

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **TWEEDMOUTH MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Spittal, Berwick-upon-Tweed

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122348

Headteacher: Mr D Watson

Lead inspector: Mrs G Salter-Smith

Dates of inspection: 16-18 May 2005

Inspection number: 268502

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Middle deemed secondary  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 9 - 13  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 339

School address: Billendean Terrace  
Spittal  
Berwick-upon-Tweed  
Northumberland  
Postcode: TD15 2DJ

Telephone number: 01289 307480  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Rev J Shewan

Date of previous inspection: 1 March 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Tweedmouth Middle School is average in size and takes pupils from age 9 to 13 years. The school has an above average proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds but most live in wards in which social and economic circumstances are below average. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs. The number of pupils with a statement of special educational need is above average. Pupils' special needs arise mainly from learning or behavioural difficulties with a very small number having social and emotional difficulties or hearing difficulties. The school population is relatively stable; there are no pupils of ethnic minority background nor are there any pupils learning English as an additional language; a handful of children are looked after or from Traveller families. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is average.

The school has received a School Achievement Award in 2001, 2002 and 2003. It is part of a Network Learning Community and the Special Project Against Child Exclusion (SPACE). The school gained the Investor in People Award in 2004.

The school is subject to re-organisation proposals. The local education authority has decided to re-organise from a three to two tier system and is currently carrying out the second phase of consultation.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Tweedmouth Middle School is a good school with some very good features.** The headteacher's very strong leadership and good management have resulted in significant improvement since the previous inspection. All pupils, whatever their background or circumstances, thrive and do well in a positive supportive atmosphere. Pupils reach above average standards and achieve well because teaching is good. Value for money is good. The school faces staffing difficulties caused by long term absence.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher's clear focus and drive have been the inspiration behind the school's very good improvement.
- Pupils enjoy school, behave very well and are eager to learn because they are well cared for by the staff; relationships are very good and they are well taught.
- In 2004, results in Year 6 national tests were above average compared to the national picture and well above average when compared with similar schools.
- Pupils' achievement is good overall and standards are above average, especially in English, mathematics and science; however achievement is more variable in religious education, history and citizenship and unsatisfactory in information and communications technology (ICT).
- Subject leaders do not have enough opportunity to carry out checks on standards and teaching so that inconsistencies are not picked up quickly enough.
- Reports to parents for pupils in Years 7 and 8 are unsatisfactory.

Very good improvement has been made since the previous inspection. Results and standards in English, mathematics and science have risen from well below average to above average. Teaching has improved from satisfactory and is now good. The school has tackled and made improvements on the main points for action. Provision in ICT in Years 7 and 8 has not improved enough.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

**Pupils' achievement in all years is good and standards are above average in Year 6 and in Year 8.** National test results in English, mathematics and science in 2004 were above average compared with all schools and well above average compared with schools with pupils of similar prior attainment. Current standards reflect these results and there are no significant differences between girls and boys. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and those identified as gifted and talented is good. Pupils' good literacy and numeracy skills help them to achieve well. Pupils' achievement in ICT in Years 7 and 8 is unsatisfactory and standards are below average. Pupils' achievement in religious education in Years 5 to 8, history and ICT in Years 5 and 6 and citizenship in Years 7 and 8, is satisfactory.

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social and cultural development, is very good overall.** Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good; it is good for their spiritual development and satisfactory for their cultural development. Though pupils are aware of different cultures across the world, they are less aware of the cultural diversity in this country. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory and their punctuality is good. Attitudes and behaviour are very good.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The overall quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching, learning and assessment are good across the school.** Teachers' very good relationships with pupils, the encouragement they give them and their high expectations of learning and conduct bring the best out of pupils. Well planned and structured lessons that include a good variety of challenging activities help pupils to learn at a good rate. Innovative approaches to assessment are helping to motivate pupils and give them a clear understanding of how well they are doing. Teachers and classroom assistants work very well together to support pupils with special educational needs. ICT is not used often enough to support learning. Though homework is given, there is no overall plan so that the amount pupils have to do varies considerably and is unpredictable.

The quality of the curriculum though good in Years 5 and 6 is satisfactory overall. Opportunities for enrichment are good. Pupils of all backgrounds and circumstances have good access to learning and are well supported. In Years 7 and 8, ICT lessons are too long and not enough time is given to religious education. The care, guidance and support of pupils are very good. The school's links with parents and the community are good and those with other schools and colleges are very good.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good overall.** The leadership of the headteacher is very strong; that of other leaders is good. Governance is good and the school is well managed. A well planned programme for staff development is helping to raise standards. The school's approach to financial management is very successful in helping it to achieve its educational priorities. Senior staff carry out rigorous checks on teaching and learning in order to make improvements but subject leaders do not have sufficient opportunities to do this. The management of religious education and ICT is unsatisfactory leading to missed opportunities to raise attainment in these subjects. Governors know the school well and hold it rigorously to account. However, not all statutory requirements are in place: pupils do not experience a daily collective act of worship; pupils' progress is not reported to parents annually in all National Curriculum subjects in Years 7 and 8.

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

Parents and pupils are very supportive of the school. They rightly consider that the teaching is good. Parents are happy that this leads to their children working hard. Parents praise the leadership and management of the school and find staff readily approachable. A small proportion of pupils and parents expressed concerns about the behaviour and the amount of bullying in the school. However, inspectors found behaviour to be very good both in classrooms and around the school. Bullying is not extensive and it is dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils are well informed about how to find help if they are unhappy. Vulnerable pupils are very well cared for.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- raise standards and achievement in ICT by improving the curriculum arrangements in Years 7 and 8 and ensuring continuity in the leadership and management of the subject;
- improve achievement and standards in religious education overall and history in Years 5 and 6 by ensuring continuity in the leadership and management of the subjects;
- improve achievement and standards in citizenship in Years 7 and 8 by ensuring that all pupils have full access to all parts of the National Curriculum for citizenship and that their progress is assessed;
- provide opportunities for subject leaders to carry out checks on standards, teaching and learning more frequently in order to iron out inconsistencies;
- improve the quality of reports to parents so that it is clear what progress pupils have made and what they need to do to improve.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure that pupils' progress in all National Curriculum subjects is reported to parents annually;
- provide a daily collective act of worship for all pupils.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Pupils' achievement in all years is good and standards are above average in Year 6 and in Year 8

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

- Standards are above average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science in Year 6 and in Year 8 and pupils' achievement is good.
- National test results in 2004 were above average compared with all schools and well above average compared with similar schools based on pupils' prior attainment.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those identified as gifted and talented achieve well.
- Pupils' achievement in ICT in Years 7 and 8 is unsatisfactory and standards are below average.
- Pupils' good literacy and numeracy skills help them to achieve well.
- Pupils' achievement in religious education in Years 5 to 8, history and ICT in Years 5 and 6 and citizenship in Years 7 and 8, though satisfactory is not as good as in most other subjects.

#### **Commentary**

1. Standards of work seen have improved significantly since the previous inspection. At the time of the last inspection standards were well below average; current standards are above average overall. Pupils join the school with average standards, they reach above average standards by Year 6 and their achievement in Years 5 and 6 is good. In Years 7 and 8, pupils maintain above average standards and their achievement is good.



- Results in national tests taken in Year 6 in 2004 in English, mathematics and science reflect the improving picture. Results are improving at a faster rate than the national upward trend. Results in 2004 overall were above the national average and well above average when compared with schools with similar pupils based on prior attainment. When each subject is compared individually with results in schools with similar pupils, in mathematics and science results were well above average and better than in English where results were above average. Girls and boys did equally well as each other in both mathematics and science. In English, girls did better than boys though the gap between them is smaller than it is nationally. Results for the higher level, Level 5, show that compared with similar schools, well above average numbers of pupils gain higher grades in science, above average numbers do in mathematics and in English these results are average. This shows that higher attaining pupils achieved well in science and mathematics. In 2004, the school exceeded its realistic targets set by the governors in consultation with the local education authority and based on pupils' prior attainment and social circumstances.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.9 (26.9)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.5 (26.1)	27.0 (26.8)
science	30.0 (29.1)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 77 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

- Standards have improved as a result of strong leadership and management that have ensured a whole school determination to drive up standards and improve the quality of teaching and learning. Changes in the leadership of key subjects, such as mathematics, science and literacy have brought renewed momentum to the drive to improve. Well planned in-service training, including some innovative practice and opportunities to share best practice among staff, has helped to empower teachers and improve the quality of teaching. The school has taken on the national strategies to raise standards in literacy and numeracy and these are having a positive effect on improving standards across subjects. Improved analysis of assessment information has helped the school to identify weak areas, such as writing, and take action to improve the teaching of these across subjects. Identification of pupils in danger of underachieving and provision of support for them has also helped to drive up standards.
- There is some variation between subjects. In English, mathematics, science and physical education pupils' achievement is good throughout the school and they reach above average standards in Year 6 and maintain them into Year 8. In art and design, design and technology and history they move from average standards in Year 6 to above average standards in Year 8. Overall this represents good achievement.
- Pupils' achievement in ICT in Years 7 and 8 is unsatisfactory and standards are below average because recent staffing difficulties have left the subject without adequate leadership and management and temporary staff are struggling to manage to teach successful lessons that, at over 2 hours, are too long. Lack of access to computers across subjects limits the skills that can be developed.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory rather than good in religious education because in Years 7 and 8 the time in which the subject is taught has been reduced to make way

for a lesson per week of citizenship. The school has these arrangements under review and is due to redress the balance. Staffing difficulties, due to long term absence, have adversely affected the leadership and management of the subject and assessment is not being used well enough to help to drive up standards.

