of lessons, this is not the case

and there is an impact on the learning of all pupils. For instance, in a Year 8 graphics lesson, the pace of learning dropped because the teacher was unable to push things on quickly enough and some pupils drifted off task. The short attention span of a number of pupils was not effectively addressed but above all the expectations of behaviour were not high enough.

27. Planning of lessons is usually thorough and effective in meeting the needs of all pupils, but where the learning is less effective, it is sometimes because teachers have not planned sufficiently well to meet the range of learning needs in the class. Identified gifted and talented pupils make satisfactory progress and in some subjects, notably art, French, geography, ICT, music and drama, there is good provision for these pupils.
28. The special needs co-ordinator draws up detailed and well-structured individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. These are on the school Intranet and give key information to all staff, along with precise targets for the pupils to work towards. Teaching assistants, who are often deployed to work in one subject area, work effectively alongside pupils, questioning, advising and asking for explanations, enabling them to complete tasks successfully.
29. Some pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn for small group support. Very good teaching, using resources that are matched well to the specific needs, such as dyslexia or autism, ensures that pupils make good progress. The co-ordinator also manages a social skills programme for the more vulnerable and withdrawn younger pupils. This has been running for a year and is proving successful in overcoming behavioural barriers to learning. Pupils with special educational needs in some lower ability classes are not achieving as well as they should, largely because of the lack of specific support in those classes and the management difficulties that face teachers.
30. Parents indicated that homework in some subjects was irregular and sometimes of a poor quality. Inspectors found no evidence to support this claim. Homework was set as indicated by the timetable and usually supported and extended work done in the classroom. In some subjects, notably English and history, homework is carefully constructed to encourage independent research and learning.
31. Overall, the assessment of pupils' work and progress is satisfactory. Marking varies in quality, confirming the pupils' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, where around one in four pupils commented that their work is not always assessed helpfully so that they can see how to improve it. Comments on what pupils have achieved and what they need to do to improve are not consistently given. Written comments are sometimes bland. There are some exceptions to this, and marking in English and mathematics is thorough and constructive. Some very effective use of peer evaluation is carried out in art, history and drama. However, the monitoring of marking by heads of department and senior managers is insufficiently rigorous to ensure consistently high standards.
32. The school now has comprehensive and thorough assessment systems but these have only recently been introduced and as yet are not fully embedded in the practice of all departments and individual teachers. As a result, the impact of effective assessment has yet to be seen in improving pupils' achievement. Systematic and comprehensive tracking procedures are now in place and form tutors and year team leaders are able to monitor pupils carefully against their subject targets and identify potential underachievement. However the use made of this data remains inconsistent across the school. Pupils said

that they appreciated the academic profiling system, which made them more aware of their strengths and weaknesses and what they needed to do next to improve.

The curriculum

The school provides satisfactory learning opportunities across Years 7 to 11. The curriculum is broad, and ensures progression for pupils of all abilities. Extensive extra-curricular opportunities are a strong feature. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range of opportunity in Years 10 and 11 is improving and there is good provision for pupils at this level.
- Provision in the arts and sports is both popular and effective.
- The enrichment programme and range of extra-curricular activities effectively enhance the curriculum.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils is good.
- A well considered programme for work related learning prepares pupils successfully for the workplace.
- Staffing difficulties have hindered school improvement in some subjects.
- Resources, and computers in particular, are only just adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum.

Commentary

33. The curriculum meets the needs of the pupils satisfactorily – there is a broad range of worthwhile curricular opportunities that caters for the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of all pupils. In all subjects, the curriculum is well planned to build on prior learning, and to cover statutory requirements. Strengths of the curriculum in Years 7-9 include the strong provision made in the arts, including drama. However in design and technology there are weaknesses in ensuring that all pupils receive the same experiences and there are currently insufficient opportunities to develop skills in computer-aided manufacturing.
34. Since the previous inspection the school has made substantial improvements in the curriculum for pupils in Years 10 and 11. The range of GCSE courses has been extended and pupils have greater flexibility to choose the number of subjects they wish to study. A new vocational GNVQ course in applied ICT has been introduced, and four out of five pupils follow this course. For others, ICT requirements are met across the curriculum. For some pupils GCSE courses are unsuitable but currently alternative accreditation is limited. In English, the Certificate of Achievement is available to pupils for whom GCSE is not appropriate. The school is planning similar opportunities to be identified in other subjects. Some pupils in Years 10 and 11 opt for a curriculum support programme, which enables them to drop one GCSE option and gain tutorial support and improved study skills in other GCSE subjects. This is valued by pupils, being expertly managed using the very good support of subject teachers. Pupils make subject gains as well as gains in confidence as independent learners.
35. Work related learning (WRL) has developed successfully since the last inspection, and prepares pupils well for subsequent stages of education and employment. A new vocational programme has been introduced into Years 10 and 11 in which pupils spend

one day a week at local colleges to follow subjects not available in school. This has proved effective in extending opportunities to pupils of all abilities. Approximately 40 pupils are following courses in health and social care, child care, hair and beauty, engineering, sport and recreation, and food preparation. Courses have proved interesting and motivational for the pupils involved. Business studies courses have been introduced. In addition, a number of subjects, including design and technology and ICT, make substantial contributions to pupils' understanding of the workplace through designing specific projects, such as production methods or setting up a business, which have a vocational relevance. All pupils have opportunities for work experience in Year 10.

36. The provision for gifted and talented pupils is good. Provision is well managed and a number of subjects are making a strong contribution, enabling pupils to make good progress. Drama, art, music, geography, ICT and physical education in particular have well designed programmes for ensuring these pupils are challenged in lessons and their experiences enhanced. Gifted linguists are able to take GCSE French at the end of Year 9. A cross-curricular committee is working to extend good practice across all subjects.
37. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Support is given in subject departments by well trained and effective learning support assistants, some of whom are based full time in the subject, thereby creating a strong link. However some teachers have difficulty in supporting the sometimes large numbers of pupils with special educational needs in some of the lower sets, when there is no support assistant. The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is well planned for pupils with special educational needs, with a choice of some vocational courses, alternative examinations in English and the curriculum support programme which offers additional support and guidance for pupils.
38. There are currently no pupils who need extra support because English is not their first language. Where there has been such a need in the past, the school has been able to draw on the local authority's bilingual service.
39. The planning for personal, social and health education, which is integrated into the citizenship programme, is satisfactory. All pupils follow a short course GCSE in citizenship in Years 10 and 11.
40. There is a good range of enrichment activities including opportunities for pupils to participate in extra-curricular activities. In particular, the commitment of staff to offering additional activities in sport, drama, art and ICT is recognised and valued by the pupils. These programmes help develop good attitudes to learning and promote good relationships between pupils and staff. Overseas visits and out-of-school visits to museums and sporting events all contribute to a rich programme of extended opportunities. At the end of the summer term all pupils across Years 7-9 engage in *Artcetra* week. There are a number of other clubs and activities held at lunchtimes and after school.
41. The match of teaching staff to the needs of the curriculum is good. However, recent staffing difficulties - notably in the mathematics department - have hindered school improvement. Most teaching is carried out by specialists, but where teachers are working outside their specialisms, inspectors found no adverse impact on provision. Technicians and learning support assistants are well used.

42. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. There has been considerable investment during recent years, which has resulted in improved learning environments in humanities, modern foreign languages, drama and music. Accommodation is also good in physical education. There is, however, a lack of specialist facilities for dance, and some areas, notably design and technology, mathematics and English, need refurbishment. Access for those with disabilities is limited.
43. Budgetary constraints have limited the school's ability to resource subjects well. However resources in subjects are satisfactory overall although there are important gaps in provision in some. ICT resources in particular are inadequate and as a consequence, access to computers is limited in some subjects. The library is well managed, but remains a limited resource for independent study.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety is good. Pupils' are given good quality support, advice and guidance. The school council works well and pupils feel their views are acknowledged and listened to.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's pastoral system ensures that pupils are known well and develop trusting relationships with their form tutors and year team leaders.
- Academic profiling is beginning to make an effective contribution to pupils' achievements.
- Pupils' views are valued and the school council makes a positive contribution to pupils' understanding of citizenship.
- Carefully managed induction arrangements for pupils transferring in Year 7 ensure pupils settle in quickly and easily.

Commentary

44. The school makes good arrangements for the care and welfare of its pupils. Health and safety, child protection and risk assessment procedures are all in place. The school discharges its responsibilities of care in a responsible and sensitive manner.
45. Form tutors and year team leaders know their pupils well and provide them with good levels of pastoral support, through the year and tutorial system. They are sensitive to the needs of individual pupils, and develop trusting and long-standing relationships with them. The great majority of pupils report that they value the advice and support they receive from teachers. The recent introduction of the academic profiling system in which form tutors take prime responsibility for monitoring progress and setting targets is beginning to prove effective. Form tutors are using the additional lesson on Monday afternoon effectively for a discussion about progress and target setting with pupils. Pupils report how much they value this attention paid to their individual needs.
46. Careers guidance is good, and the programme is well planned ensuring that all pupils have good access to information and advice, enabling them to make informed choices about their next stage of education.
47. Good induction procedures ensure new pupils and parents are quickly introduced to the routines of school life. The school takes considerable care to build close links with partner

primary schools on the island and work with prospective parents and their children before they join. These sensitive and carefully planned procedures are much appreciated by parents, ninety-eight per cent of whom feel that the arrangements are good.

48. Pupils' views are respected and valued. Their views are sought and taken into account when the school makes a teaching appointment. Consultation is well developed through the school council and a number of its ideas have been implemented by the school. The school policy on, for example, the use of mobile phones was agreed first by the school council. Pupils speak positively about the support they receive from staff and their involvement in setting up and developing the work of 'buddies', senior pupils who befriend pupils identified as at risk of exclusion. The school council and the responsible manner in which pupils are involved make a strong contribution to pupils' awareness and understanding of citizenship.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with its parents is satisfactory, and most parents speak favourably of the school's work. The school enjoys an effective and purposeful partnership with partner schools and colleges and the wider community. These constructive arrangements enhance pupils' achievements and personal development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's partnership with schools and colleges is effective.
- Most parents are pleased with the education provided by the school.
- The school has developed an active and successful partnership with the wider community.

Commentary

49. Most parents are supportive and appreciative of the school's work. They particularly value the approachability of staff, the sensitive manner in which their children were helped to settle in when they joined and the fact their children enjoy coming to school. A minority have concerns about the behaviour and bullying of some pupils, and information about their child's progress. Inspectors agree with the positive comments made by parents. Standards of behaviour are satisfactory overall, although there are a small number of pupils whose behaviour is thoughtless and insensitive. Incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively. The school issues an annual report to parents on their child's progress. The format of this is in the process of revision and early indications are that this will be much more user friendly and useful to parents. Inspectors judge reports to be satisfactory and to give a clear indication of progress. The academic profiling day in which parents and their child are invited to discuss progress with the form tutors has been welcomed by many parents, but some felt that there is insufficient access to subject teachers.
50. Communication with parents is satisfactory. Half-termly newsletters provide information on school activities and events. Parents are considered part of a partnership which works together to promote achievement. The school is working hard to engage with the small minority of parents who are less supportive of their children's education.
51. The schools partnership with partner primary schools and schools within the Federation, as well as colleges and universities, is good. The Federation in particular is proving a valuable framework for developing training initiatives at all levels with other schools. Curricular links are developing, particularly in response to the need for more vocationally

orientated courses in Years 10 and 11. The school has worked well with the local further education college in developing an alternative curriculum for some pupils.

52. The school has good links with the community and has developed effective partnerships with a number of local businesses. It has significant levels of support for its application for mathematics and ICT specialist status. Agencies working for social change, business organisations, employers, the church and sports coaches all work closely with the school. For example, the school invites local employers to be involved in the appointment of school prefects, and they play important parts in interviewing pupils for this role. This helps pupils develop an awareness of the world outside and its relevance to their learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is effective and giving a clear lead; he is well supported by his deputies and senior team. Management is satisfactory and increasingly effective. Governors have a good grasp of the school's work and are making a strong contribution.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good leadership of the headteacher inspires the confidence of the whole school.
- The senior management team is providing a strong focus for improvement.
- Monitoring and self-evaluation procedures need greater rigour and consistency to ensure they are fully effective.
- Financial management is good, and the school successfully operates the principles of best value in its decision-making processes.

Commentary

53. The headteacher is a good leader. His vision is clear and the school's motto *Pride through Success* is the touchstone for the school's development. His dedication and skill have ensured that the school's reputation in the community has improved. The headteacher is well respected by the whole island community, and steady but secure improvements in provision have been made since his appointment. The school is poised for further improvement and its application for mathematics and computing specialist college status is evidence of its commitment to further improvement.
54. The two deputy headteachers and two assistant headteachers provide effective support to the headteacher. There has been a strong focus on improving the school's climate for learning, particularly behaviour. This has had a significant impact and older pupils themselves commented how much the ethos for learning has improved during the last two years. The reduction in exclusions is another measure of the improving learning environment. All members of the senior management team have played significant roles in recent school developments.
55. Most subject and year team leaders are providing effective leadership of their teams. There have, for example, been impressive improvements to provision in the whole of the aesthetics area (drama, art, music and physical education). Year team leaders are taking an increasingly pro-active role in monitoring pupils' academic as well as personal development through the academic profiling system. However, inconsistencies remain, particularly in the rigour with which middle managers are monitoring the work of their teams. Although the senior team has a comprehensive programme of monitoring, and performance management systems are in

place, the more routine monitoring by middle management of such things as marking, homework and teaching is not consistently effective. While subject leaders work conscientiously to work together with their teams, management procedures are not always sufficiently robust and comprehensive to ensure consistent practice and a secure basis for self-evaluation.

56. As a result, management at all levels is judged satisfactory. The school's systems for line management are effectively in place, and appropriate links are made between performance management, continuing professional development and school and departmental improvement planning. As yet, however, self-evaluation procedures are not fully embedded.
57. The school has a strong commitment to educational inclusion. Leadership of special educational needs is good. Records of pupils are very well kept and appropriate information is given to staff, through individual education plans.
58. The school's strategic plan is a two-year plan and provides a framework for departmental improvement plans. A new plan is currently being devised. This has involved governors and senior staff in debate about the strategic direction of the school. The identified strands - raising achievement at GCSE, maintaining the improvement in behaviour, implementing the workforce reform proposals and the application for specialist status - are appropriate.
59. Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They are very well informed and take an active role. Regular and focused visits ensure that governors are pro-active and closely involved at all levels in the school. They are ably led by the chair of governors. Her commitment to the school is infectious and governors are supportive but not un-critical. Their involvement in both strategic planning and monitoring is effective. Statutory requirements are met.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	£2,457,775	Balance from previous year	-£114,702
Total expenditure	£2,526,908	Balance carried forward to the next	-£183,835
Expenditure per pupil	£3,641		

60. Financial management is good. The administration of finances is very effective and governors and senior managers are provided with the information they require to effectively plan and monitor expenditure. A poor budget settlement in 2003-4 led to significant reductions in provision, resulting in increased class sizes, split classes and some non-specialist teaching. Governors have taken decisive action to reduce the deficit and a recovery plan has been agreed to bring the budget into balance. A cut in capitation during 2003/4 had an adverse effect upon resource levels in some subjects. There are satisfactory links between planning and spending. Day-to-day management of finances is very careful and financial reports to governors and the headteacher are well designed to give them exactly the information they require. The school's most recent audit report indicated that overall the school's financial systems were well operated. Recommendations made in the report have now been acted upon. The financial management of the school is successful in applying the principles of best value to its work, as seen through spending decisions on catering, cleaning and grounds maintenance. Benchmarks are used well to compare financial spending patterns over time and within the local authority.

