

INSPECTION REPORT

THE SNAITH SCHOOL

Snaith; Goole

LEA area: East Riding of Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 118021

Headteacher: Mrs J Pickerill

Lead inspector: Mr I Thompson

Dates of inspection: 21 - 24 February 2005

Inspection number: 268495

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Terms used in this report

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

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

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

Efforts have been made to minimise the use of abbreviations, though some have been used. Throughout the report, ICT refers to information and communication technology; PSHCE refers to personal, social, health and citizenship education. Comparisons to national averages are based on data for the academic year 2003/2004 for national tests at the end of Year 9 and for GCSE.

Little reference is made to pupils for whom English is an additional language. Few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds; only two are at an early stage of learning English.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Comprehensive
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 11-16
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 786

School address: Pontefract Road
Snaith
Goole
Postcode: DN149LB

Telephone number: 01405 860327
Fax number: 01405 862748

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Mrs S Young
governors:

Date of previous 26/4/1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Snaith school is a smaller than average, 11-16 mixed comprehensive school serving the town of Snaith and a wide rural area surrounding it. Overall, the social and economic backgrounds of pupils are relatively advantaged. The school has very recently gained specialist business and enterprise college status. There are 786 pupils on roll. Lower than average proportions of pupils join or leave the school at other than the usual times. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The majority of pupils are white; few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Four pupils have English as an additional language, only two of whom are at an early stage of learning English. The school's data show that pupils' standards when they join the school are broadly average with lower than usual proportions of higher and lower attaining pupils. The proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is about average as is the proportion with statements of special educational need, most of which refer to specific or moderate learning difficulties.

The headteacher has been in post for just over two years.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
12271	I Thompson	Lead inspector	
32655	J Bostock	Lay inspector	
19913	R Garrett	Team inspector	English; English as an additional language
8341	W Wimshurst	Team inspector	Mathematics
17799	A Stoddart	Team inspector	Science
15051	L Kauffman	Team inspector	Design and technology
32211	B Geoghegan	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
12408	A Frith	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
30427	F Shuffle-Botham	Team inspector	History
30749	H Boyle	Team inspector	Geography
18854	M McGregor	Team inspector	Art and design
31660	M Young	Team inspector	Music
30800	B Colley	Team inspector	Physical education; special educational needs
12003	A Marfleet	Team inspector	Citizenship; religious education

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
DT2 9PU

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	18
WORK-RELATED LEARNING	19
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4	21
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	41

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a good standard of education. The school is improving in response to very good leadership by the headteacher and has many strengths. Good teaching overall leads to good achievement. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher provides very good leadership.
- Pupils' personal development is very good; attitudes and behaviour are very good and moral development is exceptional. Relationships are very good and make a great contribution to the very effective learning atmosphere in the school.
- Standards are above average overall and achievement is good.
- Senior and middle management monitoring of cross-curricular aspects of the school's work, particularly marking and assessment, is not consistently rigorous enough.
- Arrangements for pupils' care and welfare are very good.
- Links with the community and other schools and colleges are very good. The school is very well regarded in the area.
- Curricular provision for multi-cultural education is unsatisfactory.
- Accommodation and resources for music are unsatisfactory.

Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. After a fall in standards, the school is now improving. Most of the key issues have been tackled effectively in the two years following the headteacher's appointment. There is still work to do in improving monitoring of whole school issues and the school still does not provide daily collective worship for all pupils.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good. Standards are above average in Year 9 and well above average in Year 11. The D in the table above indicates that the 2004 year group did not make as much progress in Years 10 and 11 as they did in Years 7 to 9. Nevertheless, they made very good progress overall between Years 7 and 11. Current pupils are making good progress in all years.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Pupils have very good attitudes; their behaviour and attendance are very good. The school provides well for some aspects of multi-cultural education but there is not enough focus on non-western cultures that are part of multi-cultural Britain.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good standard of education. Teaching and learning are good, leading to good achievement by pupils of all levels of attainment and capability. Assessment is not used well enough to tell pupils how they can improve. The curriculum is good and the school ensures that all pupils benefit equally from the broad range of opportunities provided. Provision for extra-curricular activities, additional enrichment and support for learning outside the school day is good. The school makes very good arrangements for pupils' support and guidance. The school makes very good use of opportunities in the community to support learning and links with other schools and colleges are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. Governance is good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and very clear educational direction for the school's improvement. Leadership of other key staff is good. Although management is satisfactory overall, monitoring of some cross-curricular aspects of the school's work is not as effective as it should be. Governors provide good support for the work of the school and hold it appropriately to account but have been unable to ensure that daily collective worship is provided for all pupils as required by law. Financial management is very good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents believe that their children make good progress because they are well taught and well cared for. Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. Pupils are happy in the school; they believe the school to be good, that they are well taught and expected to work hard. Inspectors agree with these positive views. A substantial minority of pupils are concerned about bullying and fairness of treatment. The few incidents of bullying that arise are dealt with quickly and effectively. Boys and girls are treated differently in relation to the school's uniform requirements, relating to the colour of trousers, but there is no other inspection evidence of unfair treatment of boys or girls.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve senior and middle management monitoring to ensure that:
 - self-evaluation across the school is accurate
 - assessment is used consistently well to raise standards.
- Improve curricular provision for multi-cultural education.
- Improve accommodation and resources for music.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Provide a daily act of worship for all pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

In work seen during the inspection, overall standards are above average in Year 9 and well above average in Year 11. Achievement is good in relation to students' standards and their capabilities when they join the school and when they begin their examination courses in Year 10.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are well above average and achievement is good.
- Pupils achieve well as they move through the school.
- There is much less difference in the performance of boys and girls than found nationally.
- Pupils with special educational needs, the gifted and talented and those with English as an additional language are enabled to make similarly good progress to others.
- Achievement is unsatisfactory in citizenship.

Commentary

1. Statistical data need to be treated with some caution because this is a small school in which results for a few pupils can have a greater effect on overall figures than would normally be the case. Over recent years, results in national tests in English, mathematics and science have consistently been well above average overall with some variation from year to year in English and science results, which have nevertheless always been at least above average and rising at a faster rate than found nationally. In relation to pupils' performance at the end of Year 6, results in 2003 were in the top five per cent of schools nationally with no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls. Unverified results for 2004 indicate similarly high performance.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	34.3 (37.0)	n/a (33.4)
mathematics	38.1 (38.0)	n/a (35.4)
science	36.2 (35.7)	n/a (33.6)

There were 154 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year. National results are not available for 2004. School results for 2004 have not been verified

2. GCSE results for pupils' best eight subjects in 2004 were well above the national average. They were below average in comparison with schools whose pupils had a similar score in national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 9. This apparently weaker performance in Years 10 and 11 is no longer evident among current pupils. The rate of improvement in the school's results has been slower than the trend of improvement nationally over recent years. Results showed a decline after

2000 but have improved over the last two years. This improvement reflects management initiatives aimed at improving teaching and learning, particularly to raise boys' achievement, along with changes in procedures to identify and support potentially underachieving pupils in Years 10 and 11. Boys' performance has improved over recent years, indicating some success for these approaches. In 2004, the gap between boys' and girls' performance was smaller than nationally; boys' results were further ahead of their national average than those of girls. Nevertheless, overall scores were affected by results for English literature, for which there was a much higher proportion of pupils entered than nationally. Results in the subject were much worse for both boys and girls than in their other subjects. The school's data also show some underachievement among girls in relation to predicted grades. There is no clear explanation for this except that a majority of the pupils with the lowest attendance, below 85 per cent, are girls in Years 10 and 11.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	62 (57)	52 (52)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	99 (98)	89 (88)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	100 (99)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	39.7 (39.7)	34.9 (34.7)

There were 151 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- In work seen during the inspection, standards in Year 9 are well above average in English, mathematics and science. They are above average in art and design, geography, history and religious education. Standards are average in all other subjects except citizenship, where they are well below average. Achievement is good overall. It is good in all subjects except modern foreign languages, where it is satisfactory, and citizenship, where it is unsatisfactory. Achievement in modern foreign languages is affected because work is not consistently matched well enough to pupils' needs and they do not know clearly what they need to do to improve. In citizenship, achievement is adversely affected by a low time allocation and lack of coordination across the curriculum. The school is aware of these deficiencies and has plans for improvement. Because of the school's efforts in response to the key issue from the previous inspection, boys achieve as well as girls and the gender gap in overall performance is much smaller than found nationally.
- In Year 11, standards are well above average in English, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, ICT and religious education. They are above average in geography, music and business studies. Standards in other subjects are average except in citizenship, where they are well below average for the same reasons as in Years 7 to 9. Achievement is good overall in relation to pupils' standards at the end of Year 9. It is very good in design and technology and ICT in response to very good teaching. Achievement is good in all other subjects except modern foreign languages and physical education, in which it is satisfactory, and citizenship, where it is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils with special educational needs do well when standards in Year 9 are compared with their standards on entry to the school. Individual pupils do well in GCSE examinations and results for pupils with special needs rose above predictions in 2004. Teacher assistants help subject teachers to support the good achievement of these

pupils in lessons. Focused special support lessons and small group work concentrate on improvement in reading, writing, spelling and number so that pupils achieve well and develop their confidence. Effective planning, in most lessons, provides well for pupils' needs. In a minority of lessons pupils do not achieve as well because of the lack of specialist support or ineffective planning. Target setting has been reviewed recently and this is more specific in the identification of pupils' needs for improvement but departments are not yet sufficiently involved in this process.