7. Pupils' achievement in citizenship in Years 7 and 8 is satisfactory. Pupils achieve well in developing knowledge and understanding of citizenship through a series of well taught lessons. However, their progress in the more active and participatory aspects of citizenship is less secure because progress is not tracked or assessed nor is there an overview to ensure that all pupils have sufficient opportunity to experience these. In history, pupils in Years 5 and 6 achieve satisfactorily because there is some inconsistency in approaches to teaching and learning that have not been recognised or acted upon by the leadership of the subject. However, the good teaching they receive in Years 7 and 8 helps pupils to catch up and they achieve well overall.
8. Pupils identified as gifted and talented achieve well because the good range of enrichment activities presents them with additional challenge. In lessons, teachers recognise their needs and provide extension tasks to ensure that they are working to their full potential. Pupils of all different abilities achieve well because teachers are aware of pupils' differing needs and potential. The setting arrangements for literacy and numeracy in Years 5 and 6 and for English, mathematics and science in Years 7 and 8 support this. The very small number of looked after children achieve well overall.
9. Pupils with special educational needs enter school with below average standards, especially in literacy. By Year 6 these pupils have made good progress generally making an increase of a full National Curriculum level in English and mathematics. By Year 8 pupils continue to make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are carefully integrated into the school and achieve well overall. They often achieve standards much higher than those predicted based upon their prior attainment. There is some variation in achievement between subjects. Achievement in English, mathematics, science, art and design, history, physical education and design and technology is good whereas achievement in ICT is unsatisfactory.

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

Pupils' attendance is satisfactory and their punctuality is good. Attitudes and behaviour are very good. The provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social and cultural development is very good overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are keen and eager to learn and this helps them to achieve highly.
- Relationships are very good so that pupils feel valued and respected.
- Provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good and provision for their spiritual development is good.
- Pupils willingly take the initiative and accept responsibility.
- Pupils behave very well and this helps them to concentrate on their work.
- The school's recent actions have led to improved pupil attendance.

- Though provision to develop pupils' cultural awareness is satisfactory, they are less aware of the cultural diversity in this country.

## Commentary

### Attendance

10. Towards the end of the most recent academic year, the school was surprised to note that pupils' attendance levels had fallen to well below those found nationally in similar schools. In collaboration with the education welfare officer, staff took swift action, starting with an 'attendance week' during which they reconfirmed expectations to both parents and pupils. This has proved to be effective and attendance this year has risen to around the national average with the great majority of pupils arriving at school regularly and punctually, ready for a good, crisp start to the day.

#### **Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (91.7%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	8.2	School data	0.0
National data	6.0	National data	0.3

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

### Pupils' attitudes and behaviour and personal development

11. The school's very caring and supportive ethos does much to develop a sense of self worth in pupils through a strong emphasis on celebrating achievement. Respect for feelings, beliefs and values of others is strongly encouraged through the school's high expectations about behaviour and learning. Most pupils respond very positively to this. They enjoy school and develop high self-esteem. This helps them in their approach to work and in their involvement in the life of the school. For example, they speak confidently to visitors and when they take part in assemblies. In a Year 5 science lesson, pupils enthusiastically discussed approaches to investigation techniques with the teacher and groups of peers. Relationships between teachers and pupils and amongst pupils are very good. They are very keen to contribute to lessons because they know that their efforts will be valued. This helped lower attaining pupils in an English lesson in Year 6 to collaborate effectively in a performance of a poem and for higher attaining Year 6 pupils in mathematics to engage in a rigorous dialogue with the teacher about different strategies to use in mental calculations. Pupils like school and come willingly because it is a friendly, welcoming place and the work is generally interesting both in lessons and in after school clubs.
12. Pupils with special educational needs are valued highly by the school; every attempt is made to provide a positive learning environment and as a result relationships are very good. The work done by the Special Project Against Child Exclusion (SPACE) has helped improve behaviour and attendance and has supported many children who were disaffected or alienated by school.
13. Pupils behave very well in and around school. Pupils are managed well in lessons so that they concentrate on their work and focus their attention on the tasks at hand. The school pays very good attention to developing pupils' moral development because the school has clear guidelines about behaviour, which are complemented by themes in assemblies, and pupils know what is expected of them. This is why, for example,

movement between lessons is usually smooth, in spite of the narrowness of some corridors. During lunch times and breaks pupils behave sensibly and play well together. They are polite, helpful, welcoming and cheerful. Teachers and support staff provide good role models. The school has a clear policy on bullying and checks with pupils by way of questionnaires to ensure that its approach is effective. Any issues of behaviour or harassment are dealt with promptly and fairly. The number of exclusions is low. Furthermore, the school encourages pupils to empathise with those experiencing hardship and need, for example, in writing about their feelings after the recent tsunami disaster.

## Exclusions

### *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	339	22	0

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

14. Pupils' social development is very well catered for providing many opportunities for pupils to work co-operatively, take the initiative and accept responsibility. For example, during lessons they are encouraged to plan their own investigations in science and to develop their own methods of calculation in maths. Many pupils benefit socially, culturally and academically from a broad range of after school activities, trips and educational visits. There is a very strong tradition that when pupils are on visits out of school or are taking part in sporting competitions that they are ambassadors of the school and take responsibility for representing it in a positive way. Pupils accept the responsibilities involved in form captaincy and in being library monitors and school council representatives. Others are in charge of playground equipment and litter picking. The School Council is well run so that pupils are learning to handle issues efficiently and effectively and it has been successful in bringing about improvements to the daily life of pupils, for example through provision of playground equipment and the negotiation of mutually agreed criteria concerning lunchtime social activities. Older pupils benefit greatly from their involvement in the school's partnership with a nearby special school, working alongside pupils on many projects. Provision for both moral and social development has improved since the previous inspection and is now very good.
15. Assemblies contribute very well to pupils' self knowledge and spiritual awareness. The active involvement of both pupils and staff does much to reinforce the sense of shared community which is a characteristic of the school. Most assemblies include collective worship. This is made relevant to pupils' lives and they respond with respect. Provision for spiritual development has improved since the previous inspection and is now good.
16. All year groups are active in fund raising for local and national good causes and the recent development of links with a Ugandan school whilst bringing material benefits for the African pupils has also made a good contribution to pupils' appreciation and understanding of cultural diversity. Nevertheless, opportunities for first hand experience of cultural diversity, particularly in this country, are limited. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to participate in and appreciate cultural activity

through music, drama, art and sport. Overall provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching, learning and assessment

are good. The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory and opportunities for enrichment are good. The care, guidance and support of pupils are very good. The school's links with parents and the community are good and those with other schools and colleges are very good.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are good across the school.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' very good relationships with pupils, the encouragement they give them and their high expectations of learning and conduct bring the best out of pupils.
- Well structured lessons with challenging activities help all pupils to learn at a good rate, including those identified as gifted and talented.
- Teachers pay good attention to improving pupils' literacy and mathematical skills.
- Innovative approaches to assessment are helping to motivate pupils and give them a clear understanding of how well they are doing.
- Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in ICT in Years 7 and 8 and ICT is not used often enough to support learning across subjects.
- Though teaching is satisfactory in religious education throughout, history and ICT in Years 5 and 6, it is not as good as in most other areas.
- Teachers and classroom assistants work very well together to support pupils with special educational needs.
- Though homework is given, there is no overall plan so that the amount pupils have to do varies considerably and is unpredictable.

### Commentary

17. Teaching is good overall and has improved significantly since the previous inspection when it was satisfactory. Currently, five out of six lessons are good or better and more than one in every four lessons is very good. Very few unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The school's determination to raise standards through well-focused professional development and innovative approaches to assessment, learning and teaching have helped to improve the quality of learning experiences for pupils across the school.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 65 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	18 (28%)	37 (57%)	8 (12%)	2 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

18. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school in English, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, and physical education. Teaching is good in history and citizenship in Years 7 and 8. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in religious education in Years 5 to 8, and in history and ICT in Years 5 and 6. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in ICT in Years 7 and 8.
19. The school's positive ethos and good atmosphere for learning is created very much in the classroom where teachers have very good relationships with pupils and know them well. They encourage pupils to do well and set high expectations of learning and behaviour. Pupils respond well to this support. They grow in confidence and are not afraid to ask questions and to work on their own or co-operatively in groups.
20. Teachers plan lessons carefully making good use of their knowledge of the pupils to give tasks and activities that match pupils' needs well. Consequently pupils of different abilities are usually well challenged. This works especially well in subjects where pupils are in ability groups such as English, mathematics, science and French. Pupils identified as gifted and talented are known by teachers and are given challenging tasks, as was seen in mathematics and in physical education. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught throughout the school. Activities are tailored to meet individual needs whether these are emotional, behavioural, pastoral or academic. Individual educational plans are detailed and help all teachers to plan suitable learning activities. Teachers work very well alongside well qualified learning support assistants who provide additional support for pupils with statements of need and as a result these pupils learn well. In occasional lessons in English, mathematics, science and history not enough challenge is offered to higher attaining pupils.
21. Pupils enjoy lessons because of the variety of learning activities and the good pace to learning. Learning is broken down into small manageable steps in most subjects helping pupils to gain confidence. Recent training and developments in approaches to learning, thinking and teaching have encouraged staff across the school to consider how to encourage pupils to think more deeply about what they are doing. Teachers use activities that encourage pupils to analyse, compare, reflect, talk about their work to each other and the teacher and so they gain better understanding of many areas of their work. This is particularly evident in many English, history, mathematics and physical education lessons where well thought out questioning of pupils contributes to their depth of thinking.
22. Lessons are well structured and teachers ensure that pupils understand the purpose of lessons and each activity. Frequent reference to the purpose of the lesson and clear feedback to pupils on their progress help to motivate pupils. Pupils are particularly well motivated where they take responsibility for assessing their own and other's work, as is seen in innovative approaches used in history in Years 7 and 8. Useful final sessions to lessons, where learning is reviewed, together with teachers' careful marking of work help pupils to understand how well they are doing and what they must do to improve.
23. Teachers pay good attention to improving pupils' literacy and mathematical skills. Since literacy, especially writing among boys, was identified as a weakness, the school has rigorously and successfully focused on developing these skills across all subjects. For example key technical vocabulary is learnt and reinforced and teachers use a range of supportive guidelines to help pupils of differing abilities write for different purposes. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to talk about their work to each other and the teacher. These are usually well structured and are

developing well alongside the innovative approaches to assessment, and thinking for learning.

24. A reasonable amount of homework is given to pupils in most subjects. It supports learning and involves pupils in some independent research. However, there is no overall plan for subjects to follow so pupils and parents do not always know how much homework to expect. There is sometimes very little or sometimes too much and this is not helpful in developing a habit of self-study and learning.
25. Teaching is satisfactory in religious education across the school and in history and ICT in Years 5 and 6. Recent disruption in the leadership of each of these subjects has led to inconsistency in the quality of teaching that has not been picked up by the leadership quickly enough.
26. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in ICT because recent staffing difficulties, supply teaching and overlong lessons have led to unsatisfactory lessons in Years 7 and 8 especially. The lack of access to ICT equipment restricts the amount computers and other ICT is used across subjects to support learning.

## **Assessment**

The assessment and marking of pupils' work is good and has improved since the previous inspection. A very good assessment audit of practice in each subject has helped senior managers target support and development where it is most needed, and has provided a focus for teachers' continuing professional development. The majority of subjects give feedback to pupils on how well they are doing, and share what is good about their work, and what needs to be improved, with them. In many lessons, teachers relate what pupils are going to learn with National Curriculum levels. Marking and assessment are particularly good in science and mathematics, and in history in Years 7 and 8. In these subjects, pupils' progress is effectively tracked through the setting and regular review of subject targets. Assessment is good in English, art and design, design technology and history in Years 5 and 6. In other subjects it is satisfactory, except in Years 7 and 8 for citizenship, religious education and ICT, where it is unsatisfactory. Pupils' progress is not assessed often enough so pupils do not know how well they are doing and what to do to improve. The assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs are good and their progress is effectively tracked as they move through the school.

## **The curriculum**

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory and the school provides a good range of enrichment activities. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. There is a good match of support staff to the curriculum.
- The school provides a good programme of enrichment activities that supports many pupils' personal and academic development.
- The curriculum is good in years 5 and 6.
- The limited time allocated to religious education in Years 7 and 8 is holding back pupils' achievement.
- Lessons in ICT in Years 7 and 8 are too long.

- There are no overall plans for citizenship or personal, social and health education, though pupils' learning experiences are at least satisfactory in these areas.
- Limited access to ICT restricts the use subjects can make of ICT to support learning.
- The library is poorly stocked.
- The statutory requirement to provide a daily collective act of worship is not met.

## **Commentary**

27. All pupils have equal access to all learning activities provided by the school and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in classrooms from learning support assistants and, where appropriate, are withdrawn from lessons for additional support.
28. Curriculum provision is good across the school in English, mathematics, science, art and design, design technology and physical education. In these subjects teachers follow well thought out schemes of work that enable pupils to make good progress. The school is successful in improving pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy across the subjects of the curriculum.
29. The curriculum is good in Years 5 and 6; all the subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and pupils achieve well, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils are grouped by ability for literacy and numeracy lessons in Years 5 and 6 enabling activities to be well matched to pupils' needs.
30. In Years 7 and 8 the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils continue to benefit from the arrangements for grouping pupils in English, mathematics and additionally, in science and French. There is plenty of time allocated to teaching these subjects, consequently pupils achieve well. Innovations in teaching and learning approaches across the school have led to improved learning experiences, for example, in history lessons in Years 7 and 8 pupils develop very good critical thinking skills. Since the recent introduction of a separate citizenship lesson in Years 7 and 8, the time allocated to teaching religious education in Years 7 and 8 has been reduced and consequently pupils' achievement in religious education is just satisfactory. The school is reviewing this change and is planning adjustments to redress the balance. The elements of citizenship that are taught in the allocated lesson are well planned and taught and pupils have many additional experiences that contribute to their education in citizenship. However, there is no overall plan for citizenship to ensure that all pupils are taught all the required elements. In ICT in Years 7 and 8 there is some inappropriate timetabling which results in some lessons being too long for the pupils. Difficulty of access to computers means that not all subjects are teaching ICT.
31. Pupils attend three assemblies every week and they make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, the statutory requirement for pupils to experience a collective act of worship every day is not met.
32. A good programme of personal social and health education meets statutory requirements with regard to sex and relationships education, careers education and guidance and drugs education. Teaching is shared between form tutors, who teach part of the programme in the daily form periods, and subject teachers in science, religious education and citizenship lessons. An innovative course in philosophy for children, taught in Years 5 and 6, also contributes well to pupils' learning and personal development. Assemblies are also used to reinforce the learning, which takes place in



the classroom and the programme is enhanced by contributions from visitors to the school, for example the local community police officer deals with the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse. Appropriate careers education is provided for older pupils' through participation in the well-regarded 'Real Game' activities. However, there is no overall written curriculum plan for personal, social and health education and there are no procedures for checking on its overall effectiveness.

33. The school provides many activities that enrich pupils' experiences and support their personal and academic development, especially in physical education and music. Science provides pupils with the opportunity to experience environmental work through the pond dipping and gardening clubs whilst English and history arrange visits out to the theatre and places of interest. The art and design technology departments hold regular sessions for pupils to catch up on work. Pupils are also given a chance to help to run the school shop and library.

### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

The school makes good use of its teaching assistants to support the curriculum, particularly with pupils who have special educational needs. Support staff are well trained and have a comprehensive programme of professional development co-ordinated effectively by the school bursar. They liaise closely with class teachers in order to ensure continuity of education.

Although the accommodation is generally satisfactory the school is aware of the need to upgrade the science laboratory and that the provision of practice rooms for music is unsatisfactory. The library is poorly stocked and not used often enough by subjects across the school, limiting opportunities for extended reading. Though the school has a good number of computers, access to them is difficult because the suites only provide 15 computers and for classes larger than 15 pupils have to share. Consequently they are not used often enough to support pupils' learning in a range of subjects including mathematics, art and design, design and technology and religious education. Though the school has adequate number of teachers, long term absences have adversely affected continuity of learning and leadership in ICT and religious education especially.

### **Care, guidance and support**

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The school provides very good support, advice and guidance for pupils. The school seeks, values and acts upon pupils' views very well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Arrangements to help pupils settle well at school are very good.
- Staff have a very good knowledge of individuals' circumstances and work very hard in order to help pupils flourish.
- Very good liaison with outside agencies strengthens the support available to pupils.
- Pupils' views have a real effect on school practices.

### **Commentary**

34. The school's strong pastoral support begins before pupils even arrive, with great care taken over preparing them to settle smoothly into their new surroundings. The head of Year 5 meets all pupils in their first schools, and new recruits sample middle school life on two occasions before they start in the autumn term, ably helped by Year 7

buddies. With a designated Year 5 building and playground, pupils feel well cared for once they move up to Tweedmouth Middle School, working in small classes alongside pupils of similar ability to their own. This sets the tone well for the rest of their time at the school.