WORK RELATED LEARNING

The school's provision for work related learning (WRL) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are guided to a good understanding of the workplace through comprehensive and growing opportunities to experience the world of work.
- The co-ordinator works tirelessly through his extensive local network to build quality opportunities for pupils.

Commentary

61. Pupils' achievements in activities related to the workplace are good. Of the nineteen pupils following joint courses with South Downs College, all pupils following NVQ courses in catering or sport and recreation passed. Most of the others taking a vocational GCSE in health and social care or ICT also achieved well.
62. Courses have proved popular and pupils of all abilities have generally shown good attitudes and a keen enthusiasm to do well. Feedback from the both the college and employers involved in work placements has been very positive. As a result, pupils are learning some of the skills and attitudes which are necessary in the workplace, and gaining a good understanding of "real world" situations. Five Year 11 pupils are currently on extended work experience placements, spending four days in school and one day out of school. This too has proved an effective way of motivating and engaging some pupils with a relevant curriculum.
63. The quality of provision is good and all lessons observed which had a work related dimension were judged to be good lessons. In a Year 11 design and technology (food) lesson, pupils were using computer software to explore the use of ICT in production methods. The keen response of pupils to the activity demonstrated a good application of pupils' knowledge and understanding to a practical and work related task. In a Year 9 ICT lesson, pupils were working on a project about starting up a business. All the pupils responded positively to the teacher's approach, sharing ideas and discussing the task's relevance to the world of work. In discussion with pupils, they reported how much they value an approach to learning which stresses its relevance to everyday life.
64. One unusual and highly effective aspect of the school's provision is the involvement of business and the community in the interviewing and appointing of senior pupils as prefects. Pupils are given an early insight into the requirements of job applications, by being required to complete an application form, supply referees and be interviewed by local industrialists. In addition, prospective teachers applying for jobs at the school are interviewed by members of the school council, whose views are then taken into account by governors before making an appointment.
65. Leadership and management of work related opportunities are good. The co-ordinator is committed and hard working. He is also the school's careers co-ordinator and is therefore able to make connections easily. The programme is well organised and through his extensive network of local business and community contacts, he has established a wide-

ranging programme of college courses and work placements. The school's work related policy is shaped by the school's motto *Pride through Success* and activities are carefully monitored and evaluated. Although a plan for the development of careers is included in the school strategic plan, there is no clearly defined section for the further development of the work related curriculum, although the contribution subjects make is included. However, the school is continually seeking ways to extend its provision, and an important priority for the school is ensuring the relevance of all courses in Years 10 and 11. The curriculum for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is developing well in this respect.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Test and examination results, though below average in 2003, improved in 2004.
- Standards are now average and achievement is good overall.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Leadership and management are good.
- The department is not well resourced; access to ICT is particularly limited.

Commentary

66. National Curriculum Test results at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were below the national average, but average in comparison with similar schools. Provisional results for 2004 indicate that a higher proportion of pupils reached the expected level than is usually found nationally. A lower proportion of pupils, in recent years, have achieved levels above those normally expected. GCSE examination results in English and English literature were below the national average in 2003, both for boys and girls. Provisional results for 2004, although hardly better in English, show considerable improvement in English literature, with almost three quarters of those entered – who were most of the year group – gaining the higher A*-C grades.
67. The standard of work seen, across the year groups, is broadly average. Reading and writing skills are better developed by the end of Year 11 than speaking and listening skills. Pupils who joined the school with below average standards are leaving Year 11 at least in line with national averages, which represents good achievement overall. Standards are slightly higher in Years 7 to 9, although these pupils were closer to the national average when they joined the school. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to others. Those in the higher ability teaching groups are more confident in speaking than those in the lower groups; oral competence hinders progress and attainment levels for some – this has contributed to the relative underperformance in English, as distinct from that in English literature, in recent examinations.

68. Most pupils respond well to their teachers, although there is a small minority, mostly of boys, whose immature behaviour in a few lessons affects overall achievement. Relationships are usually good, but a few pupils find it hard to work together.
69. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, leading to good achievement. Teachers are all very experienced practitioners, who know their subject well. They also manage their classes well, coping well with the minority of unco-operative pupils. They make their expectations of good behaviour quite transparent, setting clear boundaries. Their understanding of the demands of the tests and examinations effectively contributes to the learning of their pupils. Pupils are introduced to a wide variety of texts, and are equipped with the skills of eliciting ideas and information from them, through a range of strategies. Analytical skills are developed so that pupils are able to write effectively about literary and non-literary texts, the latter including film and media forms. A good example of this was in a Year 8 lesson that focused on how *J.K. Rowling* uses words to create atmosphere in a *Harry Potter* novel. On subsequently seeing a video clip of the same episode, pupils were able to comment on what had been lost in the film version. The teachers employ a variety of methods, often drawn from recent initiatives, but a sharper focus on learning objectives at the start of lessons would enhance learning.
70. Written work is marked thoroughly, and pupils are given every opportunity to improve on their work. They have clear targets. Pupils are given opportunities for paired discussion, although only a limited amount of working in groups was observed. They respond to opportunities to learn independently, such as research homeworks, but dependency on teachers sometimes prevents higher achievement. They use ICT to redraft written work or to research material to present in class or in writing; computers are not used widely in lessons, although some boys in a lower ability group were provided with wireless laptops and this enabled them to write with more confidence.
71. The subject makes a good contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are enabled to face questions about mortality, human rights, moral and social dilemmas, and beliefs of others, as well as being given greater insight into the culture of this and, to a lesser extent, of other lands. Citizenship issues are addressed; for example in lessons on *Lord of the Flies*. Teachers make the subject relevant to the lives of the pupils.
72. The department is well led and managed. There is a team of experienced teachers who have been together for some time now, enabling good co-operation and sharing of tasks to take place. There is a sense of direction in the department; the subject leader's vision is shared. The quality of teaching and learning is well monitored and assessment procedures are securely in place. Data on pupils is used to track progress and to enhance it. Pupils are grouped by ability to maximise their learning, but with a flexible attitude that allows for change when and where this is needed. Resources are somewhat limited, although the library is easily accessible from the main English classrooms. Televisions and video players are available but there are only two overhead projectors available. Access to ICT is very limited, with little hardware within the department. The accommodation for English is adequate, though more than ready for redecoration.
73. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The main concerns raised then have all been addressed: there is better achievement in Years 7 to 9 and standards are rising. The quality of teaching and learning is now uniformly good, as is the leadership and management of the subject.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

74. The provision for literacy has developed well over the last two or three years, ably co-ordinated by one of the English teachers with good support from local authority advisers. There has been whole staff training and a cross-curricular group has been set up. There is a budget allocation for literacy. As a result, the school's literacy strategy is now being implemented in most departments and standards are rising.
75. Writing is the weakest area, although attention is also rightly given to speaking and listening skills. In most subjects now there is due attention to technical vocabulary, sentence construction and extended writing, with appropriate writing frames being used. Literacy is under-developed in mathematics, and is not yet fully embedded in science, but most departments are progressing well with the implementation of the strategy, which features in their subject documentation and planning. The librarian gives good support to progress units for Year 7 pupils at the start of the day.