6. There are four pupils with English as an additional language, only two of whom are at an early stage of learning English. They are well supported by the learning support manager, who provides a complete programme of tuition and assessment. There is good liaison with teachers in other subjects and lesson observation indicates that pupils are achieving well.
7. Gifted and talented pupils have been identified. More able pupils have good opportunities in the national Aim Higher and Maths Challenge initiatives. Their very high examination results indicate that learning and achievement are good for the gifted and talented. Planning is in place to raise the standards and achievement of higher attaining pupils. Master classes are not yet arranged although work is in progress with local colleges to offer more challenge to these pupils. Overall, gifted and talented pupils achieve as well as other groups of pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Attendance is well above national levels.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Virtually all pupils behave very well, which helps teachers to focus on teaching rather than classroom management.
- Pupils' very strong relationships with each other and with staff allow them to feel comfortable at school, valued and able to try their best.
- Attitudes to learning are very good, which helps to create a positive learning environment.
- Pupils display strong evidence of very good personal development.
- There is not enough focus in the curriculum on non-western cultures that are a part of multi-cultural Britain.
- Very good (and improving) attendance enables pupils to increasingly benefit from their learning opportunities.

Commentary

8. During the bad weather experienced during the inspection, pupils behaved very well. The atmosphere was friendly, happy and self-controlled. In lessons, teaching is usually uninterrupted and able to progress effectively. During lunch and morning breaks, pupils talk, read or play together quietly. They mix well, are polite, queue in an orderly manner for their food and clear away their chairs helpfully. A significant proportion of pupils responding to the questionnaire are concerned that there is bullying or racist behaviour but the inspection found little evidence during observations and discussions with pupils. Pupils and parents are generally satisfied that any incidents are dealt with quickly. The school employs very good strategies to encourage good behaviour and to penalise poor behaviour and pupils respond well.
9. Pupils show obvious respect for one another in their personal relationships. They enjoy being able to know all the other pupils in the school and naturally help others. In discussions they value other pupils' comments and listen to alternative points of view. They feel comfortable with each other and able to experiment with new or difficult work.

10. Pupils enjoy school. They expect to work hard, are enthusiastic and contribute well to lessons and other activities. They are keen to be involved, collaborate well together and participate strongly in discussions and activities. These attitudes, together with their very good behaviour and relationships, help create a harmonious, positive learning environment in which they learn well.
11. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Spiritual development is good. In religious education pupils have very good opportunities to consider significant issues, such as the question of belief in life after death. They have the time to consider their own beliefs and values and this provides very good opportunity to develop their own spirituality. Where they are encouraged to reflect on the quality of their own achievements and the wonder of man-made and natural design, as they do in design and technology, they respond well. The 'Sense of Wonder' exhibition and the art focus on 'Art at the marshes' provide for good spiritual development.
12. Pupils are becoming confident, sociable and well-rounded personalities with a strong commitment to the school and their own development. The school provides excellent moral guidance and pupils reflect this in their daily lives. There is a clear understanding of right and wrong and pupils respect the right of others to study. The school's open nature and the fact that they are not worried about the security of their belongings clearly indicate the trust pupils have in each other. Assemblies provide good support for these moral values and pupils are attentive and self-disciplined. Across the curriculum, issues are raised for discussion and the high expectations of the school ensure that such discussion is orderly. Prefects support these expectations in school time and on the journey home. Prefects have a very clear sense of personal duty and provide very good role models for younger pupils.
13. Pupils' social development is very good. Through clubs in school and residential experiences, such as the 'East Barnby Trip', pupils learn to form relationships, collaborate and gain confidence. Group work and co-operative learning are features in many areas of school life. They enjoy each other's company and their enthusiasm and participation are evident at the end of year balls. Pupils are quick to support good causes and to take responsibility when it is offered. The support given to the primary schools' sports day by Year 11 pupils demonstrates their confidence and maturity. Opportunities for pupils to take the lead and to initiate change are less developed. The school council, chaired by a member of staff, has just been re-launched. Two pupils attend the local education authority's Youth Assembly.
14. The quality of pupils' cultural development is good. Visits to galleries and places of cultural significance are encouraged and pupils are provided with very good opportunities to observe western influences in art. Visits to Spain, Germany and France enable pupils to appreciate European influences and to widen their horizons. Music plays a significant role within the school and participation is good. In religious education, pupils explore the cultures that are revealed through religious practices but, generally, pupils have few opportunities to develop an appreciation of the multi-cultural diversity of Britain and non-western culture. Provision for these aspects of their multi-cultural awareness and appreciation is unsatisfactory.
15. The level of exclusions is below the national average for a school of this size and is reducing. 16 pupils were temporarily excluded for a total of 43 days last year and this has been reduced this year. Repeat offending is not significant. All exclusions were justified and involved mainly violence, about which the school has a zero tolerance policy for even minor offences.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	776	43	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0

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

16. In recent years, attendance levels have improved as a result of the school's actions and are well above national average levels. So far this year attendance has improved further to 95.3 per cent.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.5	School data	0.1
National data	6.9	National data	1.1

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. The curriculum is good overall and enriched well. Pupils receive very good support and good advice and guidance. The partnership with parents is good. Links with the community and other schools and colleges are very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good relationships support high standards of classroom behaviour.
- Teachers do not use assessment data and marking consistently to inform pupils as to how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers provide strong pastoral support and know their pupils very well.
- Teachers use their good knowledge of their subjects to plan interesting lessons.
- Teachers and teacher assistants work well together to promote the progress of pupils with special educational needs.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 87 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (2%)	15 (17%)	50 (57%)	17 (20%)	3 (3%)	0	0

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

17. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good so that pupils achieve well as they move through the school. With the exception of citizenship, in which no teaching was seen during the inspection, some very good teaching was seen in most subjects and some good teaching was seen in all. Consequently, there is good practice to build on across the curriculum. Overall, teaching is good in all subjects except modern foreign languages and physical education, in which it is satisfactory, and citizenship where it is unsatisfactory on the evidence of work seen.
18. Teachers know their pupils very well. The strong pastoral support that teachers provide results in very good relationships that they build upon to establish high standards of classroom behaviour. As a result, time is used well and there is a purposeful working atmosphere throughout the school.
19. Teachers use their good knowledge of their subjects to plan well lessons that capture and keep pupils' interest. Pupils learn well because, in the great majority of lessons, they are given good support matched to their needs; lessons are planned well to provide an appropriate level of challenge at all levels of attainment and capability. The common fault of the few lessons that are unsatisfactory is a failure to plan for pupils' individual needs – for example, some pupils are not given the information they need to complete tasks in a way that they understand, or they are not well enough supported when they encounter difficulties.
20. In an otherwise positive picture, there are two linked common faults that could easily be remedied. Although there is some good practice, assessment information is not consistently used well enough to let pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Similarly, marking varies in rigour and usefulness, both within and between departments, so that mistakes too often go uncorrected. Particularly with regard to marking, these faults reflect a weakness in senior and middle management monitoring of the application of whole school policies.
21. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well in mainstream classes. Teachers have appropriate information and plan effectively. Most teachers make effective use of individual education plans that are prepared to outline pupils' needs. Teacher assistants are effective and experienced and make good contributions to the progress made by pupils with special educational needs. For example, time during registration is taken to give intensive support to different groups of pupils to boost their understanding. Good cooperation between teachers and teacher assistants in planning to support pupils' learning assists these pupils to achieve as well as their classmates. Homework is supported well in the learning support area for all pupils at lunchtime so there is good social inclusion and support staff are able to follow up any pupils' problems. Teachers comment on the work of pupils for reviews but teachers and teacher assistants do not consistently make sufficiently clear to pupils what they need

to do to improve. Daily assessment in support classes is not linked well enough to what pupils can do and have learned to indicate areas for improvement.

22. Assessment is satisfactory. The school provides a good range of data to enable comparisons to be made against national benchmarks and for individual pupils' achievement to be identified. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are thorough and constructive in many subjects. Very good assessment practice exists in design and technology. However, procedures in many subjects do not always clearly inform pupils of how well they are doing in relation to national standards. For example, in modern foreign languages the policy on marking and guidance is not applied consistently, with the results that pupils do not always know what to do to improve. Senior and middle managers, and most subject teachers, make satisfactory use of the available assessment information to respond effectively to the needs of pupils. Value added approaches and reviewing of targets are not yet firmly established in many subjects.