35. Staff build up a good picture of the individuals in their care which enables them to cater for their different needs. They have a very good understanding of pupils' home circumstances and, while setting very clear standards relating to, for instance, behaviour, they are willing to be flexible when necessary. Those who are in public care are supported very well. The warm relationships that staff build up with pupils ensure that they feel confident to talk about any concerns. The Special Project Against Child Exclusion (SPACE) provides support for individuals in the classroom, runs a club for those who find it hard to occupy themselves during the lunch break and has recently started a homework club. The project provides much advice and support, as well as access to other agencies who may be able to help those in need. Arrangements to ensure child protection are good, as are those related to health and safety. The quality of school dinners and relaxed atmosphere in the hall at lunchtimes also make a strong contribution to pupils' well-being. First aid and care for those who have specific medical needs are both very good, with friendly office staff playing a key role in ensuring pupils feel well looked after.
36. Running alongside the very good pastoral care offered to pupils is the good academic support and guidance. This is based on increasingly well-focussed monitoring of individuals' progress and leads to regular reviews and the movement of pupils between sets and bands according to the progress that they make. The innovative use of interactive assessment in Years 7 and 8 supports pupils very well in developing their skills of self-evaluation and understanding what they need to do next in order to improve.
37. This community very effectively helps pupils to grow in self-confidence and the school is very good at taking their views into full account. School councillors carry out their role well and understand what needs to be done in order to improve life for all. Recent discussions about the difficulties brought about by lunchtime supervisors having different approaches to behaviour management led to a meeting between the supervisors and the headteacher which has resulted in greater clarity and consistency. Similarly, the council's purchase and responsibility for litter bins has led to a cleaner, safer site.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school's partnerships with parents and the wider community are good. Those with other schools and colleges are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's commitment to sharing good practice among educational establishments greatly enhances its provision for pupils.
- Staff and parents work together very closely to support pupils' different needs but written reports for pupils in Years 7 and 8 are unsatisfactory.
- Partnership with the community related to design technology is especially strong.

### **Commentary**

38. Parents are supportive of the school and work in particularly close partnership with staff over pastoral matters in order to resolve any difficulties. They, rightly, consider that the teaching is good and they are happy that this leads to their children working hard. They praise the leadership and management of the school and find staff readily approachable. The lively parents and teachers association raises impressive funds on an annual basis which are used for such things as decoration of the hall and library. The school keeps parents well informed about its activities, mounts workshops about different aspects of the curriculum and offers them two opportunities a year to discuss their children's progress as well as brief interim reports. The school has developed good links with parents of pupils with special educational needs. This has led to a high proportion attending reviews of the progress being made by their child.
39. The full written reports issued at the end of the summer term give a good indication of the particular strengths and weaknesses of pupils in Years 5 and 6 but those for older pupils are unsatisfactory. The most recent ones do not report on each required subject separately and they fail to make clear whether the comments and grades relate to pupils' attitudes, achievement or standards of work. In various subjects the targets for improvement are very general, such as 'concentrate harder', rather than giving clear guidance about the subject specific areas for improvement.
40. The school works well with other members of the community through its charitable work and close partnership with local churches and sports clubs. Over a number of years many good links that greatly enrich pupils' experiences have been established through work in design and technology. These range from local producers providing ingredients for food technology and school events, to pupils entering competitions. One of these resulted in the school designing, registering and being presented with a length of its own tartan and this, in turn, led to pupils creating story sacks for a neighbouring first school.
41. Links with other schools, despite uncertainty around possible reorganisation, are very strong. Tweedmouth is at the hub of the local Network Learning Community through which staff share good practice and discuss developments in education such as Philosophy for Children and Thinking for Learning, both of which are having a positive effect on the provision in this school. Most subject leaders liaise closely with their counterparts at the neighbouring high school and this year the head of Year 5 is involved in marking the Year 4 Optional standardised national optional tests. Very close working with the local special school leads to some of its pupils joining lessons in art, design and technology and physical education at Tweedmouth Middle School while, on a weekly basis, Year 8 pupils visit the special school and work alongside its pupils. Such regular integration makes a very strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Trainee teachers are given a warm welcome and well structured support. They bring new ideas and extra adults into the classroom enhancing the quality of pupils' education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very strong; that of other leaders is of good quality. Governance is good and the school is well managed.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership provided by the headteacher has been the inspiration behind the school's very good improvement since the last inspection.
- The well planned programme for staff development is helping to raise standards.
- The school makes good use of its assessments in order to prioritise areas for development and set targets for improvement.
- The school's approach to financial management is very successful in helping it to achieve its educational priorities.
- Senior staff carry out rigorous checks on teaching and learning in order to make improvements but subject leaders do not have sufficient opportunities to do this.
- The management of religious education and information communication technology is unsatisfactory, leading to missed opportunities to raise attainment in these subjects.
- Though governance is good overall, not all statutory requirements are fully in place.

## Commentary

42. At the time of the last inspection, the headteacher was very new in post and faced a number of issues identified by inspectors. He also had his own very clear thoughts about how to improve the quality of education provided by the school. This he has done most successfully, steadfastly keeping his focus on the school's main aim of raising attainment. Staff, pupils, parents and others connected with the school all speak very highly of his vision, commitment and skill at bringing the best out of colleagues in the interest of the pupils. While very obviously remaining 'in charge' he delegates responsibility, ensures staff receive appropriate training and allows them to take calculated risks in the development of learning. These opportunities to take risks, for example, the introduction and use of 'assessment walls', to aid pupils' assessment of their own and others' progress, ensures that the school operates as a dynamic institution. When faced with significant staffing difficulties he leads from the front, taking on extra roles, such as that of the special educational needs co-ordinator, so that pupils' education does not suffer. Strategic planning is a consultative process, incorporating the views of pupils and parents as well as staff, with the success criteria clearly defined in terms of educational improvements leading to higher standards. The senior management team, which includes heads of year and the senior administrator, work together well and adopt a consistent approach to school development. The leadership of subjects is of good quality overall with that for history being particularly strong, although leadership and management of ICT and religious education are currently unsatisfactory.
43. The school has in place a comprehensive and effective system of professional development for its teaching and support staff. Performance management, opportunities for in service training and the priorities in the school development plan are closely linked so that there is a very close and coherent focus on raising standards. This is a significant feature in the clearly improving trends in standards and provision. For example, strategies for pupils to understand and access text books were improved following staff attendance at a writing day, and standards in the process of planning and designing in design technology were raised after staff attended meetings on the National Strategy to raise standards. The school's work in this area is further enhanced because courses are evaluated and their impact on improving teaching and raising standards closely checked. The professional development of teaching assistants is well planned and helps to enhance the significant contribution they make to the work of the school. Staff meet regularly to discuss how ideas and strategies from courses might be implemented and to disseminate examples of good practice.

44. The school analyses its assessments of pupils' progress closely. This helps it to identify areas for further development, to set targets for improvement. For example, the need to focus more closely on writing came from an analysis of formal assessments and teacher assessments and led to further staff development. Assessments are used as part of the half termly reviews of pupils' progress in order to ensure that they are appropriately placed in classes according to ability. The self-evaluation process is strong and is well established in school. There is a well-developed culture where all members of staff work together to make sure that initiatives are successful.
45. Teaching and learning are regularly checked by senior staff in order to support professional development and raise standards. Newly qualified teachers are similarly well supported. The very open climate of the school and the constant informal dialogue that staff share help to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. However, there are insufficient opportunities for subject leaders to check teaching and learning in order to make improvements in their subjects. Long-term illnesses and staffing difficulties have necessitated unanticipated adjustments in staffing allocation and responsibilities. This has not been managed satisfactorily in ICT, religious education and in Year 5 and 6 history. Not enough support has been given to teachers new to the school or subject. This has led to a dilution in the provision for pupils and consequently slower progress than might have been expected.
46. Strategic planning is very well supported by very prudent financial management so that the school makes very good use of its budget in order to support its provision and raise standards. The school administrator and administrative staff play an important role in this and in helping with the robust and rigorous procedures for day-to-day management and the smooth running of the school. They are very welcoming to staff, pupils, parents and visitors and make a significant contribution to the school.
47. Budget monitoring is carried out regularly by the headteacher and governors. Financial planning includes three-year forecasting, which has enabled the governors to consider the longer-term implications of spending decisions. Expenditure is closely linked to school priorities and monies allocated for specific purposes such as special educational needs are spent appropriately. The principles of best value are applied very effectively. The school compares its performance and expenditure with other schools within the LEA and with similar schools throughout the country. Much of this work is carried out by the very well qualified and efficient school administrator. The school consults well with pupils, staff and parents: for example, the parent teacher association was involved in the decision to redecorate the hall and library; staff have been consulted about an imminent senior staff vacancy; pupils are consulted through the school council which is allocated a budget to improve the school environment. The school explores alternatives to find the most effective way of addressing priorities: for example, by appointing a teacher from a Beacon special school to lead improvements in literacy and numeracy, and, once in place, the effectiveness is carefully monitored. The school rigorously seeks best value for major purchases and follows the local education authority procedures for competitive tendering.

***Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005***

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,082,527	Balance from previous year	55,923

Total expenditure	1,046,119
Expenditure per pupil	3,104

Balance carried forward to the next	36,408
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48. Governors know the school well through direct involvement in the work of the school and through the regular detailed headteacher's reports. Many governors are linked to a subject or an area of the school. They work alongside staff and pupils to find out for themselves how the school is functioning. Consequently, governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors bring a good range of experience and expertise to their role. This and their knowledge of the school help them to support major decisions and to hold the school to account. For example, recent decisions with regard to increased class sizes and staffing levels were debated at length. Close checks on the effect of the decisions taken are in hand to ensure that pupils continue to achieve their best and that their progress is not affected. Though governors uphold their major statutory role in guiding the school and holding it to account, not all statutory requirements are upheld. Though pupils experience three good quality collective acts of worship each week, these are not experienced by pupils on a daily basis. Parents do not receive a separate annual report on their children's progress in each National Curriculum subject.

## PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

### SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 2 and 3

English was inspected in depth and French, which is taught to all pupils in Years 7 and 8 was sampled. In the two French lessons observed, good teaching resulted in pupils learning well and making good progress. Pupils enjoyed a good variety of activities taught at a good pace in well structured lessons. Pupils' pronunciation was good, particularly among lower attaining pupils, though not all opportunities to communicate in the foreign language were taken. Higher attaining pupils were suitably challenged with nearly all of them achieving higher standards than their target grade.

#### English

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen significantly since the last inspection and are above average.
- Teaching is good, which leads to good achievement.
- Pupils enjoy English and respond well in lessons.
- Planning is very good and provides a cohesive framework for learning.
- Checks on the work of the subject need improving to ensure consistency.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunity to produce longer pieces of creative and personal writing.
- The limited recording of pupils' reading inhibits continuity.

#### Summary of key inspection judgements

Aspect	Years 5 and 6	Years 7 and 8	Overall
<b>Achievement:</b> whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Good	Good	Good
<b>Standards of work seen</b> in relation to national age-related expectations	Above average	Above average	Above average
<b>National test results</b> in 2004	Above average	Not applicable	Not applicable
<b>Attitudes</b> of pupils to their work	Very good	Very good	Very good
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	Good	Good	Good
<b>Quality of learning</b>	Good	Good	Good
<b>Quality of curriculum leadership</b>	Good		
<b>Management of the department</b>	Good		
<b>Changes in effectiveness since the last inspection</b>	Very good		

#### Commentary

49. The 2004 Year 6 national test results were above average and have shown an upward trend over the last three years. Girls did better than boys but the gap has narrowed and is now the same as the difference nationally. By Year 6 and Year 8 pupils achieve well and reach above average standards in line with their individual targets. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. A very small number of pupils underachieve as a result of staffing difficulties and poor attendance.

50. Standards of reading, writing, speaking and listening are improving and are above average. This is due to a rigorous and planned approach to teaching that is focused entirely on raising standards in literacy. Pupils of all ages are keen to respond orally and they confidently take part in debates such as in the 'Granny Project' and Macbeth, where pupils learn the skills of negotiation and collaboration. Written responses to reading are good; pupils have plenty of opportunities to respond in a range of styles. In a Year 5 lesson, lower attaining pupils enjoyed reading and retrieving written evidence and produced structured responses to the teacher's questioning. In this lesson, higher attaining pupils gave evaluative and analytical responses to a newspaper article and were able to discuss the effect of persuasion and exaggeration. Opportunities to extend reading are limited. The library remains under-stocked and underused and the recording of home-school reading has just begun. The lack of recording of reading limits continuity of experience. Pupils of all ages have developed a good range of writing skills and confidently produce scripts, diaries and newspaper reports. Writing skills develop quickly due to the high level of teachers' expectations and challenge, as was seen in pupils' very good work in responding to the works of Chaucer and the poems Lady of Shallot and the Ballard of Elaine. However, not all pupils, but in particular higher attaining pupils, have enough opportunity to produce more extended pieces of creative or personal writing.
51. Rising standards are a direct result of improved teaching. Very good planning includes a clear structure for the teaching of the lessons. The pace of learning is brisk because teaching includes a good variety of activities that carefully builds pupils' understanding step by step. Well prepared resources, including good use of ICT, well-matched to differing needs help pupils to succeed and gain confidence. Pupils are constantly challenged to improve their own performance because their work is carefully marked and gives clear indications as to what is needed in order to improve. Pupils respond very well to the challenge posed by teachers. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and teachers instil confidence in pupils. Teachers work very well alongside learning support assistants to produce work tailored to the needs of individual pupils.
52. Leadership of the subject is shared and is dedicated and enthusiastic. Since the last inspection the key priorities identified have been worked on. This has resulted in standards that have risen from below to above average and teaching that has improved from satisfactory to good. However, still more work needs to be done in merging the management of both key stages by sharing of good practice and ensuring a consistent approach to assessment. This is currently impeded by staffing difficulties which have created a huge extra workload for the Years 7 and 8 co-ordinator. Opportunities for subject leaders to observe others teaching and maintain checks on standards are limited so that some inconsistencies are not dealt with very quickly.

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

Since the last inspection the school has focused on raising standards in literacy and they are now above average. Speaking and listening skills are above average and have improved across all subject areas; good examples were seen in English, history and physical education. Reading skills are above average and pupils are able to understand subject specific text books. The whole school has successfully focused on improving spelling and subject specific vocabulary and they are better than average. Books are checked regularly by the literacy co-ordinator ensuring that teachers pay attention to



improving pupils' literacy skills. Subject specific vocabulary was well taught in lessons observed in mathematics and science.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and achievement is good.
- Pupils are very well motivated and enjoy very good relationships with their teachers.
- Teaching and learning are good because teachers have high expectations and plan their lessons very effectively.
- Assessment is used very well to track pupils' progress and to inform teaching and learning, but marking is not detailed enough to help pupils improve.
- Leadership is very good with a clear focus on and commitment to raising achievement.
- ICT is not used widely enough to enhance learning in mathematics.
- The subject leader has few opportunities to carry out checks on pupils' work and work in lessons.

### Summary of key inspection judgements

Aspect	Years 5 and 6	Years 7 and 8	Overall
<b>Achievement:</b> whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Good	Good	Good
<b>Standards of work seen</b> in relation to national age-related expectations	Above average	Above average	Above average
<b>National test results</b> in 2004	Above average	Not applicable	Not applicable
<b>Attitudes</b> of pupils to their work	Very good	Very good	Very good
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	Good	Good	Good
<b>Quality of learning</b>	Good	Good	Good
<b>Quality of curriculum leadership</b>	Very good		
<b>Management of the department</b>	Good		
<b>Changes in effectiveness since the last inspection</b>	Very good		

### Commentary

53. In 2004, pupils' results in national tests taken in Year 6 were above the national average and well above average when compared with schools with pupils of similar prior attainment. Boys and girls performed equally well. The rate of improvement over the last four years is above the national trend. Currently, standards when pupils join the school in Year 5 are broadly average but by the end of Year 6 are above average. This reflects good achievement from pupils' starting points. Boys and girls achieve similarly and pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
54. Standards in the current Years 7 and 8 are also above average, and show steady improvement as pupils progress through the school. Both boys and girls achieve well.
55. Pupils in all year groups are articulate and confident in answering questions and explaining their answers. They are very well motivated and most pupils set out their work neatly. They organise themselves sensibly for group and practical work and work

collaboratively. Pupils' numeracy skills are good. In Year 6, lower attaining pupils apply these skills to money problems well; middle and higher attaining pupils convert simple fractions to decimals and percentages and understand the concept of equivalence; higher attaining pupils interpret statistical data from graphs and charts. In Year 8, pupils have a good grasp of basic algebra, which higher attaining pupils apply to express and solve problems algebraically. All pupils have a good knowledge of regular shapes and the angle properties of lines and triangles. They carry out simple constructions accurately and higher attaining pupils apply these skills to solving problems accurately.

56. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good in all years, because the work is matched closely to their needs and they receive effective in-class support.
57. Teaching and learning are good in all years and half the lessons observed were very good. Teachers have high expectations for all pupils and usually set challenging work, though occasionally higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Lessons are very well planned, with careful sequencing of tasks to build confidence and promote good learning. Teachers' management of pupils' behaviour is very good and they use a wide range of teaching strategies, including paired and group work, practical activities and games, with good emphasis on numeracy skills. At present there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use ICT to enhance their learning of mathematics. Assessment is used very well in class to check pupils' understanding, but marking is not detailed enough to help pupils improve. Termly assessments are referenced to National Curriculum levels and this is shared with pupils so they have a clear understanding of how well they are doing in relation to their individual targets.
58. Leadership of the subject is clearly focussed on improvement of teaching and learning. Teachers work well together and share a commitment to raise standards; they meet together regularly to discuss teaching and learning and to share good practice. Teaching and learning are checked by senior staff, but the subject leader does not have the opportunity to carry out regular checks of teaching and of pupils' work. As a result, weaknesses in teaching, for example inconsistencies in marking, are not identified and addressed. Assessment of pupils' work is used very well to inform planning and data is analysed very well to measure pupil progress over time. Long term planning is based on appropriate textbook schemes of work, but these have not been adapted to meet pupils' specific needs. Very good links with feeder primary schools and with the local high school ensure continuity of learning.
59. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good. Standards have improved from below average to above average, and pupils now make good progress. The national strategy for improving teaching and learning has been implemented in all years and the quality of teaching is now good. The use of assessment to inform planning is now a strength, and leadership is very good.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

All teachers have received some training for the teaching of mathematics across the curriculum, and informal links with other subjects, particularly science, have been established. However a whole school policy, promoting a common approach to calculations and graph work, has not yet been implemented. Pupils' application of mathematics in most subjects is good, but it is unsatisfactory in ICT because pupils are not given the opportunity to apply their mathematics using spreadsheets and data handling software. Pupils use their

graphical and measurement skills competently in science; scale, proportion and symmetry in art; scale drawing and measurement in design and technology; number patterns and sequences in music; and number skills for scoring and measurement in physical education. In history, pupils show understanding of chronology using timelines and interpret statistical data from graphs, and in English pupils apply their numeracy skills to understanding rhyming couplets. The teaching of mathematics across the curriculum is well planned for pupils with special educational needs through their individual education plans, which all contain a target for mathematics.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching leads to good achievement.
- Results are improving and are above the national average and well above average compared with similar schools.
- Systems to assess and track pupils' progress are very good.
- Pupils do not use ICT enough in lessons due to a lack of equipment.