French and Spanish

Overall, the quality of provision in French and Spanish is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' very good use of the target language presents pupils with very good listening opportunities.
- The head of department has a very good vision for the future development of the department.
- Although pupils' achievements overall are satisfactory, the achievement of a few pupils is still unsatisfactory.
- GCSE results in 2004 improved significantly.
- Few pupils take a modern foreign language after Year 9 and only two pupils take two languages.

Commentary

76. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 study either French or Spanish; in Year 9 all pupils study French. French is offered as an option in Years 10 and 11; a basic Spanish course is offered from Year 10. Currently fewer than one in four pupils studies a modern language in Years 10 and 11; only two pupils take two languages.
77. Teachers' assessments of pupils' work at the end of Year 9 suggest that the overall level of attainment is below average. However around one in five able pupils in Year 9 took GCSE in French two years early in 2004 and achieved well. In 2003, GCSE results in French were well below average and pupils attained less well than in the other subjects which they took. Only one in four pupils entered for French achieved an A* - C grade. Results in 2004 improved significantly, and were close to the national average, although the number of pupils entered was small. On the basis of these results, achievement is satisfactory, although there are pockets, particularly where pupils have been disaffected by earlier staffing difficulties, where achievement is not yet satisfactory. There is no significant difference in attainment and achievement between boys and girls: this is unusual because girls normally tend to outperform boys. Work seen during the inspection suggests that attainment at the end of Years 9 and 11 is close to national expectations, though many pupils find speaking and writing skills challenging. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
78. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good but, as yet, the improving quality of teaching has not had time to impact on the long-term achievement of pupils. Teachers' knowledge of the language is very good and most use it as the main method of communication in the classroom. The most effective teaching was where English was used only for explanations and consolidation. This presents good learning and listening opportunities for pupils. In a very successful Year 8 lesson the teacher used open questioning techniques and motivated pupils to think about language development through, for example, the words *promenade* and *le petit-déjeuner*. Teachers succeed in making lessons enjoyable, and show a caring and supportive attitude to pupils. Teachers rightly insist on high standards of behaviour. Examples of poor behaviour and attitudes in a Year 7 and a Year 10 class were well managed. However, in some classes which contain a wide spread of ability, tasks are not always clearly directed at different abilities and this results in less effective learning. In these classes, the more able pupils, in particular, are not always sufficiently challenged. Some good examples of the use of ICT to support study were seen in the departmental portfolio.

79. Leadership of the department is good. The head of department has a clear vision for the future and how to secure improvement. The innovative entry of Year 9 pupils for GCSE is one example of this vision in practice. Management is satisfactory, because management procedures such as the new ones related to assessment have not yet had time to impact on achievement throughout all classes. Some timetabling arrangements, for example, one 2½ hour session per week for Year 10, create teaching and learning challenges which do not support effective progression for pupils.
80. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Standards of work in Year 9 have improved slightly and the quality of teaching has improved. Good use was made of the opportunity to create very attractive accommodation after a fire at the end of 2001 and the accommodation and resources are now very good. However, far fewer pupils now study modern languages in Years 10 and 11 and even allowing for the increased level of performance in 2004, GCSE standards have not improved since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- New leadership of the department is very good.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge effectively and relationships between teachers and pupils are good.
- Teachers plan their lessons well and have high expectations of the pupils.
- The National Key Stage 3 Strategy has been introduced well in lessons and the pupils are able to work at the appropriate levels.
- Assessment is not used sufficiently to inform pupils of their strengths and weaknesses.
- Resources are used well but ICT is not used sufficiently to support learning.

Commentary

81. Results in the 2003 Year 9 national tests were below average, but above average in comparison with similar schools. Test results in 2004 improved, and almost 10 per cent of pupils achieved higher levels. Standards of work seen in Years 7 to 9 are average and achievement is good. With a new team of teachers in place, good progress is being made towards raising standards and pupils' achievement further.
82. Standards in the 2003 GCSE mathematics examination were below the national average. While most pupils achieved satisfactorily, there were some who underachieved and pupils tended to do less well in mathematics than in their other subjects. Results in 2004 declined further, although all pupils entered achieved an A* to G grade. This relatively poor performance and underachievement at GCSE reflected the staffing difficulties the department experienced during last year. Current standards of work seen by both Year 10 and 11 pupils are better and around average. The department is now in a much better position to improve and sustain standards. Pupils' achievement overall is improving and now good. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress.
83. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 7 to 9. Teachers' good subject knowledge is evident in their planning and exposition. Teachers are aware of the next steps in pupils' learning and there is a good balance between theory in lessons and extended practice of newly taught skills with respect to homework. Learning objectives are shared with pupils at the start of lessons; pupils also benefit from the use of a mental starter as part of the National Strategy. Marking of pupils' work is up to date though the end of lesson review to give some

understanding to both the teacher and pupils of how well pupils have progressed and understood the work is underdeveloped. Good use of directed questions challenges pupils' thinking, though opportunities to record key operations and statements in exercise books are sometimes overlooked. Opportunities to promote pupils' personal development in lessons are proving successful. Pupils contribute well in lessons and relationships between the pupils themselves and their teachers are good. As a result pupils' perception of the subject, as well as their achievements, is improving rapidly. However, the improving quality of teaching has not yet had chance to impact on pupils' long-term achievement.

84. The quality of teaching and learning is also good in Years 10 and 11. There is clear evidence of continuity and progression with pupils making good use of previously taught skills. For example, high attaining pupils in Year 11 were able to draw on the rules of algebra and coordinate geometry when required to solve pairs of simultaneous equations graphically. Recorded work is of a high standard, supporting review and revision. Pupils can work both independently and collaboratively and are comfortable with the high expectations subject staff have of them. Pupils' work is marked well with comments that both praise and challenge. Resources that are available are used well but there is a lack of suitable textbooks, mini whiteboards and ICT to support teaching and learning.
85. Leadership by the new head of department is very good and there have been significant recent developments. There is a clear vision for improvement and early strategies are already having a positive impact on standards and pupils' achievement. The head of department has established a team committed to improving the quality of teaching and learning still further. Monitoring and evaluation of department policy, sharing good practice and assessment for learning are included within a short-term development plan and the scheme of work has been revised to reflect the needs of the pupils. Management of the department is effective with a rolling programme of curricular initiatives, improved documentation and target setting that are already impacting on securing improved achievement. Improvement overall since the last inspection has been satisfactory, and there is now clear potential for a more rapid improvement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

86. The National Numeracy Strategy is used well by the mathematics department and action taken in conjunction with the special educational needs department is having a positive effect on improving the numerical skills of lower attaining pupils. Other departments - notably science, geography and history - provide a broad range of numerical experiences, though no systematic planning is involved in other subjects and opportunities are sometimes missed to reinforce numeracy skills. Currently no action has occurred to conduct an audit and evaluate the quality of provision. There is a school numeracy policy and a new appointment has been made with responsibility for raising awareness. Competence in mathematics overall is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and Years 10 and 11 and pupils' numerical skills are not a barrier to learning across the curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average and pupils do not achieve as well as in English or mathematics.

