

INSPECTION REPORT

Westfield Community School

Yeovil

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123864

Headteacher: Marguerite Jackson

Lead inspector: Susan Chamberlain

Dates of inspection: 21st – 24th February 2005

Inspection number: 268513

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Comprehensive
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 11 to 16
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll; 1054

School address: Stiby Road
Yeovil
Somerset
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body
Name of chair of governors: Dr Allen Parrott

Date of previous inspection: 26th to 30th April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Westfield is a community school of average size with Specialist Science College status. It is a popular, over-subscribed school which has increased in size since the last inspection. It serves families from the western area of Yeovil and surrounding urban and rural areas. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs, including those with statements, is below average. Relatively few pupils join or leave the school during the year. The majority of pupils leaving the school other than at the usual time are moving out of the area. Relatively few pupils come from ethnic minorities and very few speak English as an additional language. Attainment on entry has been around or just below the national average. It is an inclusive school where the full ability range is represented. The socio-economic background from which the pupils are drawn varies widely. Although many pupils are from professional and educated families, there are also pupils from needy and educationally deprived backgrounds. The school has achieved a range of awards including Healthy School Award, Sportsmark and Investor in People.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
7661	Susan Chamberlain	Lead inspector	
9837	Roy Walsh	Lay inspector	
3731	Bill Robson	Team inspector	English, Drama
35075	Diane Savin	Team inspector	Mathematics
18453	Colin Lower	Team inspector	Science
34266	Gwen Hart	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
21954	Terry Chipp	Team inspector	Art and design
8503	Alfred Allfree	Team inspector	Design and technology
23324	Sylvia Greenland	Team inspector	Geography, special educational needs
12825	Niall Carr	Team inspector	History; work related learning
2928	Bill Baxendale	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
19613	Susan Thomas-Pounce	Team inspector	Music
15590	Susan Slocombe	Team inspector	Physical Education
12179	Laurence Moscrop	Team inspector	Religious Education, citizenship, English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very good** school with some **excellent** features. In nearly all aspects there is steady, consistent improvement; consequently examination results are rising. The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Excellent leadership and management ensure that the needs of the individual are taken very seriously and strategies are in place to ensure that all are unquestionably motivated to reach their potential. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Leadership by the headteacher and senior leadership group is inspired; leaders value all pupils equally and, as a result, pupils break through barriers that might otherwise have restricted them.
- The school promotes the sciences very well by giving pupils a strong scientific and technological foundation on which to build.
- GCSE results are above average and rising.
- Teaching is consistently good; it contributes significantly to the very good quality of education offered to pupils.
- The curriculum and its enrichment, including out of school activities, are very good; it is exceptionally innovative; the work related programme is excellent; links with other schools and colleges are excellent.
- Very good levels of care, support and guidance promote pupils' very good attitudes and relationships; links with parents and the community are very good.
- The profile of citizenship is too low and management roles in relationship to it are unclear.
- Numeracy across the curriculum is underdeveloped.

There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection. Massive improvement has occurred in ICT resources and their use and also in special educational needs. There have been many innovations which have improved work related courses. New teaching and learning styles have been identified and practised; consequently teaching and learning have improved, as have examination results. Leadership and management have improved. There have been gains in English in Years 7 to 9, modern foreign languages, music and drama. The support and guidance of pupils has also improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Examination results have been consistently good with the school achieving well above national averages in successive years. When taking account of work seen and examination results, standards are good overall. In Years 7 to 9, pupils' achievement, including that of those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and those who are gifted and talented, is good. It is very good in English, information and communication technology (ICT) and history, satisfactory in physical education and good in all other subjects. In Years 10 and 11, pupils' achievement is good overall. It is very good in drama, art, science, ICT and music and good in design and technology, modern foreign languages and physical education and satisfactory in other subjects. Standards in the work seen were as expected nationally in Years 7 to 9 and above expectation in Years 10 and 11. English language and literacy skills are good by the ends of Years 9 and 11. Competence in mathematics is in line with national expectations. In ICT it is above expectations in Years 7 to 9 and well above in Years 10 and 11.