### Summary of key inspection judgements

Aspect	Years 5 and 6	Years 7 and 8	Overall
<b>Achievement:</b> whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Good	Good	Good
<b>Standards of work seen</b> in relation to national age-related expectations	Above average	Above average	Above average
<b>National test results</b> (EN, MA & SC only)	Above average	Above average	Above average
<b>Attitudes</b> of pupils to their work	Very good	Very good	Very good
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	Good	Good	Good
<b>Quality of learning</b>	Good	Good	Good
<b>Quality of curriculum leadership</b>	Very good		
<b>Management of the department</b>	Very good		
<b>Changes in effectiveness since the last inspection</b>	Very good		

### Commentary

60. The national test results at the end of Year 6 in 2004 were above average. Boys and girls achieved similar results.
61. Standards of work seen are above average in all years and compared with their starting point on entry to the school represent good achievement. This is due to good teaching and the very positive attitudes of the pupils. The help given by support staff ensures that pupils with special educational needs also achieve well. Standards of literacy and numeracy in science are above average and their investigative skills are well developed. Pupils in all years plan and design fair tests and make predictions. Year 6 pupils understand why different organisms live in different habitats and higher attaining pupils explain the effect of the environment on numbers of species. Pupils in Year 8 label parts of the respiratory system and higher attaining pupils understand the

process of respiration. The attitude and behaviour of pupils in lessons is very good. They listen attentively and are keen to answer questions.

62. Teaching is good and the well-prepared lessons include a variety of activities which maintains the interest of the pupils so that they learn well. Teachers pay good attention to literacy in lessons with emphasis on technical vocabulary. Pupils are given opportunities to read aloud and discuss the work with their peers. There are many ways in which they are able to practise numeracy skills, for example, through drawing graphs and measuring. Though pupils are encouraged to use the internet for project work, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use ICT in lessons. This is because there is no equipment available capable of taking readings and recording information electronically. Although homework is set when staff feel that it is appropriate, it is not on a regular basis. Pupils' progress is checked and recorded very well and all pupils have target sheets in their exercise books so that they can check on their own progress easily. Pupils' work is marked on a regular basis and teachers' comments are helpful and informative.
63. Leadership is committed to the continued improvement of examination results and standards. Although the leadership carries out regular checks on pupils' written work, checks on teaching and learning in lessons are carried out informally. Though accommodation is satisfactory, the laboratory is due for refurbishment. The department receives very little technical support so that teachers spend time preparing equipment for lessons, which could be done by a technician. Since the previous inspection national test results, standards, teaching and staffing have improved and a new scheme of work has been introduced for Years 5 and 6.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Years 7 and 8, because of unsatisfactory teaching and learning, standards are too low and pupils are underachieving.
- Pupils' use of ICT to support their learning in other subjects is unsatisfactory.
- Temporary teachers of the subject are not getting enough support from curriculum leaders.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their learning and behave well in all years.
- Teachers manage their Year 5 and 6 classes very well despite overcrowded conditions.

### Summary of key inspection judgements

Aspect	Years 5 and 6	Years 7 and 8	Overall
<b>Achievement:</b> whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
<b>Standards of work seen</b> in relation to national age-related expectations	Average	Below average	Below average
<b>Attitudes</b> of pupils to their work	Good	Good	Good
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
<b>Quality of learning</b>	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory

<b>Quality of curriculum leadership</b>	Unsatisfactory
<b>Management of the department</b>	Unsatisfactory
<b>Changes in effectiveness since the last inspection</b>	Unsatisfactory

## Commentary

64. In Year 6, pupils' awareness and understanding of how computers can be used to control events are above average, a significant improvement since the previous inspection. They know how to use the major software packages to set up spreadsheets and databases but skills in the use of computers to present information are below average. Design skills are below average. By Year 8, as a result of unsatisfactory teaching and learning and poor timetabling, standards overall are below average. Pupils' skills in selecting information for different purposes are undeveloped. Although they know the major search engines when using the Internet, their web design skills are below average. Pupils with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 5 and 6 but in Years 7 and 8, progress is unsatisfactory because teachers do not know who they are and therefore do not set them challenging or appropriate work.
65. In Years 5 and 6, because the computer rooms will only house fifteen computers, pupils have to share a computer. Although teachers' very good management and organisational skills enable them to manage large classes without any disruption to learning, individual progress is not as rapid as it would be with better accommodation. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils whom they know very well. This encourages pupils to want to learn; consequently their attitudes to learning are good. Teachers set interesting tasks but do not always set different tasks for different ability groups and higher attaining pupils are not always challenged enough. In Years 7 and 8 teaching is unsatisfactory. This is because unresolved staffing difficulties have resulted in non-specialist teaching by temporary teachers. At two and a half hours, lessons are much too long and although teachers do their best to fill the time productively, because they do not know enough about the subject, they cannot plan work for this length of time which challenges pupils and extends their learning. In addition, teaching lacks the expertise to explain difficult concepts in ways that pupils can understand. Teachers lack information about the prior level of attainment of individual pupils in their groups; consequently all pupils are set the same tasks with the result that higher attaining pupils finish too quickly, and lower attaining pupils struggle to understand.
66. Disruption in the leadership and management of the subject due to unresolved staffing difficulties has led to difficulties in the subject and unsatisfactory achievement in Years 7 and 8. Temporary teachers lack support and guidance and their work is not being monitored closely enough. Lessons are too long and there is a health and safety concern about pupils spending so long, albeit with short breaks at hourly intervals, in front of a computer screen. Pupils have limited access to computers out of lesson times. There is no one ensuring that computers are used effectively to support learning in other subjects; consequently computers are not used enough. In Years 7 and 8, pupils' work is not regularly marked or assessed. Staffing remains a concern. There is evidence that good assessment and recording systems were in place at the beginning of this school year but staffing changes have resulted in these systems being shelved. Improvement since the previous inspection is unsatisfactory. The use of computers in other subjects remains unsatisfactory and lessons are still too long.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

The use of computers to support pupils' learning in their other subjects is unsatisfactory, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Unsatisfactory use is made of ICT in mathematics, science, and religious education. In art and design, citizenship, design technology, history and physical education, satisfactory use is made of computers to help pupils learn, mainly through Internet use for research, and word processing for presenting information. Only in English do pupils apply their ICT skills effectively. Here, pupils use software packages such as Word and Desktop Publisher to present their work, and use PowerPoint effectively when giving presentations.

## HUMANITIES

History and religious education were inspected in full and geography was sampled. Two geography lessons were observed. Year 5 pupils learned well and were well taught. The teacher made good use of pupils' interest in and knowledge of the local environment as a starting point for an investigation of the differences between human and physical characteristics of the coastline. In a Year 8 lesson on the effects of flooding in Bangladesh, pupils made very good progress and were very well taught. Pupils were initially provided with a very clear indication of their learning objectives and were able to set challenging targets for themselves based on a good understanding of the subject's attainment criteria. Challenging learning activities absorbed them very well with boys and girls working effectively together in groups to arrive at convincing explanations for their conclusions about the results of processes of environmental change.

### History

Provision in history is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and leads to good achievement and above average standards by the time that pupils leave the school at the end of Year 8.
- Innovative teaching methods and assessment procedures in Years 7 and 8 make a significant contribution to the standards achieved and the quality of learning.
- Checks on teaching in Years 5 and 6 are not frequent or rigorous enough and so inconsistencies in Years 5 and 6 in particular, are not recognised or improved quickly enough.
- Computers are not used enough to support learning in history.
- Higher attaining pupils are not always stretched enough in the critical analysis of evidence.

### Summary of key inspection judgements

Aspect	Years 5 and 6	Years 7 and 8	Overall
<b>Achievement:</b> whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Satisfactory	Good	Good
<b>Standards of work seen</b> in relation to national age-related expectations	Average	Above average	Above average
<b>Attitudes</b> of pupils to their work	Very good	Very good	Very good
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	Satisfactory	Good	Good

<b>Quality of learning</b>	Satisfactory	Good	Good
<b>Quality of curriculum leadership</b>	Very good		
<b>Management of the department</b>	Satisfactory		
<b>Changes in effectiveness since the last inspection</b>	Good		