The curriculum

The school's curriculum provision is good overall. The school is developing a good range of courses supported by good enrichment activities. The match of staffing to the curriculum is satisfactory. Provision of learning resources is satisfactory overall. Accommodation is broadly sufficient for curriculum needs and is of a satisfactory standard overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum meets pupils' needs well and leads to good achievement in most subjects, but provision for citizenship is unsatisfactory.
- Good use is made of partnerships and opportunities in the community to help meet pupils' needs.
- Staffing is unsatisfactory in physical education.
- Unsatisfactory accommodation and resources adversely affect learning in music.

Commentary

23. The school's curriculum is good in its breadth and balance overall. It supports good achievement in the majority of subjects. The curriculum is under particularly close review during this year because the organisation of the school day was changed. Curriculum time has been increased to the nationally recommended level and lessons are now one hour in length. The other feature of importance in the review is the school's recent success in obtaining specialist business and enterprise college status. Although managed well overall, the transition from one pattern of curriculum and timetable organisation to another has inevitably led to some difficulties that the school plans to solve as the changeover is completed next year. The only aspect of the academic curriculum that is unsatisfactory is the provision made for teaching citizenship. Within the PSHCE programme there is currently insufficient time for teaching citizenship and the contributions of subjects across the curriculum to citizenship are not identified and coordinated well enough to be effective.
24. The management of the curriculum makes good use of the school's very strong links with its community, industry and partner educational institutions, both schools and colleges. As a result, the curriculum reflects the school's inclusive outlook and provides well for the wide range of pupils' needs. This is particularly evident in a range of courses run in conjunction with local colleges. Pupils study subjects such as engineering, hair and beauty, and office administration. These work-related courses develop problem solving and social skills, preparing pupils well for career development and work outside school. An enterprise day

brings the school, the community and industry together to develop pupils' understanding of business.

25. Pupils with special educational needs have good access to the curriculum. There is the minimum of disruption to the planned timetable. Experienced teacher assistants support pupils in class; good links and communication between departments ensure smooth special needs support. In a minority of subjects, teachers find it more difficult to maintain this contact because of time constraints, but areas of difficulty are always dealt with. Intensive courses help pupils with special educational needs to improve their personal development and literacy and numeracy skills. Good alternative courses are provided in Years 10 and 11. These prepare pupils for work well and build up their self-esteem and confidence and develop their sense of responsibility. College courses meet a variety of special needs very well. The ASDAN course is well designed; pupils record their planning in files, discuss aims for projects and cooperate well in problem solving. These work-related courses prepare pupils well for work outside school and this is supplemented well by specialist Connexions advice. Good extra-curricular support for homework is available during lunchtimes.
26. Opportunities for gifted and talented pupils are offered through some curricular enhancement. For example, a small number of Year 9 pupils attend a residential ICT course focused on more able pupils; however, opportunities like this are few. There is good provision in art and design, English, music and religious education. Opportunities for independent learning encourage pupils and allow them to develop well. For example, in art and design, talented pupils are well motivated by the freedom of choice and pupils select options that challenge them. Extra-curricular opportunities help this group of pupils but there is no specific provision. The school is beginning to raise the interests and aspirations of more able pupils and to extend opportunities for them and provision is developing and improving in some subjects.
27. Extra-curricular provision and enrichment of the curriculum are good. Support for learning beyond the school day is good overall with departments providing opportunities that extend learning in very good sports activities, arts activities or general study including the use of ICT facilities. There is very good participation in drama for after-school productions, lunchtime clubs and theatre visits. The music department offers a range of experiences, including string ensembles, a folk group, a band and choir, which are well attended. Pupils' development is also supported well through the organisation of many visits of a local, national and international nature.
28. The match of staffing to the school's curriculum needs is satisfactory overall. The school has worked hard to recruit and retain well qualified teaching and support staff. It has effective arrangements in place for the recruitment of high quality supply staff, many of whom are well known to the school. Induction arrangements for newly qualified teachers and teachers new to the school are well established. The school is currently expanding its initial teacher training provision and focusing on staff development opportunities for middle management. Staff working with pupils who have special educational needs support the individual needs of pupils well. The level of non-teaching staff across the school is good. They contribute well to the smooth running of the school and know the pupils and teaching staff well. This gives pupils a strong sense of community and belonging. Although the level of non-specialist teaching staff does not affect the standard of education overall, this is not always the case in physical education.
29. Resources to support learning are satisfactory overall. Most subjects have a range of resources that are adequate for their needs. They are good in history, ICT and

religious education. The library is well stocked and used well. The principal deficiency in resources across the school is in the provision of computers for use in departments. The improvement strategy associated with the successful specialist school bid plans to deal with this shortcoming that particularly affects work in music, where there is also a shortage of up-to-date equipment.

30. Overall, accommodation for teaching is satisfactory. The school is housed in several buildings, sited close together but with little protection from the weather for staff and pupils moving from one area to another. The accommodation for music teaching is unsatisfactory. Some lessons take place in the school hall, which is unsuitable for the purpose. Acoustics are poor, especially after lunch when clearing-up is still in progress and other adults are moving around. The business studies department has unsatisfactory accommodation in a variety of non-specialist rooms. A new building, under construction, should improve this situation and improve accommodation for several other subjects.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good care of the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. It provides pupils with very good support and good advice and guidance. It takes satisfactory account of their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pastoral guidance provides strong support for pupils in their choices of subjects, courses and careers but assessment and marking do not consistently inform pupils how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers are very caring towards pupils, who consequently feel secure and confident about expressing and challenging themselves.
- Thorough arrangements ensure a very good quality of care and welfare for pupils.
- The school council does not yet provide for high quality participation of pupils.

Commentary

31. The close working relationships of the pastoral support team enable a very good service to be provided to pupils with regard to their choices of subject and careers. Extensive efforts are made to discuss with pupils their ideas and choices and good arrangements are in place for mock job interviews. The Connexions service provides very good support. The colleges that provide additional curriculum support also maintain good quality pastoral care of the pupils. Work experience opportunities are well developed and managed and the quality of the placements is assessed. Pupils' involvement in sporting and cultural activities is recognised in the above processes.
32. Teachers are committed to the care and development of pupils' physical and emotional well-being, which results in pupils trusting the adults. Most pupils feel that they are fairly treated by virtually all the teachers and nearly all feel there are adults to turn to if they need support. Consequently, pupils feel able to be ambitious in their learning without embarrassment or fear of failure. A relative weakness in guidance is that teachers' marking and use of assessment do not consistently show pupils what they need to do to improve or let them know clearly how well they are doing.
33. The school has well-structured and thorough arrangements for pupils' care and welfare. There are sound processes for the induction of pupils. As far as possible, form tutors stay with their classes as they progress through the school. Pupils causing concern are discussed in regular meetings involving key staff and external services where appropriate. The school arranges alternative learning pathways for pupils struggling with the normal curriculum; learning support

and very good mentoring services are available for pupils needing additional help. Pupils in public care, or in need of protection, are well looked after and the school has plans for further staff training. Pupils with special educational needs are looked after sensitively and with special care. Supervision of breaks is organised well and all accidents and incidents are handled sensitively and appropriately. Parents feel satisfied that the school takes good care of their children. Boys and girls are treated differently in relation to the school's policy that specifies the colour of trousers they are permitted to wear, which causes some discontent among pupils and parents.

34. The school council has recently been reconstituted, having been judged by the school to not be effective enough in providing pupils with sufficient consultation and involvement in the school's affairs. It is now supported by sub-groups of representatives from lower and higher years. At the first meeting, discussion concerned subjects relevant to pupils, such as their recent observations about bullying and harassment as well as provision of water fountains and selections of healthy food.
35. Health and safety procedures are sound and becoming more systematic, thereby ensuring the safety of pupils and staff. Maintenance of buildings and equipment is carried out in an orderly and timely way. There are very good processes for rigorous assessment of risks involved with trips, which ensure problems are anticipated and dealt with. Access for physically disabled people is not fully possible with current facilities although classes could be relocated if necessary. The school has plans to deal with a number of minor issues found during the inspection.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school makes very good use of its well established links with the community to support pupils' learning.
- The school's partnership with other schools and colleges ensures smooth movement of pupils and benefits the school's arrangements for pupils' learning.
- Parents appreciate the school's provisions for their children and have provided good support to the school in its bid for specialist school status.