Year 11 results

Performance in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
	B	C	B	B

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

Pupils' personal, qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good; however, their multi cultural awareness is underdeveloped. Pupils show very good attitudes to their learning. Their behaviour in lessons and around school is good overall. Attendance rates are satisfactory because the school is successful in promoting good attendance.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is **very good**. Teaching and learning are **good**; they are very good in Years 10 and 11. In over four fifths of lessons teaching was good or better. In approximately one twentieth of lessons, teaching was excellent. Unsatisfactory lessons are very rare. Learning is improved by the school's determination to understand the individual's preferred learning styles. Assessment is good overall and very good in many subjects, for example in information and communication technology. In most subjects, pupils know what they need to do to improve. The curriculum is very good with excellent work related aspects. Extra curricular provision is very good. Provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. There is a very good personal and social education programme. Support and guidance is also very good. Arrangements for involving pupils in the work of the school are very good. The school has established very good links with its parents, and with the community. Excellent links have been developed with other schools and colleges; consequently pupils' transfer between institutions is usually carefree.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership by the headteacher and senior leadership team is **excellent**. The headteacher has a clear vision of how the school will continue to improve. Management is very effective. Governance is very good. Leaders are innovative and realistic. All work at the frontline of education taking on board revolutionary new initiatives which are transforming the school. Some innovations are in the early stages of development but not neglected.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents think highly of the school. Some would like more communication with it but there is no evidence to suggest that they receive less than most schools. Pupils enjoy their time at Westfield; they are positive about their learning.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

Improve awareness of citizenship by:

- Raising the profile of citizenship in the school
- Clarifying management roles in relationship to the subject.

Improve numeracy across the curriculum by:

- Auditing present provision
- Creating a whole school policy
- Ensuring that teaching methods across the school are consistent.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement, including that of those who have special educational needs, that of those whose first language is not necessarily English and that of those who are gifted and talented is good in Years 7 to 11. Standards in the work seen were as expected nationally in Years 7 to 9 and above expectation in Years 10 and 11.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good.
- Standards seen in history and ICT are well above average throughout the school.
- GCSE results are above average for 5 A* to C and well above for 1 A* to G grades.
- Literacy skills have improved since the previous inspection.
- Many pupils with learning difficulties make sufficient progress to leave the care department.

Commentary

Key Stage 3

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	35.3(36.4)	[n/a].(33.4)
Mathematics	36.0(35.4)	[n/a].(35.4)
Science	33.6(34.8)	[n/a].(33.6)

1. In 2004, results in statutory tests were well above average in English and information and communication technology, above average in science and average in mathematics. When compared with pupils' previous attainment, they are well above in English, above average in science and in line with the average in mathematics. The trend over time is above average. In Years 7 to 9, achievement is good overall. It is very good in English where pupils express themselves confidently and write very well, in ICT where pupils co-operate well and in history where pupils show considerable improvement. Achievement is satisfactory in physical education and good in all other subjects. Standards in the work seen are well above expectations in history and ICT, above average expectations in English, mathematics, science and physical education and in line with expectations in other subjects.

Key Stage 4

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	[61].(53)	[52].(52)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	[95].(94)	[89].(88)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	[99].(98)	[96].(96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	[47.3].(44.6)	[41.4].(40.6)

There were 219 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. In 2004, GCSE results are above average for 5 A* to C grades and 5 A* to G grades and well above average for 1 A* to G, when compared with all schools and with schools of a similar context. The trend over time is broadly in line with the national trend. In Years 10 and 11, pupils' achievement is good overall. It is very good in drama where pupils self and peer evaluate well, in art where pupils produce high quality projects, in science where pupils gain higher than predicted grades, in ICT where pupils demonstrate the ability to work independently and in music where pupils are competent musicians. It is good in design and technology and modern foreign languages and physical education and satisfactory in other subjects. Standards in the work seen during the inspection are well above expectations in drama, science, history and ICT, above average in English, art, design and technology, music, modern foreign languages and physical education and in line with expectations in other subjects.