## Commentary

67. Pupils' understanding of and use of chronology is good. This is because it is initially well taught in Year 5 and subsequently reinforced as pupils move through the school. By Year 6 most pupils have at least a sound understanding of key features of the period studied, for example, the structure of society in Ancient Egypt. However, the quality of the work and the extent to which pupils experience sufficiently challenging work in developing all the key historical skills in their investigations varies between the teaching groups. The quality of teaching, while satisfactory overall, ranges between satisfactory and good. The best provides more challenge for pupils, for example in the way in which they are expected to use sources of information and in the variety and extent of their written responses. The quality of marking also varies with some pupils not provided with enough guidance on how to improve their work.
68. The pace of learning picks up markedly in Year 7 as a result of some very good teaching which contributes to and capitalises on pupils' generally very positive attitudes to learning. Most pupils quickly learn to write at a good length allowing them to provide full explanations, with higher attaining pupils using well chosen evidence to support their conclusions, for example in evaluating the claims to the English throne in 1066. However, the pace is not maintained evenly across all the key skills. The range of sources of information provided for pupils to use is relatively narrow and higher attaining pupils in particular could be stretched more in analysing their usefulness and reliability. Although opportunities for teachers to use computers in support of pupils' learning in history are identified in the subject's schemes of work, in practice they are not used often enough for research or presentation of work. Two major strengths in teaching are evident in Years 7 and 8, which significantly contribute to the overall standards reached and the quality of learning experiences provided. Teachers are skilled in the use of innovative "thinking skills" techniques which underpin the learning. One effect of this has been that relatively few pupils fail to reach expected standards for their age and many pupils feel that their experiences in history help to improve their learning in other subject areas. Pupils are also adept in using very well devised assessment procedures. These include self and peer assessment activities using "interactive assessment walls" which motivate pupils well and equip them with a clear understanding of how they can improve their work. Throughout the school, pupils who have special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils and the support provided by their learning support assistants is particularly effective. There is a good programme of educational visits, which contributes well to the standards achieved.
69. Despite teachers' lack of specialist qualification in history and some uncertainty about the whereabouts of overall subject responsibility there is, nevertheless, a very clear vision for subject improvement, which has led to some very successful curriculum development in Years 7 and 8. A strong team ethos has also been created. However, in Years 5 and 6 not enough is done to assure consistently good practice through checks on the quality of teaching and shared good practice. Since the previous inspection, overall standards and achievement have improved and teaching in Years 7 and 8 is now better.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development, especially their spiritual and moral development.
- Management does not ensure that pupils' work in Years 7 and 8 is marked and assessed often enough.
- Relationships are very good and pupils' very positive attitudes contribute to their learning.
- Computers are not used enough to aid pupils' learning.

### Summary of key inspection judgements

Aspect	Years 5 and 6	Years 7 and 8	Overall
<b>Achievement:</b> whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
<b>Standards of work seen</b> in relation to national age-related expectations	Average	Average	Average
<b>Attitudes</b> of pupils to their work	Very good	Very good	Very good
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
<b>Quality of learning</b>	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
<b>Quality of curriculum leadership</b>	Satisfactory		
<b>Management of the department</b>	Unsatisfactory		
<b>Changes in effectiveness since the last inspection</b>	Satisfactory		

### Commentary

70. Standards of work in the main religions studied in Years 5 and 6 are average. Although it was not possible to see any lessons, from a scrutiny of pupils' written work and discussions with pupils, standards are judged to be average. Pupils have a good understanding of the key beliefs and teachings of Christianity, for example, the importance of Easter in the religious calendar. They know the Bible stories, relating, for example, to Moses and the Ten Commandments, very well. Their knowledge and understanding of the key features of other religions studied, such as Hinduism, are below average. By Year 8, pupils have extended their knowledge of religions other than Christianity well, especially Buddhism. They know about the Four Noble Truths and can compare the main features of Buddhist worship to that of Islam. However, their knowledge and understanding of Hinduism, one of the key religions to be studied in Years 7 and 8, are below average.
71. Standards in Years 7 and 8 though average, are not as high as in most other subjects because teaching and learning, whilst satisfactory overall, are not good enough to enable pupils to achieve higher standards than those expected. Strengths in the teaching include the variety of ways that teachers encourage pupils to learn. The very positive relationships between pupils and teachers give pupils confidence to ask and answer questions and their very good attitudes to learning compensates for the barely adequate time given to the subject in Years 7 and 8. The management of pupils is very good and lessons proceed according to plan and without disruption. However, not enough emphasis is given at the end of lessons on checking whether pupils' learning



has been good enough. Not enough use is made of computers to help pupils to learn. Pupils are rarely set tasks that demand the use of the Internet for research, particularly in Years 7 and 8, and very little work is word-processed. Higher attaining pupils, and pupils with special educational needs, achieve as well as other pupils because tasks are well matched to pupils' needs.

72. The management of the subject is ineffective in ensuring that the school's policy with regard to the marking and assessment of pupils' work is being applied in Years 7 and 8. The majority of pupils do not have their work marked regularly enough and because their work is not assessed, they have no idea how well they are doing and what they have to do to improve. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development and there are good links with local Christian clergy. However, there are no visits to Mosques or Temples. Relationships are good and teachers are good role models. Pupils are encouraged to relate their learning to everyday life, for example, when considering the notion of God as a parent, and their study of the Bible gives them good insights into aspects of morality, such as the consequences of breaking or keeping a promise. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

Art and design, design and technology and physical education were inspected in depth. Music was sampled. Three music lessons were observed. Pupils make good progress because lessons are challenging and good fun. Good relationships, good humour and the teacher's infectious enthusiasm for music keep pupils interested and enjoying the lessons. In each lesson there is a good variety of activities and pupils learn at a good pace. Every pupil is challenged to improve their performance at their own level, be it of a rhythm exercise at the start of the lesson or performance of a solo guitar piece in the middle of a whole class performance. All pupils have the opportunity to learn how to play a musical instrument and many of them take up this challenge and perform in a range of school bands or playing groups at different times of year. The lack of practice rooms limits the development of group compositions as part of lessons.

### **Art and design**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils make good progress as they move through the school.
- Pupils enjoy working with a wide variety of topics and a good range of media, though their compositional work is less well developed.
- Lessons are well prepared and teachers give good individual tuition.
- The use of ICT to support teaching and pupils' learning is rudimentary.
- The subject leader has limited opportunity to check on lessons and pupils' work on Years 5 and 6.

### **Summary of key inspection judgements**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Years 5 and 6</b>	<b>Years 7 and 8</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>Achievement:</b> whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Good	Good	Good

<b>Standards of work seen</b> in relation to national age-related expectations	Average	Above average	Above average
<b>Attitudes</b> of pupils to their work	Good	Good	Good
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	Good	Good	Good
<b>Quality of learning</b>	Good	Good	Good
Quality of curriculum leadership	Good		
Management of the department	Good		
Changes in effectiveness since the last inspection	Good		

## Commentary

73. By Year 6, standards for most pupils are average. Pupils have gained a good breadth of experience in art and design and are achieving well in relation to their starting point in Year 5 when pupils join the school with differing prior experiences. In Year 6, most pupils have improved their basic skills of drawing and painting in a variety of topics and with a range of media. In Year 8, standards are above average and pupils achieve well. In Years 7 and 8, high attaining pupils, mainly girls, work with great concentration and take pride in their work. All pupils achieve well with the technical aspects of using media and materials. They respond well to questioning about the different properties of a range of media. All pupils are confident in using the influences from the work of other artists as a way of producing their own individual pictures. The standard of research in sketch books is average. Lower attaining pupils do not control the manipulation of clay well, whilst the higher attaining pupils produce well-made pieces that express their ideas convincingly. The standard of observational drawing, especially of natural forms in Year 8, is above average. Most pupils achieve well because they have a positive attitude towards the subject and are well taught. Pupils with special educational needs, and those from a local special school, make good progress because of individual tuition and the expert support they receive from teachers and learning support assistants.
74. Teaching and learning are good in all years. Lessons are well prepared and lesson objectives clearly explained using appropriate illustrations and other resources. Pupils are told what it is they are to learn and so are purposeful and focused. There is an appropriate emphasis on learning how to apply different types of paint and which drawing materials are most suited to drawing different objects from observation. Pupils learn well when they have tuition from practising artists. They enjoy seeing how well they can do in making similar pictures. Projects include a wide variety of topics that are carried out in a range of sizes; pupils acquire good skills in small-scale printmaking and enlarging lettering. Teachers do not give enough emphasis to improving pupils' compositional skills. Good attention is paid to literacy and teachers take care to emphasise key technical words. Good assessment supports pupils' learning. Pupils receive regular written comments about their work that lead to the allocation of a National Curriculum level and give them an indication of what to improve. Pupils' progress is tracked and pupils have achievable targets. Teachers use this information well to ensure that pupils have tasks well matched to their needs. Pupils use ICT to investigate the background and influences from other artists but there are no opportunities for pupils to manipulate images electronically.
75. Leadership demonstrates a good role model for teaching and is well organised and enthusiastic. There is a clear commitment to improvement and a good team spirit has developed among teachers of art and design. Though checks on the teaching of art and design are carried out by the headteacher, there is little opportunity for subject

leader to observe lessons in Years 5 and 6 and consequently there is a less secure overview held of how well pupils are achieving in these years. Systems of assessment and the breadth of the curriculum are improving rapidly. Good displays in the art room, and around school, have an uplifting effect on the environment. Since the last inspection above average standards and good teaching have been maintained and improvements have been made to assessment and the curriculum.

## Design and technology

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good for all pupils as they progress through the school.
- Teaching methods match pupils' needs and capabilities well.
- Pupils enjoy the topics set and work hard.
- The use of ICT for teaching and learning is inadequate.