- Monitoring and evaluation are not rigorous enough for making sustained improvements in the quality of provision.
- The department works well as a team and has started to tackle inconsistencies.
- Teachers make effective use of their secure subject expertise for explanations and there is strong focus on safety.
- Marking is not always effective enough in raising standards.
- Some recent initiatives, for example, in curriculum and teaching and learning, have started to improve the provision beyond satisfactory level.

Commentary

87. Results of 2003 national tests for pupils in Year 9 were below the national average but average in comparison with similar schools. Results in 2004 dipped further. National test results improved sharply from 1999, reaching the national average in 2001. Since then, results have fluctuated but have been below the national average. In 2003, the performance of girls was lower than the performance of girls nationally but the performance of boys was similar to the performance of boys nationally. Accumulated GCSE results of triple, double and single science for 2003 were broadly average. Overall, the pupils achieved well in relation to their prior attainment at the start of Year 10. However, in GCSE single science award, the boys did not do as well as they did in other subjects. Accumulated results during recent years have been improving but 2004 results dropped to below the national average for 2003. Standards of work seen in Year 9 and 11 during the inspection were below average.
88. Whilst achievement is broadly satisfactory given attainment on entry to the school, pupils could do better. Although many make satisfactory progress in lessons, not enough pupils are attaining the average standards currently found in English and mathematics. Achievement is best in lessons where teachers manage pupils well, motivate them and engage them in learning productively. Pupils achieve less well in lessons when they are unaware of the learning objectives and the level at which they are expected to learn. The lack of consolidation and assessment at the end of the lesson reduces the effectiveness of their learning. Pupils' work shows that they do not link ideas and explain observations well. In one class, weaknesses in pupils' literacy restricted the quality of their thinking and recording of precise understanding of what they were going to investigate. Boys and girls achieve equally well in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs achieve better in lessons when they receive support or in lessons which require them to interact with other pupils productively, for example, in practical work. The needs of gifted and talented pupils are met satisfactorily. Whilst the overall standards of pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory, the presence of a few pupils with inappropriate behaviour adversely affects the learning of others.
89. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but are of an inconsistent quality. All teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject, and use it effectively to provide clear and confident explanations. There is a good focus on safety and as a result, pupils work in a safe environment. In the most effective lessons, learning objectives are planned and shared with the pupils. Learning is carried out at a good pace and time is used efficiently. Demonstrations are effective in motivating pupils, who subsequently collaborate well when conducting investigations. A good level of challenge stimulates the pupils' thinking and deepens their understanding of natural phenomena and processes such as weathering and erosion. However not all teaching is of this good quality. Characteristic of less effective teaching is an ineffective use of time, expectations which are too low and stale

methodology. The impact of these factors is unexciting and undemanding learning. Weakness in the management of behaviour in some lessons also hinders learning. The use of literacy, numeracy and ICT is satisfactory. Marking is inconsistent. Often the work is neither graded nor sharply targeted on improvement. In addition, marking is not always followed up so that required improvements are ignored.

90. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall since there have been some good recent developments aimed at raising standards and achievement. The development plan for Years 7 to 9 has provided a good impetus for improvement through the national strategy, and there has been some imaginative use of ICT to support pupils in tackling examination questions. The department is beginning to work as an effective team, for example, in developing consistency in moderating standards and managing pupils' behaviour in lessons. However, management has not yet effectively tackled all the inconsistencies in teaching and learning. Achievement is improving but it is not yet good enough. This is because of a lack of rigour in monitoring and evaluation. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory; GCSE and end of Year 9 results of 2003 are similar to those found then.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership of the subject is good and the subject leader shows very good commitment to improvement.
- Good teaching is leading to secure improvements in pupils' achievements.
- There is insufficient access to computers in all subjects and, as a result, the use of ICT across the curriculum is inconsistent.
- Very good relationships result in the positive attitudes of pupils, good behaviour and enthusiasm for the subject.

Commentary

91. Standards in ICT throughout the school are average, and overall achievement in work seen is good in all years. Pupils with special educational needs and those identified as gifted and talented are also achieve well. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are following a GNVQ course. GCSE results have been below average but action taken by the subject leader is likely to lead to higher results this year. Evidence from work seen in the current Years 10 and 11 supports this optimism. Although most pupils follow this course, around one in five pupils are acquiring ICT competencies through other subjects. Up to now this has not been monitored, but there are now sound plans in place to ensure the monitoring and assessment of all pupils in Years 10 and 11.
92. The quality of teaching and learning is good in all years. Much is very good. Very good relationship and good behaviour management ensure that pupils are enthusiastic and eager to learn. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and lessons are prepared well. They make good use of questions to target the learning. Teachers are particularly successful at relating the classroom tasks to everyday life and future work opportunities. Effective summaries help ensure learning is consolidated. By Year 9, pupils have made good progress in word processing, desktop publishing and the use of presentation software and spreadsheets, where they are able to create formulae using absolute references. They have experienced the use of control technology and use search engines on the internet to look for information. In a good

Year 9 lesson, pupils were able to use the correct procedures to find appropriate information and images on the internet to help with their project. Class sizes are large and this limits the amount of individual support that can be given by the teacher to the mixed ability groups. However, most pupils are able to work independently and the teachers actively encourage pupils to help each other, which they do quietly and successfully. Marking is often absent and does not always give any constructive advice as to how pupils can improve.

93. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 following the GNVQ course are making good progress. The teachers' very good subject knowledge inspires enthusiasm in the pupils, who concentrate on their work and learn well. They are eager to contribute to lessons and feel that they are learning relevant and valuable skills. Pupils' portfolios, demonstrating work on spreadsheets, databases, multimedia presentations and webpage design, are carefully presented and pupils are justifiably proud of what they achieve. Pupils demonstrate good planning of their projects and are able to evaluate their work sensibly. More able pupils give clear details of how the work was carried out, why and how it was improved. In a good Year 11 lesson, pupils were able to create a database with more than one related table. They customised the databases of their virtual businesses by adding forms and used the internet to add appropriate images. They took care that the images were appropriate to their virtual businesses and met the needs of their customers. During the lesson, most pupils made good progress in evaluating and improving their designs. However, not all pupils are sure how well they are doing and what to do to achieve a higher grade.
94. Resources are inadequate, as there are too few computers for the number of pupils in the school and other departments cannot get access to a computer suite. Much of the equipment is outdated and takes up a lot of the skilled senior technician's time to keep the computers working so that any technical problem does not hinder learning. However, the pupils are often frustrated by the slowness of some of the computers.
95. Overall, leadership is good. The subject leader has a clear vision for improving and expanding ICT provision. The development of the department has been very well planned and organised, and good support has been given to other staff. Management is satisfactory, as systems for monitoring are not systematic enough to ensure consistency. Improvement since the last inspection, where ICT was a key issue, is good. Standards, achievement and teaching have improved.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

96. The use of ICT across the curriculum is inconsistent. Although opportunities to use ICT are identified in subject documentation, it is only used consistently in physical education, art and music. Word processing is used in most subjects for course work, but much of this work is done at home. In physical education, there is good use of digital cameras and video cameras for analysis of performance. There are timely interventions for whole group observations of pupils' performance with the use of video clips. ICT is used well in curriculum support, where the special needs co-ordinator helps pupils to improve their work by using the internet for information and for revision. The use of ICT is unsatisfactory in English and mathematics, where the departments, together with some others, find it difficult to obtain sufficient access to the ICT suites. In design and technology, there is no computer-aided manufacture and a lack of ICT resources generally in the department.