Commentary

36. Pupils benefit from the wide-ranging use the school makes of its links with the community. There are many visits nearby and further afield in support of learning, such as to museums and for geography fieldwork. Residential visits, such as in ICT for pupils in Year 9, help pupils with their personal development. Several visitors to the school provide professional medical services and support in areas involving PSHCE especially. For example, businesses help with information about topics such as money management. Worthwhile work experience placements each year are a feature of the partnership benefiting pupils directly, as are the mentoring support and mock interview support from several local businesses. The community sports hall building is used by the school during the day and by the community and other schools at night. It also provides facilities for mother and toddler groups and other gatherings of local people.
37. The school has good constructive partnerships with several partner primary schools and other secondary schools and colleges, which benefit pupils. These links have been significantly strengthened during the creation of the bid for specialist status. Primary schools benefit from specialist teaching and technician support, as well as sharing purchasing power from the

arrangements. Links for pupils' transition to the secondary school after Year 6 are well developed. Secondary schools support one another in teacher development and subject coordination and this will lead to shared teaching arrangements in the new relationship emerging from the specialist school status. Colleges are already closely integrated in the provision of alternative vocational courses and the school supports initial teacher training requirements well.

38. Parents are very supportive and comment favourably about the school, praising its work with their children. They feel well informed by communications about the daily life of the school and changes to arrangements. They like the schools' 'open door' style, where they can discuss any emerging issues easily. The Snaith School Association is very active in fund raising and has played a key role in raising funds towards the specialist school bid as well as providing funds for other valuable equipment in school. Its activities are well supported by parents at events, as are the charity collections by pupils. Parents receive good information about the development of their children and the day-to-day life of the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and that of other key staff is good. Governance is good. Management is satisfactory. Statutory requirements are fully met with the exception of the provision of daily collective worship.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's very good leadership has created a climate for change that is improving the school.
- Very good financial management has brought the school through difficult circumstances and ensured it has a sound basis for future plans.
- Key staff support the school's aims and lead effectively so that standards are maintained.
- The chair of governors and her team know and support the school well. They provide professional expertise and constructive challenge to take the school forward.
- Some cross-curricular aspects of the school's work are inconsistently applied, and management in a few subjects is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

39. Governance of the school is good overall. Governors made a considerable contribution to setting the direction for the school by their appointment of the headteacher. They were keen to contribute to the inspection by meeting inspectors during the inspection week. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, are very supportive and are used to asking searching questions and setting targets. Governors do not yet meet the statutory requirement to ensure a daily act of collective worship, despite their efforts to do so. The school's accommodation does not allow for daily assemblies for all pupils. Nevertheless, pupils' spiritual development is not adversely affected.
40. Leadership is good. The headteacher has changed the climate in the school by promoting its successful bid for specialist status, by challenging staff to create effective teams that focus on raising achievement and by sorting out behaviour issues. Her very

clear sense of direction is supported well by senior staff, who are active in implementing the programme for change. Other key staff lead their areas of responsibility well overall. As a result there is a strong sense of this being an improving school.

41. Management is satisfactory overall. There is good management of change and improvement using approaches and materials recommended in the national strategy for Key Stage 3. Responsibilities for the oversight of the school's work are clearly established (a key issue at the previous inspection) and monitoring and evaluation are carried out regularly. Nevertheless, the school recognises that although management has developed the tools of monitoring, fully effective monitoring is still a 'job in progress'. Self-evaluation is not consistently accurate across the school, which means that areas for improvement are not always identified as well as they should be. Inconsistencies in assessment and the way subjects develop pupils' ICT skills, for example, are still present. Aspects of the management of citizenship and modern foreign languages are unsatisfactory. Learning support leadership coordinates special educational needs provision well. Good day-to-day management systems ensure that all work links well with subject departments' needs and subject teachers are beginning to assist reviews further with their own targets to help improvement.
42. Financial management is very good. The finance team managed an unexpected substantial shortfall in its budget two years ago very well. Frequent meetings with strong involvement of governors for strategic planning take place so that the school has a sound basis for future developments. The school applies 'best value' principles very well in accordance with its revised procurement policy.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	2,363,118	Balance from previous year	107,500
Total expenditure	2,425,978	Balance carried forward to the next year	44,640
Expenditure per pupil	3,110		

WORK RELATED LEARNING (WRL)

Provision in work related learning is good; it meets statutory requirements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good work experience programme promotes knowledge of the workplace.
- A successfully completed review of WRL has identified developments for the future.
- Management roles in careers and WRL lack time for coordination.
- Very good links with local colleges provide vocational placements.

Commentary

43. Pupils are given a range of good opportunities to learn through their own direct experience. A good and comprehensive work experience programme has been devised through good, collaborative planning between the careers coordinator, the Connexions careers advice service and good contacts in local industry. Subjects, such

as modern foreign languages, successfully use evaluation of work experience as part of a GCSE module. Pupils develop skills in job searches, making applications and developing curriculum vitae.

44. Developing knowledge and understanding of work and enterprise in the school are very good. The nationally promoted Increased Flexibility Programme (IFP) is well established in the school through the links with two local colleges. This gives pupils the opportunity to work in simulated work situations. For instance, the child development course offered within the school is a good foundation for the more advanced qualification in childcare taught at the college. A significant number of pupils are involved in engineering, childcare and hair and beauty courses. The work simulation provision at the colleges is very good. Lecturers and learning advisers come from recent industrial and commercial roles. Pupils remarked that their confidence and self-esteem have grown in the placement, because they know the college and school link regularly over their personal development. Staff from both colleges make regular visits to the school for parental consultation and careers conferences for Years 9 and 10. This cooperation helps parents understand the value of vocational courses as a development of the school's curriculum provision to meet all needs. Lower attaining pupils have developed an aptitude for experience in the world of work. The ASDAN course offers mini-enterprise; this has given all pupils the chance to develop their entrepreneurial skills. The most recent successful enterprise has been the 'Greenhouse Project'. Pupils decided funds raised would be donated to the Tsunami Appeal.
45. There are many good opportunities in the school to develop enterprise skills and skills for employability. The school has made a comprehensive coverage of the nine elements from the national guidance for the evaluation of WRL across the school and fully meets statutory requirements.

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

- Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching they receive.
- Not enough is done to ensure that pupils know their standards and what they need to do to improve.
- Good relationships between teachers and pupils foster good attitudes to work and help pupils achieve well.
- Because of good leadership and management, the department has a common approach and a clear direction for improvement.

Commentary

46. Year 9 results in national tests in 2003 were well above the national average and well above average compared with similar schools. Unverified results for 2004 are similarly high. The trend in pupils' average points score has been rising since at least 2000 and at a faster rate than nationally. Results in GCSE English were above average for A*-C grades and above average in comparison with similar schools, with all pupils obtaining at least a pass grade. Results in English literature slipped to below average for A*-C grades, though almost all pupils obtained a pass grade and the proportion of pupils entered for the examination was considerably higher than nationally. The department has identified why this happened and revised its approach accordingly. The results represented at least good and often very good achievement by Year 9 pupils in relation to their attainment on entry to the school and at least satisfactory achievement by GCSE pupils in relation to their performance in Year 9 tests. The performance of lower attaining pupils at GCSE represented particularly good achievement.
47. Standards are well above average in Year 9, in line with previous Year 9 results and departmental predictions, and well above average in Year 11, an improvement on the previous year. Pupils are able to sustain a variety of writing styles and organise work successfully. Lower attainers, despite difficulties with handwriting, expression and sentencing, can manage reasonably extended writing. Most pupils show a pleasing personal involvement in their work, especially imaginative writing, and higher attainers are able to use evidence well to support well-constructed essays.
48. Pupils' achievement is good. They are encouraged to be independent and to take responsibility for their learning. They are supported well by teachers' materials, including frameworks for writing, and by help from learning support assistants where appropriate. A pleasant working atmosphere, arising from an interesting and varied curriculum and good relationships between teachers and pupils, supports learning and achievement well. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is better than it was because of the way the department has dealt with underperformance in English literature in 2004 and because of its high aspirations for pupils, as evidenced by the proportion entered for GCSE examinations.
49. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is characterised by careful planning, so that lesson objectives are clear, and teachers use a variety of methods to help pupils reach those

objectives. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to write and work independently and to try out or share their ideas with others. Some teaching is very knowledgeable and stimulates lively discussion, so that pupils learn to make connections between their texts and make good gains in understanding. Teachers manage pupils well: as a result, pupils have good attitudes to their work and want to do well. At times, teachers over-explain or over-inform so that pupils are passive for unnecessarily long stretches of time and the pace of learning slows. Teachers' assessments are accurate and marking is thorough and constructive, but pupils are not always clear about what standard they have reached or about what they need to do to improve.