### Summary of key inspection judgements

Aspect	Years 5 and 6	Years 7 and 8	Overall
<b>Achievement:</b> whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Good	Good	Good
<b>Standards of work seen</b> in relation to national age-related expectations	Average	Above average	Above average
<b>Attitudes</b> of pupils to their work	Good	Good	Good
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	Good	Good	Good
<b>Quality of learning</b>	Good	Good	Good
Quality of curriculum leadership	Good		
Management of the department	Good		
Changes in effectiveness since the last inspection	Good		

### Commentary

76. A significant proportion of pupils join the school with a limited range of experiences of the design process. By Year 6 pupils are achieving well and reach average standards. In Year 6, most pupils have reasonable skills in analysing and evaluating the properties of existing products and subsequently are able to generate their own designs. In Years 7 and 8 standards are above average and pupils achieve well, especially the more able pupils, who are mainly girls. Standards are consistent across the three strands of the subject taught, food studies, resistant materials and textiles. Pupils generally have good skills in making products. Pupils' final evaluations at the end of projects are less strong, especially for those with weaker literacy skills. All pupils acquire heightened awareness of the health and safety issues involved in the subject. Most pupils achieve well because they enjoy the lessons and are well taught. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of individual tuition and the good quality support they receive from the teacher and learning support assistants. Good teamwork is evident when teaching assistants are in the classroom.
77. Lessons are well planned. Pupils are told what it is they are to learn and so are purposeful and focused. Projects include a wide variety of topics that interest all the pupils. Teachers pay good attention to improving pupils' numeracy and literacy skills.

This has a positive effect on pupils' overall development. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils. This leads to the vast majority achieving well. Strong relationships contribute to making learning enjoyable. Teachers check that pupils understand what they are doing. This reinforces learning well. ICT is used for teaching and learning but there is a shortage of opportunities for pupils to use equipment regularly for planning, design and making. This creates a barrier to raising standards. Assessment is good. Pupils' progress is monitored and recorded systematically during their four years in the school, though pupils do not all have a clear achievable target in Years 7 and 8. Homework supports classwork well.

78. Leadership provides a good role model for teaching. There is enthusiastic commitment to improving provision. All teachers appreciate the well-planned scheme of work that is used and which is under constant review. Though checks on teaching are carried out by the headteacher, subject management does not have a complete overview of standards and teaching throughout the school so weaknesses are not always spotted, supported, and improved. Good accommodation and interesting displays are strong factors that support learning well. Since the last inspection standards have improved and good teaching has been maintained; a broad curriculum has been developed and assessment is more rigorous.

## Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils reach above average standards in Year 6 and in Year 8 and their participation in a wide range of extra-curricular activities helps them to achieve well.
- Teachers' high expectations of pupils and very good relationships between teachers and pupils ensure that pupils work hard and enjoy lessons.
- Teachers' secure knowledge of the subject and well planned lessons ensure that pupils learn at a good rate.
- Pupils know what they need to do to improve but are not fully aware of how much progress they are making in relation to national expectations.
- Time for subject meetings is limited so new developments in teaching and learning are not always shared fully across the subject.
- Though digital photography is beginning to help pupils to analyse performance, ICT is not yet used extensively to support learning.

### Summary of key inspection judgements

Aspect	Years 5 and 6	Years 7 and 8	Overall
<b>Achievement:</b> whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Good	Good	Good
<b>Standards of work seen</b> in relation to national age-related expectations	Above average	Above average	Above average
<b>Attitudes</b> of pupils to their work	Very good	Very good	Very good
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	Good	Good	Good
<b>Quality of learning</b>	Good	Good	Good

<b>Quality of curriculum leadership</b>	Good
<b>Management of the department</b>	Good
<b>Changes in effectiveness since the last inspection</b>	Good

## Commentary

79. In Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of athletic event techniques, for example long jump, and they spot good and weak features in performance. They know how to warm up for activities and understand the effects of exercise on the body. In Year 8 girls have good batting and fielding skills in rounders. They know the rules well and place hits strategically. Boys play cricket to a high standard. Bowling technique is good and boys use a good range of batting strokes strategically to outwit the fielders. Across all year groups, pupils use technical language well to describe performance and suggest improvements. Girls and boys achieve equally well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because teachers recognise pupils' needs and make adjustments to tasks and activities to meet their needs. Pupils from the local special school enjoy lessons and make very good progress. Pupils identified as gifted and talented have good opportunities to succeed in extra-curricular activities and are encouraged to participate in local sports clubs. They are challenged to achieve well in lessons.
80. Teachers' secure knowledge of their subject enables them to give clear demonstrations and plan well structured lessons. Lessons include rigorous warm up activity, often led by pupils, and increasingly challenging activities so that pupils build confidence when tackling new skills and consolidating their performance. Pupils rise to meet teachers' high expectations of effort, improvement, good conduct and independent work. Boys in Year 8 worked without the direct intervention of the teacher in a cricket game, organising scoring, change-overs and setting the field efficiently. Teachers' very good relationships with pupils and their good humour help pupils to enjoy lessons. Teachers pay good attention to improving pupils' understanding of the effects of exercise on the body, posing frequent questions to check their knowledge and understanding. They help pupils to use technical language accurately and so pupils use correct terms when evaluating performance. Teachers use questioning well, often posing open questions that demand that pupils think out solutions to problems, or have to justify their answers as was seen in the evaluation of effective batting skills in a rounders lesson.
81. The small number of pupils not able to take a full active part in lessons is not always involved in learning as much as they could be. In some lessons pupils do not take on enough responsibility, for example, by planning and organising their own competitions. Teachers give useful guidance to individuals and whole class groups on what they do well and need to improve but pupils are not fully aware of the national criteria on which they are assessed or the next steps in learning across all parts of the National Curriculum. Teachers are just beginning to use ICT to support learning, for example through using digital images to analyse performance in athletics, but it is not yet used extensively.
82. Leadership sets a very good example to others and has been particularly supportive of teachers in Years 5 and 6 and newly qualified teachers. The school works well in partnership with the local schools sports co-ordinator, who provides support for teaching and opportunities to share good practice. An extensive programme of extra-curricular activities is provided by staff across the school and at least half of pupils

benefit. The subject is benefiting from initiatives to improve teaching across the school. However, time is limited for formal subject meetings so that some developments are not yet consistent across the subject, for example assessment. Since the previous inspection standards have remained above average and teaching is still good.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship was inspected in depth. Personal, social and health education was sampled and only one lesson could be observed during the inspection. In a Year 6 lesson in philosophy for children, pupils showed an above average competence for their age in their capacity to explore what makes for a really happy person. The lesson was confidently taught by the teacher, who ensured that all pupils were suitably involved in activities, which contributed well to the development of their thinking skills and capacity to cooperative effectively with each other.

### Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning about knowledge and understanding of citizenship are very good.
- Learning and other practical experiences in citizenship make a very strong contribution to pupils' personal development.
- The requirement to report pupils' achievements to parents has not yet been met.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning.
- Current procedures for recording and assessing pupils' achievements in practical citizenship activities are not rigorous enough.

### Summary of key inspection judgements

Aspect	Years 7 and 8 and overall
<b>Achievement:</b> whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Satisfactory
<b>Standards of work seen</b> in relation to national age-related expectations	Average
<b>Attitudes</b> of pupils to their work	Very good
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	Good
<b>Quality of learning</b>	Good
<b>Quality of curriculum leadership</b>	Satisfactory
<b>Management of the department</b>	Satisfactory
<b>Changes in effectiveness since the last inspection</b>	Not applicable

### Commentary

83. The statutory requirement to teach the National Curriculum for citizenship does not apply to Years 5 and 6 and so judgements are made on inspection evidence from Years 7 and 8. This indicates that, by Year 8 overall standards are in line with expectations for the age group. In relation to pupils' starting points at the beginning of Year 7, this represents satisfactory achievement.

84. The citizenship curriculum strand which deals with knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens is both well planned and taught so that most pupils reach above expected standards. For example, in the two lessons seen in Years 7 and 8, pupils made very good progress in understanding how the democratic process works in Britain. The teaching capitalised on pupils' interest in the recent general election by making very good use of the major party manifestos in order to allow pupils to investigate similarities and differences and use their knowledge and understanding to make well considered judgements on their own preferences. Lower attaining pupils do particularly well to reach expected standards, for example, in making even handed evaluations of the impact of council tax on different categories of citizens. Pupils' work is regularly marked and they are shown how to improve their work.
85. Standards reached in the subject's other two strands; the development of the skills of enquiry and communication and participation and responsible action, are more patchy. Knowledge and understanding of the working of the democratic process was effectively supported through pupils' recent participation in a 'mock' election, which also engaged them very well in appropriate research. Interest and involvement in these activities was very good. Year 7 pupils report that they enjoy group work and presentations in citizenship and find the subject interesting and useful. Pupils have also investigated ways in which they might bring about improvements to the quality of life in the local community. However, opportunities to communicate their knowledge about the outcomes of this and other investigations to others are restricted. The school provides numerous opportunities for pupils to experience taking responsible action. For example the well-managed School Council effectively and productively represents the views of pupils throughout the school. In addition, all Year Groups engage in charitable activity on behalf of deserving causes in the local community and beyond. These learning and other practical experiences contribute very well to pupils' personal development. However, it is not always made clear to pupils how their involvement in these activities contributes to their learning in citizenship.
86. Assessment procedures have been slow to develop and consequently the requirement to inform parents of pupils' achievements in citizenship has not yet been met. Procedures are now in place to assess pupils' work in knowledge and understanding of citizenship but more needs to be done to ensure that their achievements in other citizenship activities are recorded and assessed.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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