HUMANITIES

History, geography and religious education were inspected in full. **Classical civilisation** was sampled by observing one lesson and analysing pupils' work. The subject is taught as a GCSE option and the standard of work falls within the normal range of GCSE grades. Pupils clearly

enjoy the course, and readily tackle challenging tasks such as discursive essays. Teaching in the lesson observed on the Oracle at Delphi was characterised by very good questioning and effective use of video.

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the department is good; the teachers form an effective team.
- In the lessons observed, teachers' expectations were high in terms of both work and behaviour; teaching and learning were good.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent and frequently fails to tell pupils how they might improve their work.
- Too little emphasis is placed upon the development of ICT skills as access to resources is difficult.

Commentary

97. Results in GCSE examinations have fallen since the last inspection; in 2003 they were below the national average. Achievement was satisfactory. Girls outperformed boys by a margin greater than that reported nationally. In 2003, teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 were well above the national expectation. These were inaccurate and attainment is closer to national expectations.
98. Overall, achievement by Year 9 is satisfactory, though progress was better in the lessons observed than was evident in previously completed work. Standards are in line with national expectations. Pupils have an appropriate understanding of the relationship between physical and human aspects, for example the costs and benefits of development in the Amazon basin. They make sound progress in developing subject skills but have too few opportunities to construct maps and diagrams, so practising their numerical skills. All have a good factual knowledge of the places and themes studied and respond willingly to questioning. Higher attaining pupils use subject terms confidently, and respond positively to the more challenging work provided. Pupils with particular learning needs make equally good progress. A particular strength is the acquisition of the skills necessary for enquiry work, so allowing pupils to work independently. The standard of work of current Year 11 pupils is in line with expectations at this stage in the course. Overall, achievement is satisfactory. However, lessons missed through poor attendance and/or timetable arrangements, together with a failure to complete work on time, result in underachievement by a minority of pupils, mainly boys.
99. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, although teaching observed during the inspection was sometimes better than this. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are enthusiastic; this engages the pupils' interest and fascination. In all lessons, the work met the needs of pupils. For example, in an excellent Year 11 lesson on the 'Spanish Costas', lower attaining pupils were able to identify characteristics of the different phases of development while higher attaining pupils gave very perceptive reasons for change and were able to make predictions regarding further development. Teachers gave very good support to maintain the pace of learning and ensured that pupils were able to build upon existing knowledge and extend understanding. In the most effective teaching, pupils are

challenged to ask questions, and make decisions supported by evidence. This was evident in a Year 7 lesson where pupils prepared questions in readiness for their school-based enquiry. Unfortunately, pupils have too few opportunities to apply these skills through fieldwork or ICT. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the explanation of process, whether it be to explain the work of glaciers or population change, as when Year 10 pupils were able to interpret a model of demographic transition. Marking does not always tell pupils how they might improve their work. The teaching fosters pupils' literacy, but more could be done to improve the organisation and presentation of work. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' moral, social and cultural development and their understanding of citizenship.

100. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The head of department provides clear vision and direction that has resulted in successful curriculum development and the revision of schemes of work. A very good team ethos has been developed. Management is satisfactory; there is a need for more rigorous monitoring to achieve further improvement, for example in the assessment of pupils at the end of Year 9. Despite many changes and difficulties encountered since the last inspection, progress has been satisfactory.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The strong emphasis on developing history and literacy skills in Years 7-9 helps pupils' achievements.
- The subject is well led and there is a strong commitment to improvement.
- Inconsistencies in the expectations of teachers and in the attitudes of a minority of pupils are curbing good achievement in Year 11.
- The sharing of good practice through monitoring of teaching is undeveloped.
- Homework tasks are more challenging and assessment procedures have improved so that pupils know better how to improve.
- There is not enough systematic use of ICT to promote research skills.

Commentary

101. Results in the 2003 GCSE examinations were below average but better than the previous year. This continued a rising trend since the previous inspection. Girls performed better than boys. However, results in 2004 were well below average, with most pupils doing worse in history than in their other subjects.
102. Standards in Year 9 are just below average. This represents satisfactory achievement by all pupils as they enter the school with skills in history that are below average. They understand and record key events satisfactorily. Most pupils write competently in different forms, such as letters and reports, though few use ICT. More able pupils in Year 9 write effectively at length in describing Hitler's rise to power and in analysing whether Dunkirk was a triumph or disaster. Pupils in Year 7 make good progress in developing their skills of source analysis and simple interpretation such as how Harold was killed at the battle of Hastings. However, skills of enquiring in depth and explaining why historical events are interpreted differently are less developed by Year 9. Standards of Year 11 pupils are

below average but better than the 2004 GCSE results. This is because it is a more able year group. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily compared with their attainment at the end of Year 9. Pupils' skills of research and extended writing are further developed, though skills of critical evaluation of sources and causes are undeveloped. A minority of lower attaining pupils with negative attitudes to work are not achieving their potential, especially when the monitoring of their work is not rigorous enough.

103. The quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to effectively plan a wide range of stimulating activities, such as the use of a government film on the battle of the Somme to explore propaganda with Year 9 pupils. Pupils' literacy skills are well promoted by the teachers' good use of empathetic, extended writing, supported by writing guides and planning sheets. With the effective support of teaching assistants, these resources are successfully matched to the needs of those with special needs so that they make equally satisfactory progress as others. However, there are very limited opportunities in Years 7 to 9 to develop skills of independent enquiry in depth, especially with the aid of ICT. Lessons are not always taught at pace, nor strict deadlines applied to motivate pupils. Helpful summaries are rarely used at the end to check pupils' understanding of the subject and the achievement of objectives. Homework tasks, previously criticised, are now more challenging. They are marked frequently, but there is inconsistency in giving good advice about improvement, although this now happens after assessments in Years 7 to 9. There is also good peer assessment in Year 10. Clear targets related to National Curriculum levels are set, although their impact on achievement has not yet been felt. Where teachers have insufficiently high expectations of pupils' standards of work and it is not monitored closely enough, as in the coursework of some Year 11 pupils, achievement is unsatisfactory. Teachers' management of pupils in Years 7 to 9 is now better than previously reported, helped by pupils' good attitudes to learning. However, the achievement of some older pupils has been affected by the less positive climate for learning which they experienced in earlier years.

104. The head of department provides a clear vision and direction and leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Improvement has been satisfactory since the last inspection. Information on pupils' performance in all years has been thoroughly analysed and the curriculum and examination strategies are being revised as a positive response. Policies are clearly explained in a new subject handbook. The tracking of history skills through schemes of work is incomplete, as is the integration of ICT and citizenship. Teachers are strongly committed to improvement and share experiences well informally. Management is satisfactory but the sharing of good practice is inhibited because the monitoring and evaluation of teaching, including marking and assessment, are not well developed.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of work are below average and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory.
- Assessment practices and the use of performance data are unsatisfactory.
- Leadership is providing a clear direction for improvement.
- Good teaching is delivered by the team of specialist and non-specialist staff.

- There are good relationships between teachers and pupils and the management of pupils' behaviour is skilful.