3. Pupils' standards of literacy on entry to the school are typical of those found nationally in most years. The school's efforts enable them to improve throughout Years 7 to 9 and most pupils are able to cope well with the reading and writing that they are asked to do in other subjects. Speaking and listening skills are generally good, but in English and geography discussions are often hampered by pupils' lack of concentration when listening. Pupils read and understand specialist vocabulary in a range of subjects. Their writing is imaginative and descriptive but in science, religious education and art, for example, some spelling is inaccurate. Competence in mathematics is in line with national expectations. The use of mathematics in other subjects is satisfactory but is held back by the lack of a whole school numeracy initiative. Pupils' numeracy skills meet the basic needs of other subjects. Competence in ICT is above expectations in Years 7 to 9 and well above in Years 10 and 11.

4. Achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good in the majority of subjects, where they progress at the same rate as their peers, due to the sensitive and well-informed way that their teachers provide for their needs. A significant proportion of pupils achieve well enough to leave the care of the department when they are reviewed as they move through the school. In 2004, 40 per cent of these pupils achieved one or more good GCSE grades. Two achieved five or more good grades.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils show very good attitudes to their learning. Their behaviour in lessons and around school is good overall. Attendance rates are satisfactory because the school is successful in promoting good attendance. Provision for personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good overall.

Main strengths and weakness

- Pupils' very good attitudes and enthusiasm for school have a positive effect on their learning.
- Pupils generally behave well because of good behaviour strategy, which is consistently promoted by all staff.
- Pupils' relationships and respect for school property are good.
- Multicultural activities are at present underdeveloped.

Commentary

5. Overall, pupils enjoy attending lessons at Westfield and have a keen desire to learn. This is mainly due to the high proportion of good teaching, which makes lessons interesting and stimulating. The majority of pupils are confident learners who cope well with independent study and most pupils complete their homework. Their responses in class are confident and generally good. Pupils enjoy the activities organised outside the normal run of lessons, which are very wide ranging. Pupils readily accept responsibility whenever it is offered and carry out the tasks allocated well, for example, as members of year group or school councils. Pupils are polite and relate well to each other, making break times pleasant and relaxed social occasions.

6. Behaviour in lessons and assemblies is good, and is satisfactory in the corridors and around the school. The school has recently implemented a positive behaviour policy, which has reduced the level of incidents of challenging behaviour. The policy is well understood both by pupils and staff, and consistent rewards and sanctions are now applied across the school. However, the pace of learning in a small number of lessons is slowed by low level disruption such as interrupting when teachers are talking. Some bullying has occurred at the school but pupils say staff deal with it very effectively when reported. Pupils treat school property very well and value their well-maintained environment.

7. Attendance has dropped slightly since the previous inspection, but was still above the national median in the last reporting year 2003/04. This has been caused by a rise in unauthorised absence. However the school has employed an attendance officer and is deploying strategies to combat the small number of disaffected pupils. Early indications show that the measures are proving successful. Unauthorised absence for the current academic year is falling, and is now only slightly above average. Registers are marked properly and monitored very thoroughly. Swift action is taken to contact parents if their child is not in school without good cause and pupils whose attendance is less than 85 per cent are identified and targeted for action. Rewards are offered for very high attendance and certificates are given to pupils who improve their attendance over time. Lateness is carefully monitored and nearly all pupils arrive at school on time.

8. Exclusions are dealt with fairly and the school is now implementing pastoral support plans for pupils who are at risk of exclusion.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.9	School data	1.7
National data	6.9	National data	1.1

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

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	942	50	4
White – Irish	1		
White – any other White background	5		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	7		
Mixed – White and Black African	1		
Mixed – White and Asian	4		
Mixed – any other mixed background	3		
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1		
Black or Black British – African	2		
Chinese	4		
No ethnic group recorded	75		