50. Leadership and management are good. The department benefits from good leadership that gives a clear direction to its work and ensures a common approach. There is a clear focus on approaches that will help pupils' achievement. Self-evaluation is accurate and the results of analysis are acted on. The department makes good use of data to monitor pupils' achievement but it is not clear that pupils know or understand what this means for them. The department has already identified this as an area for development.
51. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good because standards are higher than they were, achievement continues to be good and teaching quality has been maintained. The department's development planning provides a good framework for further improvement.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. Pupils enter the school with average literacy skills. Their command of written and spoken English improves as they move through the school and by Year 11 their competence is above average. This enables them to achieve well in their subjects. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language. The improvement in their language competence by Year 11 is good.
53. Teachers have received training in strategies to improve pupils' ability to use language fluently and flexibly and this has resulted in much good practice. Provision is very good in design and technology, resulting in improved spelling of technical terms as pupils regularly refer to the words prominently displayed in classrooms. Pupils can adapt their writing to the different needs of the subjects they study, for example in art and design, geography and music. They can write fluently and accurately about what they know and understand. Less competent pupils are provided with writing guidance so that all can structure their evaluations and ideas effectively. Not all departments mark pupils' work with sufficient rigour, and grammar and spelling mistakes are sometimes allowed to go unchecked. The co-ordinator works hard to provide training and guidance for teachers but the school does not have a means of monitoring and evaluating what is being done across the curriculum to share good practice and raise standards further.

Modern foreign languages

French and German

Provision in French and German is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good motivation to learn and lessons are well ordered.
- Achievement is affected because work is not consistently matched well enough to pupils' needs and they do not know clearly what they need to do to improve.

- The department does not consistently give pupils information about their progress and how they can improve, nor does it analyse their results in sufficient detail.

Commentary

54. The only foreign language taken for GCSE in 2004 was French. Candidates gained worse results in this subject than they did in most of their other subjects and the proportion of candidates gaining the top grades was below average. In both these respects, boys did better than girls. Many pupils, especially girls, gained grade D but the average points score for all candidates was similar to the national average. The most recent year in which pupils entered German GCSE was 2003, when results were also below average. Standards in work seen during the inspection in both languages are average overall in Years 10 and 11.
55. Standards assessed by teachers at the end of Year 9 in both languages in 2004 were well above the national average, with a very high proportion of pupils gaining level 6 or better. However, standards in work seen during the inspection in Years 7 to 9 were lower than these results would suggest, being broadly average overall. Teachers have over-estimated attainment in Year 9 in recent years. Achievement is satisfactory in both age groups.
56. Teaching and learning in both languages are satisfactory overall in all years. Most teachers use the foreign language almost all the time in Years 10 and 11 and for part of the time in Years 7 to 9. Pupils become increasingly independent in Years 10 and 11, making good use of ICT to support their learning. Attitudes are good in all classes and pupils take pride in the presentation of their work because most lessons have good pace and a variety of activity, with some opportunity for imaginative work. Nevertheless, a weakness in planning is that work is not consistently matched well to pupils' needs. In a few lessons in Years 10 and 11 and most in Years 7 to 9, pupils do not express their own ideas in the foreign language because exercises are too highly structured.
57. Pupils do not receive enough information about what they need to do to reach the higher levels. In Years 10 and 11 they are aware of their target GCSE grades, but not all teachers follow department policy on marking and guidance. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily.
58. Leadership is satisfactory. Teachers have high aspirations and the learning environment is well ordered and positive. The head of department provides a good model of successful teaching and encourages an innovative and creative approach. Lack of teamwork causes inconsistencies because good practice has not been assimilated and shared by all teachers. The day-to-day management of lessons and resources is effective and the department monitors lessons and pupils' work, but management is unsatisfactory overall because there is not enough monitoring of achievement and the department has not analysed individual pupils' progress. The department's review of its own performance is not sharp enough to have a positive impact on results and weaknesses have gone unnoticed. Improvement since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory because GCSE performance has fallen in the last four years. This has two causes: difficulty in recruiting permanent staff, which has now been resolved, and insufficient information to individual pupils on their progress and what they need to do to improve.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good so that pupils achieve well.
- Objectives are not used consistently well enough as a focus for learning in lessons so that pupils do not know clearly how well they are doing.
- Good leadership provides a clear vision for further improvement.

Commentary

59. Results in the 2003 Year 9 national tests were well above average. The proportion of pupils gaining the highest levels was well above average. Results in 2004 were similar to those in 2003 and continue to rise in line with the national trend. GCSE examination results in 2004 were well above average. Pupils performed as well in mathematics as they did in most other subjects studied. Work seen during the inspection matches closely these results.
60. In work seen during the inspection, standards in Year 9 are well above average. Achievement is good in relation to pupils' earlier learning and capabilities. Pupils recall their tables and handle percentages confidently, algebraic and problem solving skills are being developed well and data handling skills are good. The highest-attaining pupils understand how to draw graphs of equations, average attaining pupils find areas of shapes confidently and the lowest attaining pupils plot a range of coordinates effectively. By Year 11, standards are well above average. Teachers build well on earlier work so that pupils achieve well. The highest attaining pupils use trigonometry effectively and most pupils can convert fractions to decimals and percentages confidently.
61. The quality of teaching is good and promotes good learning. Teachers use their command of the subject well to ensure that new skills and concepts are clearly explained. Questioning involves pupils well and provides opportunities for pupils to share ideas and strategies with each other. As a result, pupils make good progress with their understanding of new skills. Teachers plan well for the needs of pupils; tasks are suitably varied and challenging and, consequently, all pupils, including those who have special educational needs or who are gifted and talented, make good progress and achieve well. Teachers are using new technology well to develop pupils' learning and provide interesting lessons. The use of starter activities as part of the mathematics strand of the government's national initiative in Years 7 to 9 (Key Stage 3 Strategy) is being implemented well. However, the use of objectives as a focus for learning during and at the end of lessons is not as effective in supporting pupils' learning. Pupils' attainment is assessed regularly and teachers intervene in pupils' learning in lessons to check their progress well. Homework is used effectively to support pupils' learning. Pupils' work is marked well using the school's grading system and provides information for pupils about what they need to do to improve their work. However, pupils are not well informed about their performance in relation to national standards. Teachers manage and organise pupils well. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning are very good; they behave very well, work productively on their tasks and cooperate well with each other when asked to work together. This is encouraged by the very good relationships with the teachers and with each other.
62. Leadership and management are good. Evaluation of the work of the subject is strong and provides a clear vision and direction for improvement. Planning has identified

appropriate priorities to move the subject forward. The available teachers are well deployed and supported and pupils are organised effectively. Good assessment procedures are in place to support pupils' progress. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good; standards in Year 11 have improved, better use is made of assessment data and the differences in the performance of boys and girls no longer exist.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. Pupils' competence in mathematics is above average and numeracy skills are developed well in mathematics lessons. The school has an effective policy for developing pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum. Good contributions are being made in science and design and technology in developing pupils' use of numeracy in their work. However, opportunities and strategies are not always clearly identified in teachers' planning to support pupils' numeracy skills in other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good behaviour and teachers' good planning ensure effective use of lesson time.
- Teachers' good knowledge adds interest to lessons and helps pupils to concentrate.
- Teachers' marking gives pupils little indication of the level at which they are working or how to improve their standards.

Commentary

64. The results of national tests for Year 9 pupils in 2003 were well above the national average and the average for schools with pupils of similar prior attainment; unverified results in 2004 were a little higher than those for 2003. Results have varied since the previous inspection but are now close to what they were then. Overall there is no difference in the performance of boys and girls. Results in the GCSE double award science examinations were well above average in 2004 and better than the results in 2003, especially at the highest grades. Girls did particularly well at the highest grades A*-A. In 2004, results in science for grades A*-C were above those for English and mathematics.
65. In work seen during the inspection, standards in Year 9 are well above average. In relation to pupils' attainment on entry to the school, achievement is good. Higher attaining pupils understand the structure of plants and the function of photosynthesis. They know about the human skeleton, the functions of the human body and how to keep it healthy. Lower attaining pupils understand how personal characteristics can be inherited. Standards are still well above average by Year 11 and achievement is good. Higher attaining pupils understand electromagnetism and electromagnetic induction. They know about the configuration of electrons round atomic nuclei and how this structure is linked to the periodic table of the elements. Lower attaining pupils can write the formulae and diagrams for long chain molecules and calculate relative atomic mass. The department makes a significant contribution to the development of pupils' numerical skills but less attention is paid to literacy.
66. Teaching is good and learning is good in all years as a result. Teachers use their good specialist knowledge to add interest to lessons, which maintains pupils' concentration and ensures their safety in practical work. Pupils' very good behaviour means lessons are productive because little time is wasted in maintaining discipline. Good planning provides a sequence of activities to introduce and extend new knowledge and practical work makes theory understandable. Teachers are good at relating theory to practical applications. Less effective lessons are insufficiently demanding so pupils' achievement drops, but no lessons seen were unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers because teachers give extra help where necessary. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. Pupils rarely know at what level they are working, or how to improve their standards.
67. Leadership is good. Standards are now similar to those at the previous inspection. The drop in GCSE results in recent years has been rectified and well above average standards restored. Management is satisfactory. The department runs smoothly and

teachers and technicians are well deployed but monitoring of aspects of the department's work, for example marking or cross-curricular themes, is not rigorous enough.

68. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. There has been no improvement in the use of ICT because the department is short of equipment and there is little time available in specialist ICT rooms, but pupils up to Year 9 now have their own textbooks, which are a significant aid to their studies.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement at GCSE is very good because good teaching is enhanced by high quality support and individual mentoring.
- Assessment procedures do not fully identify pupils' capabilities.
- Pupils behave well and bring very good attitudes to their work, which helps them to achieve well.
- Though teaching is good and pupils learn well, teachers do not consistently use homework well to extend learning.

Commentary

69. Teachers assessed pupils' standards at the end of Year 9 in 2004 as above average. Results in 2004 were very high for pupils following the GCSE course with 100 per cent of pupils gaining higher grades. Pupils who do not follow the GCSE course in ICT learn enough to meet statutory requirements through key skills ICT lessons and through ICT use in other subjects of the curriculum.
70. In work seen during the inspection, standards in Year 9 are average. Achievement is good when pupils' prior attainment is considered. Pupils use ICT in a wide range of contexts to model, communicate and handle information. By Year 11, standards are well above average for pupils following the GCSE course and achievement in Years 10 and 11 is very good. Achievement is good for pupils on the key skills course when their prior attainment is considered. Good business contexts are used for project work with high quality results combining a range of software including web site, desktop publishing, presentation and data handling software.
71. Teaching is good and promotes good learning. Well developed working relationships and pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour create a very positive working environment. Good teaching resources support teachers' command of the subject well and are used effectively to engage pupils and promote learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well known and a good level of increased support is given in lessons. High quality support and individual mentoring ensure pupils on the GCSE course know exactly where they are in relation to an expected grade. Assessment information on other courses and in other years is not detailed enough to fully identify pupils' capability or to support planning. Homework, when set, is of a good quality but it is not used consistently well to extend learning.
72. Leadership and management are good. There is a keen focus on pupils' performance in GCSE examinations and on the development of ICT in the school. Development planning has supported the successful specialist school bid, which will see an

expansion of ICT resources in the school. Assessment has been identified as an area for improvement by the head of department. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory as the issues raised at the time of the previous inspection have been dealt with and the school has kept the number of computers available for pupils broadly in line with that seen nationally. High standards have also been maintained in GCSE examinations.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. ICT use across the curriculum is satisfactory overall but there is considerable variation between departments. The music and physical education departments lack adequate resources to support learning. Insufficient use is made of ICT to support learning in science. Good use is made of ICT in a number of subjects, for example in design and technology for manipulating images and creating transfers to use on fabrics. Good use of a database in a careers lesson was seen to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of available careers and careers that suited their personal characteristics. Good use was also seen in modern foreign languages and in art and design for research and to develop and manipulate images. Good use was seen in history where pupils selected information from the Internet and presented it using word processing software. Satisfactory use is made of ICT in English and mathematics.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Years 7 to 9 as a result of good teaching.
- Use of ICT supports class work very well and extends the literacy skills of all pupils.
- Standards of behaviour and personal relationships are impressive and have a very positive effect on learning.
- Fieldwork and enrichment opportunities are insufficient to support classwork and coursework.
- Higher attaining pupils are given too few opportunities for challenge in some classes.

Commentary

74. Teachers' assessments of standards at the end of Year 9 in 2004 were above average. GCSE results in 2004 were broadly average. Results show an upward trend with some fluctuation since the previous inspection.

75. The standard of work seen during the inspection in Year 9 is above average. All pupils achieve well in relation to their standards on entry into the school, including those with special educational needs. This is a result of good teaching which focuses on building up understanding and knowledge and the improvement of geographical skills. Pupils' ability to handle, observe and record information is good. They are able to accurately plan routes, produce fieldwork sketches and interpret maps of different scale well. All pupils make good progress as a result of the many opportunities to develop their communication skills through ICT projects and extended writing tasks. This gives them the confidence to ask questions, identify problems and attempt solutions. Although

higher attaining pupils make good progress overall, there are too few opportunities for them to take an active part in lessons or extend their learning beyond the classroom.

76. The standard of work of pupils in Year 11 is above average, which is higher than in previous years. Pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching, which focuses on the consolidation of knowledge and understanding through revisiting topics, and through extending pupils' use of appropriate subject terminology. Pupils are also given many opportunities to improve their written work through extended writing pieces. As a result, their communication skills are strong. This enables them to analyse information confidently and accurately. There are, however, too few opportunities for higher attaining pupils to practise these skills in class or to show what they can do when left to work independently.
77. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in Years 7 to 9. The majority of lessons are well planned. A wide variety of tasks and experiences captures the interest and imagination of pupils, who enjoy their geography lessons. Teachers relate well to their pupils and expect them to work hard. The level of challenge is realistic and most pupils are productive in the majority of classes but there are times when pupils do not share their teachers' enthusiasm for the subject. This occurs when there is limited 'tuning in' to the needs of the higher attaining pupils. Less successful teaching is a result of patchy subject coverage and a lack of high quality support material. There is also sometimes an over-reliance on textbook activities, which can lead to some loss of interest by pupils. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 10 and 11 is consistently good. Lessons are well planned to cover the GCSE course in depth and teaching has a clear focus on examination requirements. As a result, pupils are given sufficient opportunities to develop their skills of analysis and they are able to interpret data from a range of geographical sources. Exercise books and files are well presented and organised and contain high quality support material and information. This enables pupils to achieve higher levels of knowledge and understanding. Personal relationships are strong and pupils show high levels of interest and maturity in their approach to study. There are, however, insufficient fieldwork opportunities for pupils to extend their learning beyond the classroom and to give greater depth and understanding to their human and physical geography. As a result, learning opportunities are missed and there are fewer ways for pupils to present their work in a variety of forms.
78. The head of department provides good leadership and good management. She is committed to raising standards through improving the quality of teaching and learning and through the constant review of the curriculum to suit the needs and requirements of all pupils. ICT provision has expanded and is an integral part of all geography lessons, giving all pupils the opportunity to improve their communication skills. Improvement since the previous inspection is therefore good.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The emphasis on investigation and enquiry stimulates pupils' understanding and thinking skills.
- High standards of behaviour and effort enable pupils to achieve well.
- Assessment tasks provide very good opportunities for pupils to undertake independent learning.

- There is insufficient monitoring of pupils' progress in order to provide targeted support for individuals.
- Fieldwork enables pupils to undertake first hand investigations and the use of the locality enables them to appreciate their own environment.

Commentary

79. Results in the GCSE examinations were below average in 2004 but all pupils achieved a pass. Results have fluctuated over the years, but there is an upward trend. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.
80. In work seen during the inspection, standards in Year 9 are above average and achievement is good. The emphasis placed on investigation and enquiry enables pupils to develop their skills of research and analysis. Their understanding of the periods studied is good and they recognise the range of factors that lead to change or an event, for example the English Civil War. Research work is presented clearly and guidance on writing supports its logical organisation. Pupils do not generally evaluate what they discover or give equal weight to the factors they present. Investigation of their locality helps pupils to develop their skills of observation and deduction and an appreciation of their environment. Standards in Year 11 are average and achievement is good in relation to pupils' standards at the start of the course. Pupils are confident in their research and use sources well to identify opinions and different views of the time. When they present their findings, the work of higher attaining pupils is well organised and they make reasoned judgements that are beginning to be supported with evidence. Lower attaining pupils have a good grasp of key features, but there is little evidence of pupils evaluating information or reaching clear conclusions. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good because tasks and materials are designed to meet their needs.
81. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are well planned and teachers encourage the active participation of their pupils. Their high expectations of behaviour and concentration ensure activities are orderly and effective. Pupils have confidence in their teachers, whose very good knowledge and understanding of their subject enable them to give good support for GCSE coursework. Homework is generally useful and provides good preparation for the following lesson. Day-to-day marking identifies effort but pupils have little opportunity to judge their overall progress and attainment. Whilst comments are encouraging, they are not diagnostic, so pupils' understanding of how they can improve is limited. Very good assessment tasks provide good opportunities for pupils to show what they have learned, but they are too few to enable teachers to monitor the progress of individuals and so remedial help is delayed.
82. Leadership is good and the department is well managed and organised. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. New ideas and practices are being introduced, although the pace of their introduction is measured. There is a commitment to high standards. Fieldwork is well organised and makes a good contribution to the social and cultural development of the pupils. ICT is beginning to make a significant impact on the work of the department. Some pupils are being involved in their own assessment, but practice is not yet fully established in the department.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong leadership and management have led to good teaching and learning.

- Pupils' very positive attitudes contribute to their good achievement and to the above average standards reached overall.