Commentary

105. In the academic year 2003-4 the requirements for teaching religious education were not met. Poor curriculum planning had resulted in minimal coverage of the locally agreed syllabus. There has been no assessment of pupils' standards in Year 9 or Year 11, and no pupils followed a GCSE course for examination in 2003 or 2004. However religious education is currently being delivered according to statutory requirements.
106. Standards of work seen in the current Year 9 and 11 are below average. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith and other major world religions are very limited. Pupils are beginning to develop a good knowledge and understanding about ceremonies, one of the concepts of the new agreed syllabus. In one Year 9 lesson pupils could identify rites of passage and used appropriate technical language to describe their answers. In a Year 11 lesson pupils successfully analysed why ceremonies take place and how they are organised. In lessons, the progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good but because of the previous inadequate planning, their achievement across Years 7 to 11 is unsatisfactory.
107. The quality of teaching is good. Good teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and their attitudes towards the subject. Although much teaching is delivered by non-specialists, their experience and commitment are strengths of the department. The specialist teacher has very good subject knowledge and provides good support to his team of non-specialists. Teachers use a good range of effective approaches in the classroom and pupils' learning is supported by very good quality resources. Learning assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs. Assessment is unsatisfactory. Opportunities to assess pupils' progress have been identified but procedures have not been implemented. Teachers do not know how pupils are performing against the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils do not know their strengths and weaknesses and what they need to do to improve. Relationships in lessons are good, pupils' behaviour is skilfully managed and they respond well to the subject. In the lessons seen religious education is making a good contribution to the social, moral, cultural and spiritual development of pupils.
108. The subject co-ordinator is providing satisfactory leadership and management of religious education. Leadership is providing a good vision for the subject and a clear direction for improvement but it is too early to impact on standards. Schemes of work are being successfully revised in line with the requirements of the new locally agreed syllabus. Accommodation and learning resources are of good quality and meet the needs of the curriculum well. The organisation and display in the specialist room are very good and supports pupils' learning well. Procedures to review the work of the department are developing. There is good support from senior management and procedures to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning have been planned. Currently there is no use made of performance data to monitor pupils' progress or to plan work; this is unsatisfactory.
109. Improvement since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and Technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improved GCSE results in design and technology are now close to the national average.
- Pupils achieve well in the GCSE Electronics course.
- In the majority of lessons, pupils show good attitudes to their work.
- Insufficient ICT resources restrict opportunities for pupils to experience work in computer-aided manufacture and for lower attaining pupils to improve the quality of their work.
- Teachers do not always plan to meet the individual learning needs of pupils.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is insufficiently rigorous.

Commentary

110. GCSE examination results in 2003 were close to the national average and results in 2004 remained broadly the same. Results have improved considerably since the previous inspection. In 2003, girls achieved better grades than the boys, although boys' results improved in 2004. Pupils achieve better results in GCSE electronics than they do in other specialist areas within design and technology.
111. By the end of Year 9, standards are below average. This means that pupils achieve satisfactorily because they enter the school in Year 7 with below average skills in design and technology. Teachers' own assessments of pupils in Year 9 suggest that standards are higher but this judgement did not fully match the standards of work seen during the inspection. At this stage, pupils in Years 7 to 9 work through the simplified stages of the design process to produce products in a satisfactory range of materials. However, not all teaching groups follow the same experiences. For example, some pupils have missed projects in resistant materials, resulting in gaps in their knowledge. All pupils acquire a satisfactory range of basic making skills and they follow methods and processes well to achieve satisfactory end products. Satisfactory achievement at the end of Year 9 is evident in pupils' average standards in both practical and design tasks. A significant proportion of pupils lack self-confidence in lessons when using materials and tools. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. In the majority of lessons, pupils have fewer opportunities for more independent designing and their presentation and drawing skills are weak. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils, especially lower attaining pupils, to use computers to upgrade the quality of their work. All pupils achieve well in the systems and control modules, which are now well established.
112. Standards by the end of Year 11 are now close to the national average. Pupils increase their skills well and respond well to the more open design opportunities for their GCSE coursework. They work confidently and apply the basic skills they master over time to their own development work. They use ICT well to support their designing. This results in good achievement. In lessons pupils show confidence in applying a more complex design process in all material areas. However, a significant proportion of pupils do not analyse their research well enough before writing their specification for design. This lowers the overall standard. The vast majority of pupils show good attitudes to their work and are keen to do well.
113. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall; satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 and 11. In Years 7 to 9, teaching is focused on establishing a range of basic

skills in all material areas. Teachers guide pupils through the design process although pupils have less opportunity to apply their own design ideas and to develop them more independently. Pupils gain from good individual support, although planning and resources are not consistently used effectively to meet the individual learning needs of pupils. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop skills in numeracy, extend their vocabulary and develop their writing skills.

114. In Years 10 and 11, there are significant improvements in both teaching and learning. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use the full design process. They promote good quality and accuracy and ensure pupils follow the examination criteria to gain marks at each stage. Lessons are well structured and teachers ensure pupils' learning is underpinned with appropriate knowledge. This supports pupils well in their learning and enables them to include the relevant knowledge where it is required in the development of their own ideas. ICT is used well in both designing and to process the data pupils collect when conducting surveys. There is good use of ICT in electronics and by those pupils who follow the systems and control course. In lessons, pupils work with interest and are enthusiastic.
115. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The head of department has established good working relationships within the department. Teaching and learning are now structured and supported with planned schemes of work. Although the monitoring of teaching and learning is now established, it is not yet sufficiently rigorous to raise standards fast enough. Teachers would also benefit more from the opportunity to observe each other in order to share good practice. There are insufficient ICT resources in the department to provide the opportunity for pupils to experience work in computer-aided manufacturing and for pupils to improve the quality of their work in Years 7 to 9. Examination results are now close the national average and achievement by the end of Year 11 is good. The food room has been refurbished. Overall, this represents satisfactory progress since the previous inspection. The department benefits from good technician support, which complements the work of the department.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design and music were inspected in full. Drama and dance were sampled.

116. Two lessons of **drama** were seen; pupils were seen to be achieving well because of the good teaching. Attitudes to the subject are very positive, and it plays a significant part in the school's provision for enrichment, through drama clubs and productions. It is taught to all during Years 7 to 9, and is a popular GCSE option: examination results are above average. The head of drama leads the aesthetics faculty. Her very good leadership and management of the faculty has enhanced provision in the subject areas under her responsibility.
117. The teaching and learning seen in two lessons of **dance** were good. The new dance co-ordinator is providing good leadership and management; numbers on courses are increasing and in work seen during the inspection, standards are rising to be in line with the national average.

Art and design

The provision for art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching across the school leads to effective learning and good achievement in lessons.
- Peer self-evaluation gives pupils confidence in expressing their critical views and improves their use of the vocabulary of art.
- Monitoring of the work of the department, in particular lesson planning and performance management, lacks rigour.
- There is a shared commitment to high expectations and improving standards in the department.
- Assessment procedures are effective, but not fully linked to National Curriculum criteria.
- Resources for digital art are unsatisfactory and both teaching skills and learning opportunities are lost.

Commentary

118. Standards in the department are in line with national averages. Pupils have had a varied experience of primary art education and are overall at a standard below the national average when they enter the school. They benefit from good teaching through their time at school and by the end of Year 9 they are performing in line with national averages. They maintain this progress to the end of Year 11, where the number achieving the higher grades A*-C in GCSE examinations in 2003 was broadly average. Results for 2004 are indicating a maintained position. This represents an improvement in standards since the previous inspection.
119. Pupils achieve well in lessons and make good progress over their time in school, as a result of good teaching throughout all years. A calm, purposeful working environment is a feature of most lessons, Sketchbooks show good improvements in observational drawing and work on display provides evidence of some very good individual achievements in both two- and three-dimensional artwork. The planned exercises in peer self-evaluation are very well managed and pupils gain in critical awareness and self-confidence. Pupils feel well informed about how well they are doing because of the good quality verbal feedback they receive. Teachers value the views of pupils in these homework evaluation sessions and this adds to the positive, relaxed working ethos of the department. Relationships are very good and are built on mutual respect which contributes significantly to all pupils being fully included and involved.
120. Leadership of the department is good and management satisfactory. The experienced head of art is newly appointed and is familiarising himself with the department. The department is historically a good department and the head of department is currently reviewing and revising documentation to give fresh impetus to its work. Assessment criteria are being re-written to bring them in line with National Curriculum criteria. He has already established a shared commitment to raising standards and works well with his colleague in planning initiatives that will ensure this. At present the monitoring of the department lacks rigour and lesson planning in particular needs to be reviewed if learning opportunities are not to be lost through lack of careful forethought. Since the previous inspection, good overall improvement has been made.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good pupil/teacher relationships help foster a positive attitude to the subject.
- Enthusiastic teaching is motivating pupils.
- Schemes of work in Years 7-9 give insufficient consideration to the progressive development and consolidation of core skills and subject knowledge.
- Opportunities for extra-curricular work and performance are limited.