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

9. Spiritual development is good as a result of an enriched curriculum. Pupils' feelings of wonder and pride in achievement are evident in many areas of the curriculum: realising ideas in drama, dance or design technology and the warmth of teamwork in developing a school production are all examples of this. Very good teaching promotes creativity, imagination and an interest in working with new ideas. Moral development is good. School rules and values create a basis for pupils to distinguish right from wrong. The school sets many good examples to encourage caring, reliable, courteous and responsible young people. Most pupils exhibit these qualities in their relationships and in respect for others and for property. Social development is also good. The school is successful in fostering an interest and commitment both in extra curricular activities that the school provides, and also in the wider community through such activities as Duke of Edinburgh Awards. Cultural development is mainly very good, with pupils taking part in drama productions, music festivals and visits to galleries. However, pupils' awareness of multicultural issues is as yet underdeveloped.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching and learning are good; most lessons are good or better. Assessment is good. The quality of the curriculum is very good as are enrichment activities. There is a very good personal and social education programme. Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety are very good. Links with parents are very good.

Teaching and learning; assessment

Teaching and learning are **good** as is assessment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good in Years 10 and 11.
- Teachers are very good at using a variety of strategies to address pupils' preferred learning styles
- Learning is enhanced by the use of a wide range of resources, for example, the large number of interactive whiteboards
- Teachers have a secure knowledge of their subjects, advanced skills teachers enhance the learning of the most and least able pupils
- On occasions teachers talk too much; group work, although generally effective, occasionally gives pupils opportunities to lose concentration
- Assessment is well developed in most subjects but in a small number of areas marking is insufficiently rigorous.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 131 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
[7] (5 %)	[47] (36 %)	[58](45 %)	[17](13 %)	[2](1 %)	[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.

10. The consistency with which teachers ensure lessons are at least good ensures that pupils receive an overall very good quality of education. Teaching in the school is poised on a springboard; it is ready to leap forward in terms of quality. The foundations, which include a focus on the identification of the learning styles of the individual, have been laid. The benefits of these have yet to be fully manifested; they are most evident in Years 10 and 11. Excellent lessons occurred in German, mathematics, science, art and careers. Very few lessons were unsatisfactory.

11. Teachers use a wide range of resources. A large number of interactive whiteboards is used very effectively; in some lessons all pupils use hand held whiteboards that help their engagement. Pupils make good use of the library and the internet to research topics. The use of screen clips enhances visual learning.

12. Pupils experienced a very effective Super Learning Day where they were helped to identify their preferred learning styles. Lessons take account of these different learning styles, for example, in mathematics a teacher used a DVD clip as a visual representation of ratio. Some pupils elect to use mind maps. Touching shapes and matching cards gives pupils who prefer kinaesthetic approaches good opportunities to learn. Pupils are encouraged to listen carefully and to imagine various scenarios. They work in pairs, for example, where they discuss texts and analyse situations. They share reading of class texts. On occasions, pupils work independently both with short sharp internet search tasks and GCSE coursework. Occasionally group activities give pupils opportunities to shirk their learning responsibility. Whole class activities often involve good teacher led discussion and teacher exposition. Sometimes there is too much teacher talk.

13. Teachers use a three part lesson well. They define the learning styles being employed at a particular juncture. They often have a visual starter as, for example, in geography when pupils were asked to identify famous Italians. Oral plenaries such as quizzes not only consolidate learning but give pupils a boost before they leave class. There is not always sufficient guided discussion and debate. There is good emphasis on self evaluation and peer evaluation to develop performance skills; this is particularly notable in drama. In ICT, pupils have electronic guidance to enable them to improve and verbal feedback is targeted towards improvement and their next step.

14. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of their subjects and are able to motivate pupils well. Advanced skills teaching improves the experience of the most able pupils by involving them in exciting projects on topics such as genetic engineering and involvement in a science challenge day; such teaching also helps the less able by offering them a specific summer

school covering topics like a Voyage to Sedno (a new planet). Links with other schools in the federation are also arranged by advanced skills teachers, enhancing learning opportunities for less able pupils across Yeovil.

15. In mainstream lessons pupils with special educational needs are well taught. Teaching staff know all pupils well and are well aware of their needs, which are appropriately provided for either through special support or individualised work. In special small group lessons to boost literacy and other skills most of the teaching is well planned and effective, though on occasions slow pacing led to pupils not being sufficiently well motivated to do their best work.