Commentary

83. Almost all Year 11 pupils are entered for the short course GCSE in religious education, and the results, with over 80 percent of candidates gaining grades A*-C in 2004, were well above average. There is no significant difference between the results of boys and girls and almost all obtained at least a grade G. These results represent a steady improvement. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 are assessed using the department's own system of levels, based on their knowledge of standards elsewhere, and these indicate that standards by Year 9 are above average. The work seen during the inspection reflects these results and assessments.
84. Standards are above average by Year 9 and pupils are achieving well. By Year 11, standards are well above average, as the good progress is maintained. Pupils are able to discuss and write about Christianity and other world faiths with increasing confidence, and show that they are learning from the religions as well as about them. Much of their work is very thoughtful: the very positive attitudes they show to the subject contribute to their good achievement.
85. Good teaching leads to good learning. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge, even though only the head of department is a specialist. Good planning and choice of teaching methods, coupled with good classroom management, make the lessons stimulating. Pupils are very effectively challenged, and good results follow. Classroom management is good and pupils work very well with each other. Their work is marked thoroughly and the system of assessment shows them what they need to do to improve. Although pupils tend to be set similar tasks, there is very good support for those with special educational needs, so that they also achieve well.

Example of outstanding practice

An excellent lesson was seen in which Year 9 pupils were helped to understand some of the central teachings of Christianity.

The teacher introduced the question of why Christians believe they go to heaven after they die. Pupils began by thinking that Christians believed what you *did* influenced your eternal destiny, but by the end of the lesson they were able to explain concepts such as *grace* and *atonement*. Learning was reinforced in several ways so that all were able to follow the logic of the teaching, including a pupil with learning difficulties who was being supported by a teacher assistant. The teacher showed them that the Christian belief is not so much a doctrine as a story – the story of creation, fall and redemption – and a story with a bearing upon their own lives: God's grace made possible through repentance and forgiveness.

The full story of salvation was here, but this was a lesson, not an evangelistic address. From the lively PowerPoint presentation of words and pictures, through the sorting of cards and paired discussion work to the writing up of the story (with illustrations), the pupils' attention was held. By the end of the lesson, they could explain what 'grace' means to Christians better than some theologians can. This was excellent provision for spiritual development – they were still free to make their own minds up about the Christian message, but their knowledge and understanding of the message were in no doubt.

86. The head of department is a very good role model and an effective leader and manager. Because her colleagues are non-specialists, she has prepared detailed plans for all lessons that are based on the locally agreed syllabus or the GCSE specifications. Data is rigorously analysed, and there is good self-evaluation of the department. There are good resources available for use in the spacious classrooms, although pupils have limited access to ICT. A few pupils in Years 10 and 11 have to miss some lessons, because of attendance on vocational courses elsewhere, and thus

are unable to sit the GCSE examination. On the other hand, provision is now being made for a small group to study for the full GCSE, through lessons after school.

87. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good. The appointment of a specialist head of department has made a great difference – not just to the quality of leadership and management, but also to teaching and learning, and ultimately to the standards achieved.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

Provision for design and technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes to the subject contribute to their achievement.
- Teaching is consistently good and promotes good learning.
- Assessment procedures promote progress.
- Accommodation is outdated and hinders innovative teaching.

Commentary

88. In 2004, GCSE examination results were the best in the school and above national averages at grades A*-C and A*-G. The entry level was high compared with national figures because all pupils take a design and technology option. This illustrates good equal opportunity and inclusion. Boys' performance was better than girls' overall.
89. In work seen during the inspection, standards in Year 9 are broadly average. Achievement is good because pupils build a very good portfolio of information about materials and making techniques. The department has developed very good workbooks. They integrate literacy and numeracy skills that promote good design communication. The booklets offer good opportunities for personal assessment and many ways to consolidate new concepts, giving pupils a good sense of responsibility for their work. In Years 10 and 11, pupils build successfully on their earlier learning. All five technology options are offered for GCSE and standards are improving. Standards are well above average and achievement is very good. Products are finished well and the attention to detail in annotation of designs enhances pupils' work. A good proportion of pupils in Years 10 and 11 are involved in the Increased Flexibility Programme initiative, which links the school to two local colleges. This gives pupils the industrial and commercial experience of applying designing and making to the real world. Pupils are very enthused by engineering, hair, beauty and child care courses provided by the colleges and achieve good results.
90. Teaching and learning are good overall with some very good teaching, especially in Years 10 and 11. Teachers plan well to meet the needs of all pupils. Very good teacher assistants contribute well to the learning of pupils with special educational needs and the wider group. They ensure that pupils with learning difficulties are meeting the targets of their individual education plans and often exceeding them. Assessment is used very well. The purposeful involvement of pupils through group work and class feedback in lessons shows how well the assessment for learning initiative is being used in teaching and learning to support improvement. Techniques such as drawing

and rendering are not taught consistently across the department, which affects the quality of presentation. A homework notebook extends classwork and is an integrated and valued part of the course, ensuring pupils take homework seriously.

91. Leadership and management are very good because teamwork is strong, keeping the design and technology programme relevant and challenging. Teachers in the department have wide ranging responsibilities across the pastoral and academic curriculum, which are used to advantage; for example citizenship is regularly integrated into planning and teaching. Strategic planning is very effective and links well with the school improvement plan. Accommodation is very outdated and impedes development. Improvement from the previous report is good, because all issues have been addressed.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

The focus of the inspection was on art and design and music. Drama was sampled.

92. **Drama** is provided for all students in Years 7 to 9 and as an option in Years 10 and 11. A lesson in drama for Year 11 was taught well. The pupils were reminded of and had opportunities to practise their skills of performance, evaluation, and group collaboration. At appropriate points the teacher questioned pupils about the use of auditory and visual effects in their presentations, and the techniques they could employ to gain and keep an audience's attention. As a result, they practised with focus, enjoyment and commitment. Achievement was good because of the teacher's advice, evaluation, praise and good humour. All pupils felt their work had moved on by the end of the lesson. Standards were above average. Drama makes a significant contribution to enriching students' experience through theatre visits and productions. It is also associated with art and music through the expressive and performing arts course, and this is a very effective addition to pupils' experience.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership and management have sustained good achievement.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes and achieve well across all years.
- Teaching is consistently good or better.
- Assessment is used well in Years 10 and 11 but could be sharper and shared with pupils in Years 7 to 9.
- Opportunities to use sketchbooks and ICT to develop personal work are missed in Years 7 to 9.

Commentary

93. Pupils enter the school in Year 7 with varied levels of experience. Good teaching, and support for those with special educational needs, ensures all pupils achieve well so that by Year 9 standards are above average. Results in GCSE examinations in 2004 were above average for both boys and girls and the proportion attaining the highest A* grade was well above average.

94. In work seen in Years 7 to 9, skills are well developed alongside knowledge and understanding of the work of artists. Pupils are very positive, enthusiastic and keen to learn. Constraints in funding have resulted in sketchbooks not being used, which restricts scope for extended personal work beyond the classroom and for homework. The lack of access to computers inhibits pupils' use of ICT to support their learning.
95. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 build well on their range of skills from earlier years. They have very good attitudes and engage enthusiastically in activities. Standards are well above average and achievement is good. Levels of independence with coursework are very good. Though resources are limited, ICT is used well for research and to develop coursework.
96. Teaching and learning are good overall with some very good and excellent teaching. Teachers use specialist skills and knowledge well. They plan lessons effectively and engage and challenge pupils through questioning and discussion. A strong inclusive ethos and good individual guidance help all pupils achieve well. In Years 10 and 11, very good use of regular critiques of work informs them about progress and how to improve. The result is that pupils are motivated to achieve their best. Assessment is not so effective in Years 7 to 9 because, whilst pupils get very good advice in lessons, they are not given enough guidance on their levels of attainment or regularly involved in assessment of their own work.
97. The department is well led and managed with conviction and commitment. Teachers work effectively as a team and have sustained standards well since the previous inspection. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. The use of ICT has improved but access is poor in Years 7 to 9 and the need to revise and update the scheme of work is recognised. Accommodation has not improved since the previous inspection but the current building plans address this issue and there is a clear vision for the future that includes improvements to ICT resources.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Energetic and carefully planned teaching means pupils achieve well.
- Accommodation and resources for music restrict what can be taught in lessons.
- Pupils do not know how to set targets in order to improve their practical work.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are accomplished instrumentalists.

Commentary

98. According to the assessments undertaken by teachers, standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 9 in 2004 were well above average. These standards are not matched by work seen during the inspection; standards in Year 9 are average. Achievement is good in relation to pupils' standards on entry to the school. This is so for all groups, including those pupils whose home language is not English or who have special educational needs. A small number of pupils took the GCSE examination in 2004, and the majority attained grades A*-C. No pupils took the examination in 2003. It is not possible to make statistical comparisons with national data because only a small number of pupils studied music. Standards of work by the current pupils in Year 11 are

above average and their achievement is good. These pupils play their instruments to a very high standard. They perform confidently different styles of music, using key characteristics in their coursework.