Commentary

121. Standards are average by Year 9 and Year 11. Numbers taking GCSE have been relatively small and national comparisons are not valid. In 2004, fifty per cent of pupils achieved an A*-C grade. Since the last inspection, when music was identified as a weakness, significant improvements have been made and there is a real sense of vision and forward momentum.
122. Given the pupils' attainment and musical experience on entry to the school, their achievement is satisfactory throughout Years 7 -11. Both boys and girls do equally well. Gifted and talented pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in class and teachers are sensitive to their needs while planning work to both challenge and motivate. As a result, they make satisfactory progress. Throughout all years, pupils' performance skills are average and pupils are beginning to develop a good theoretical underpinning of their practical skills. Year 9 pupils have a reasonable understanding of multi-track recording and while some are able to maintain a steady pulse, a number find this challenging. While listening skills are good, appraisal skills are less well developed, and many pupils have not developed a wide technical vocabulary. Knowledge and skills are not yet being systematically developed and consolidated through Years 7-9 because schemes of work have not been fully implemented. This explains why achievement does not yet match the good teaching and learning in classrooms. Year 11 pupils have a reasonable understanding of how to structure their compositional ideas and a number introduce imaginative musical ideas into their compositions.
123. The quality of teaching and learning is good, and positive pupil/teacher relationships and the teacher's infectious enthusiasm are notable features of all lessons. Learning is well organised and both planning and classroom management are good. Clear explanations and instructions are given, and pupils are very clear about the task. As a result, a positive working atmosphere is created and pupils are keen to learn. Many are developing self-reliance as a result of the increasing emphasis placed on working on their own or in small groups. In a good Year 8 lesson pupils were incorporating a blues chord sequence into their own work. Because the lesson was carefully planned, pupils tackled the work confidently, despite high levels of challenge for some pupils. Where the learning is less effective, it is usually because skills and understanding have not been systematically developed in the past.
124. Leadership of the department is good, and the newly appointed head of department has brought a positive and committed approach. The department is ambitious for further improvement. Management is satisfactory. Although monitoring procedures are in place, the impact on achievement has yet to be felt, and there is not as yet a secure basis for

self-evaluation. Resources for the subject have improved since the last inspection – some very recent additions being related to developments in music technology. The provision for instrumental tuition is broadly in line with national norms across an appropriate range of instruments.

125. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' social and cultural development through its work. Improvement since the last inspection has been good, and the subject has enormous potential for further improvement.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by Years 9 and 11.
- Teaching and learning are good; teachers plan lessons using a range of activities that allows all groups of pupils to learn well.
- The subject leader has a strong commitment to improvement and success.
- The lack of specialist accommodation for dance reduces standards and opportunity.
- The assessment of pupils' achievement across Years 7 to 9 is not based on baseline testing at the start of Year 7.

Commentary

126. Standards in lessons and in the work of Year 9 and Year 11 pupils are above average and show good improvement from their work in previous years; pupils are achieving well. Results in the 2003 GCSE examination were above the national average and, except for 2004, results are consistently above average. The performances of boys and girls are similar. Pupils with special educational needs and the talented achieve well. High attaining pupils are successful in a range of sports at area, county and sometimes national levels.
127. The quality of teaching and learning is good in all years. Teachers manage pupils very well and plan work to suit all pupils. In a Year 8 badminton lesson, pupils across the attainment levels progressed well, because the teacher used demonstrations, modified tasks, simplified instructions, grouped appropriately and provided extension work. Teachers provide opportunities for independent learning in most lessons. In a Year 11 trampolining lesson, pupils planned work and evaluated peer performance, including the use of video analysis. Learning is less effective in a few lessons when teaching becomes more prescriptive and pupils are given fewer opportunities to explore their own ideas. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, and their specific needs are clearly identified and catered for.
128. Pupils' learning is enhanced by their positive attitudes, good relationships and good facilities. Pupils handle numerical data well, through opportunities to measure, record and analyse performance. Teachers emphasise key words, are adept in their use of questioning and enable pupils to evaluate performance. These approaches improve the technical vocabulary, speaking skills and listening ability of pupils across the attainment levels. The subject makes a good contribution to the improvement of pupils' ICT skills.

129. Leadership and management are very good and contribute significantly to the good achievement. The subject leader has a very strong commitment to improvement and success and is ably supported by a dedicated team of specialists. Good procedures are in place to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality of teaching and pupils' standards. Assessment systems are good overall, but lack the benefit of baseline testing of pupils on entry to Year 7. The lack of appropriate accommodation for dance reduces standards and opportunity but teachers work hard to minimize the effects. The teaching of GCSE physical education theory courses lacks a subject specific teaching base. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

Business Studies was sampled.

130. The school has recently introduced an applied GCSE course in **business studies**, which is due to be examined for the first time in 2005. One lesson in Year 10 was observed. Pupils achieved satisfactorily as a result of the teacher's good subject knowledge and classroom management and their positive attitude to work.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The commitment and planning of the coordinator is establishing a good basis for development in the subject.
- Dedicated materials for each year group are researched and prepared so that teachers know what is required in lessons.
- The contribution which other subjects can make has not yet been fully identified and integrated into schemes of work.
- Opportunities for pupils to participate and take responsible action are under-developed.

Commentary

131. Citizenship is part of an integrated programme with personal, social and health education for Years 7 – 9, whilst pupils in Years 10 and 11 now take it as a separate GCSE short course. The organisation of the subject has undergone changes recently and the current pattern is in the early stage of becoming established. There are, however, signs that this new structure and its implementation are raising the profile of the subject and contributing to a satisfactory level of achievement across all year groups. When the impact of the good teaching and learning is fully felt, pupils' achievements are likely to improve. The standard of work seen in both Years 7 to 9 and Years 10 and 11 is in line with expectations of pupils at these stages.

132. The curriculum introduces pupils to an appropriate range of topics and ample use is made of outside agencies from the community to make a specialist input into the course. In addition to the citizenship lessons, opportunities exist for other subjects to contribute to

relevant topics. Although some good links were observed in history lessons, this aspect of the course delivery is not as fully explored and coordinated as it might be. The impact of the subject is often most telling in situations where pupils participate and take responsible action themselves as young citizens. Although the work of the school council and other leadership opportunities provide a valuable induction and insight here, this strand of the curriculum is under-developed.

133. The standard of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers show good knowledge of the subject and engage the pupils well. Lessons are mostly well planned but sometimes lack variety. Pupils' behaviour is generally satisfactory, though some pupils are less tolerant and understanding of others' views in the groups.
134. The leadership and management of the subject are good and much effort and commitment have been shown in reformulating the course with significant improvements. The comprehensive resources provided for the team of teachers are a strength of the provision and help achieve consistency. There is now a strong basis for growth and development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

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