16. Overall assessment is good; it is very good in geography, history, ICT and design and technology. It is used very well to inform lesson planning and enables pupils to understand what they need to do to improve. Marking is, overall, effective and useful. However, in mathematics and religious education books are not marked sufficiently. This could cause problems when pupils revise for examinations at a later date. Assessment for learning is a whole school initiative; its development is clearly defined in the school development plan. The implementation of a very strong programme is well developed. All subject areas are gradually identifying good practice and bringing their procedures in line with those expected.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very good overall. Extra curricular provision is very good. Accommodation is satisfactory. The school has good resources.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- An excellent range of courses meets the needs of pupils of different abilities and aptitudes.
- Excellent initiatives and reviews keep the curriculum up to date and relevant to pupils' needs.
- The science designation for the school has had a very positive impact on curriculum development.
- Accommodation in some of the older temporary classrooms is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

17. The curriculum meets statutory requirements.

18. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection. Lessons are longer and time has been allowed for movement between lessons. Access to ICT has improved with three main computer suites and smaller ones in the library, music and art though this is still not sufficient to meet the needs of all subjects.

19. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is good. A co-ordinator has been appointed, supported by a working group of teachers, to explore ways of extending provision for these pupils. Very high ability pupils are identified through assessment data. Departments are identifying those with talents for a particular subject though this is still in the early stages and has not yet made a significant impact. Fast track examination courses and a summer school for gifted and talented pupils are in place.

20. The schools' specialist science designation has had a very positive impact on the curriculum as a whole. The increased funding has benefited all subject departments through the increased provision of ICT and other specialist equipment such as theatre lighting, music technology and pulse monitors for physical education. Science days are organised to explore aspects of science through activities in subjects across the curriculum.

21. The school offers a very wide range of examination options to meet the abilities and aptitudes of all pupils. Science courses are available from GNVQ foundation level up to a triple award for the very able pupils. Vocational GCSEs in applied science, art and ICT have been

successfully introduced. Strong links with Yeovil College broaden the range further with a selection of GNVQ and NVQ courses.

22. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is very good. In Years 7 to 9 PSHE is taught by form tutors who work in teams to develop units of the course. In Years 10 and 11 it is taught through careers and religious studies with specific units on sex and drugs education being taught in science lessons. Very thorough review and evaluation systems inform the planning for the following year.

23. Pupils are being helped to make an effective transition to the workplace through the excellent provision for work related learning. Pupils are being given the skills, qualities and attitudes needed for adult life. The leadership and management, planning, monitoring and progress are dynamic. All pupils are placed on a work experience programme with some extended placements for pupils on NVQ courses.

24. Extra curricular provision is excellent. Creative arts, physical education and science provide a particularly wide range of opportunities. The school provides a free out-of-hours bus for pupils in outlying villages since changes to the school day have led to most clubs and activities being held after school. Out of school visits are organised in term activity weeks to minimise disruption at other times. Summer school courses are held for mathematics and science.

25. The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs encompasses many strands, actively responding to all who need help and support, not only those on the Code of Practice list. A team of dedicated teaching assistants provides well-focussed support in subject lessons, though there are never enough of them to go around. Subject teachers also provide good support because they are familiar with the needs of the pupils and tailor their lessons to ensure that as much as possible is achieved. In addition, small groups are withdrawn from lessons for a time to concentrate on literacy and numeracy improvement. A homework club, a handwriting group and paired reading with mentors, are some of the ways in which support is offered. A disability access audit has been carried out in accordance with requirements and a plan is in place. The "base" room provides security and access to dedicated computers, but it is relatively small.

26. The match of teaching and non-teaching staff to the demands of the curriculum is very good. Teaching staff are well qualified and teach mainly within their specialisms.

27. Accommodation is satisfactory. The school comprises a mix of buildings situated over a large site, which is split into upper and lower school areas. The environment is very well maintained; there is a lack of litter and graffiti. A rolling refurbishment programme is ongoing and well-established plans for the replacement of the unsatisfactory temporary buildings are in place. The new buildings will provide a modern library, a student support area, additional classrooms and laboratories, enabling the school to move forward as a "centre of excellence" in science education. They will allow current community facilities to be enhanced.