99. Teaching and learning are good for all pupils in Years 7 to 11. Pupils benefit from teachers' very good subject knowledge combined with the energy and enthusiasm they bring to lessons. This is combined with pupils' own positive attitudes to learning; they work hard, especially when working with others. Lessons are structured carefully to mix different activities, but singing is not actively promoted for all pupils. Teaching makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development, especially their understanding of music from other cultures and the British Isles. Despite receiving good feedback in lessons, pupils do not know how to set themselves targets or how their work compares to standards nationally. Occasionally pupils are not involved sufficiently in their learning or encouraged to describe their learning with precise musical detail. Teachers work very hard to arrange lessons effectively and compensate for music rooms that are unsatisfactory, severely restricting what can be taught. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have to learn in the hall, which is musically sterile; interruptions and noise from changing rooms make learning difficult.
100. Despite a range of percussion instruments, resources for learning are unsatisfactory; the department does not have adequate ICT equipment or up-to-date keyboards in order for pupils to record, save and refine their compositions.
101. The department is led and managed satisfactorily. There have been several changes in staffing since the previous inspection. Improvement has been satisfactory; issues have only been addressed recently and since the appointment of the head of department. Priorities have been identified and pupils are taking part in the various enrichment activities and workshops that have been established.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes assist good learning and achievement.
- Very good extra-curricular activities give good opportunities for pupils to extend their learning.
- Inconsistency in lesson objectives, evaluation, assessment and marking affects what is achieved.
- The use of non-specialist teachers constrains what can be taught and achieved.

Commentary

102. GCSE results in 2003 and 2004 were above average but results in 2004 were better than in 2003 because there were fewer candidates with D and E results. Pupils did better than expected when target grades are compared with actual grades.
103. Standards in Year 9 are average and achievement is good in relation to pupils' standards on entry to the school. For example, pupils in Year 7 are in the early stages of learning gymnastics and they are still grappling with understanding basic movement so there is little quality in their work although their understanding of basic skills is

developing well. In Year 11, standards for the majority of pupils following the core curriculum course are average and achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' standards on the GCSE course are above average and they achieve well. Talented games players have opportunities in teams and clubs but there are few opportunities in lessons for these pupils to achieve very well. Pupils with special needs and with English as an additional language achieve as well as their peers because, in most lessons, there are clear demonstrations. Non-participants do not achieve as well as they should when they are not included in the teaching. Boys do better than girls; staffing changes and an uninspiring curriculum have affected girls' performance. Changes to include more leisure activities and dance are improving interest and more girls are entered on the GCSE course. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should in some lessons taught by non-specialists.

104. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching is good in Years 7 to 9 because challenge and teaching methods are better matched to pupils' needs and more effective use is made of lesson time. Teachers present most lessons in a lively and interesting way and this is effective in extending pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 7 gymnastics group, pupils were accumulating skills well to construct a basic sequence. The teacher pushed all pupils' understanding by varying the use of basic equipment and involved pupils well in checking their learning and performance when opportunities for observation and analysis were given. This helped to refine and improve pupils' own and others' work. Personal development is encouraged so that pupils cooperate well together; there is clear guidance from teachers to pupils to support one another's achievement but opportunities to relate this to citizenship are not taken. In a few lessons, objectives are not fully shared with pupils; there is inconsistency in planned support for literacy and numeracy. Non-specialist teachers do not provide pupils with enough guidance on how to improve. Evaluation at the end of lessons and assessment in the GCSE course are not used effectively enough to help pupils to check their progress and measure performance against targets; marking does not consistently tell pupils how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
105. Good leadership has focused on curriculum changes, which have ensured courses are more appealing to girls, and that breadth and balance, mentioned in the previous report, have been improved. Strategies for raising attainment have improved achievement on the GCSE course. Management is satisfactory. The large number of non-specialist teachers used to staff courses limits curriculum activities. The curriculum is geared to these teachers' strengths and this affects what can be achieved. Teaching is further constrained because there is no specific base for the GCSE course. ICT provision is insufficient for the subject's needs.
106. Overall improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. The curriculum now fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

Business studies

Provision in business studies is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are consistently good.
- Lack of suitable specialist accommodation for business studies impacts on learning.
- Management is constrained by limited time to develop the subject.

Commentary

107. In 2004, GCSE results in business studies were above the national average. Two options are available at the end of Year 11: business studies and the less popular applied business studies. Boys' performance was better than girls, especially at the higher grades.
108. In work seen during the inspection, standards in Year 11 are above average and achievement is good. The use of the examination board's criteria for assessment in the subject helps to build pupils' confidence in knowing what to do to improve. Marking also has a very positive impact because the quick feedback to pupils gives them the opportunity to improve on their practice and presentation. There is good use of the interactive whiteboard to explore more complex financial concepts such as break-even and profit and loss. Pupils fail to use headers and footers to help to order their work and make business-style presentations.
109. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers cope well with a very difficult situation; they teach a specialist subject, over a short period, in non-specialist rooms. Teachers are enthusiasts but, for most, this is their second subject. Teachers use innovative strategies to involve pupils in their learning but confidence is regularly dashed by the failure of equipment. Relationships are very good and the respect between pupils and teachers has a very good impact on working in difficult accommodation.
110. Leadership and management of business studies are good. The team is dedicated to raising standards. The head of department is making good links to businesses and other schools in the area, starting to develop the network essential for the specialist status strategic plan. However, he is unable to have effective meetings with his team, who all have other responsibilities in the school. Monitoring and support of teachers are good; tracking assessment is also good but the lack of time to monitor, develop and enhance the department's profile is a major stumbling block for future development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

111. PSHCE is taught through an integrated programme that is allocated one lesson per week. The whole school is engaged on the programme in the same period to allow flexibility, for example in using outside speakers. Because of the timing of this period during the week of the inspection, no lessons could be seen. Overall, the time available is inadequate to include teaching of citizenship. This is the result of the transitional stage of the school's changing curriculum structure. The time allocation will be improved when the change is complete in the next academic year. Citizenship was inspected through scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils.

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well below average and achievement is unsatisfactory because of limited curriculum time and unsatisfactory teaching.
- Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory because written work is not marked or monitored.
- The subject has not been well led or managed, although there is now a capable co-ordinator in post.
- Arrangements for assessment have been inadequate.
- Pupils' involvement in 'active citizenship' is the strongest feature of the subject.

Commentary

112. Citizenship is not an examination subject. It is taught as part of a programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education. Until September 2004, this programme was confined to 20 minutes of form time but there is now an additional hour per week set aside for these areas of the curriculum, taught by form tutors. Pupils from Years 7 to 10 have six hours of citizenship education each year. In Year 11, they have three hours.
113. On the basis of the written work seen – and some year groups have not yet been taught any citizenship modules this year – standards are well below average in the part of the citizenship curriculum taught through PSHCE. Even allowing for the fact that many pupils are involved in 'active citizenship' through their contribution to the wider school community, their overall achievement must be judged to be unsatisfactory. Written work consists mainly of short answers to questions in workbooks; even some of this work is incomplete.
114. Because the only lessons fell outside the period of the inspection, it was not possible to observe the subject being taught. On the basis of work seen, teaching and learning are clearly unsatisfactory. None of the pupils' work appears to have been marked or monitored in any way, with the result that unfinished work and unacceptable responses to questions, have gone unchallenged. The failure to monitor the written work is sufficient reason for judging the leadership and management of the subject to be unsatisfactory.
115. Because written work has not been marked, proper assessment has not been possible. The school has identified other parts of the curriculum where aspects of citizenship are taught, and there is some evidence that these are taught well but, as there are no arrangements for collecting and recording any marks, it is impossible to assess how much anyone has learned. Pupils complete a self-evaluation sheet to show their involvement in 'active citizenship' around the school, so their participation in leadership roles, the school council and in charity work, for example, does not go unrecorded. This alone has so far been the basis of reporting to parents on the subject.
116. The co-ordinator for citizenship has been in post since September 2004, but has not yet been able to make all the necessary changes. The task for her has been enormous, and she has done well to organise the curriculum and prepare good quality teaching materials for her colleagues to use, along with helpful teachers' notes – although they give insufficient instructions on marking. Her monitoring role will be crucial if provision is to improve. It has improved considerably since her appointment, but the fact that the school was late in introducing the subject as required by the

National Curriculum means that provision is still unsatisfactory. The limited time available for teaching would be less of a problem if the identified areas in other subjects were properly recognised and used as part of the overall assessment of pupils. There is good work in citizenship education happening in the school, not least in the roles pupils are able to play in school life, and the quality of their personal development indicates that the school is producing good citizens. The challenge is to bring it all together by identifying the various strands, co-ordinating the assessment and recording, and reporting more fully to parents.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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