28. The school has good resources which enable pupils to achieve well. Issues from the previous inspection have been addressed. All subject areas now have the books, materials, tools and equipment they need to deliver the courses on offer. There is some shortage of day to day consumables in Art. Some history texts are out of date. In one ICT room, occasionally, pupils have to share computers. Many classrooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards which enhance teaching and learning. Some teachers would be able to plan more effectively if they also had laptop computers. The school library is under resourced and under-used. There is no programme to introduce pupils to the library. Its use as a careers teaching room can sometimes limit whole class access.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. Support and guidance is also very good. Arrangements for involving pupils in the work of the school are very good.

Main Strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very well cared for.
- A very effective pastoral support system is in operation.
- Pupils' views are taken seriously by the school, and the school has a very effective school council.
- Very good arrangements exist to help pupils settle into the school, and inform them about the next steps in their education or chosen careers.

Commentary

29. The school takes very good care of its pupils. Arrangements for child protection are secure with two members of staff having designated responsibility for the lower and upper schools. Both have received training and have provided awareness and updates to staff. Detailed health and safety procedures and risk assessments are in place and lessons such as science and food technology contain health and safety briefings for pupils. A well-maintained system for Internet security includes filters and high levels of supervision to prevent pupils viewing unsuitable websites.

30. The pastoral care system operates very effectively and provides very good levels of support and guidance. Information about pupils' performance is used to set targets early in the academic year. As the year progresses, these are regularly monitored and advice and guidance offered if necessary. Overall, pupils find staff approachable, and are confident to discuss any problems or concerns with them. Well-trained peer mentors and tutors support younger pupils who feel they do not want to involve adults in their problems. Additional support is also targeted at pupils requiring extra help to boost their confidence and self-esteem. There is a specially trained teaching assistant who looks after the small number of disaffected pupils, providing them with individual support plans. This activity has been very successful and is to be extended to those whose behaviour may lead to exclusion. She maintains very close links with associated outside agencies. Very good arrangements are in place for the induction of pupils into Year 7, and for pupils moving from the lower to the upper school at Year 9. Pupils across the school comment very favourably about their induction period. They know the layout of the school from previous visits in Year 6 and normally have met their tutor.

31. Arrangements for seeking pupils' views and acting on them are very good. The school listens to pupils' views, and also seeks their opinions through questionnaires, for example, to help decide upon significant changes to the school uniform and the effectiveness of the assessment system. Year group councils have been established and feed information to the whole school council. Recently the school council has provided input into issues such as the anti-bullying policy, and also the provision of individual lockers for pupils. One member of the council attends the local youth parliament and provides feedback to the school.

32. Careers education is fully established across the school and is taught as discrete units within the curriculum for personal, social and health education. Work experience is well organised and all pupils in Year 11 have an opportunity for a two-week work placement in the autumn term. Pupils have good access to careers' advice and to pastoral support from the Connexions service, which helps them make fair and impartial decisions about their future.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established very good links with its parents, and with the community. Excellent links have been developed with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents receive very good quality information about pupils' progress and aspects of school life.
- The school has established excellent links with other schools and colleges so that pupils' transfers are very effective.

- A very good association with the community enhances the curriculum.

Commentary

33. The school provides a good range of high quality information, which keeps parents informed about their children's progress and other aspects of school life. Meetings for parents, and annual reports give a good indication of how pupils are doing in each subject studied, and the great majority of parents are satisfied with these arrangements. A small number of parents feel insufficiently informed about how their children are getting on. However, inspection found no evidence to support these views. The prospectus and governors' annual report are well written and informative documents which fully meet requirements. Parents are well informed about the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and are fully involved in the procedures for reviewing statements of special needs. A range of useful courses, workshops and curriculum evenings are held throughout the year to inform parents and include such topics as pupil progress, revision skills, and positive parenting. The School Association organises both social and fund-raising events, although these are not always as well supported by parents as the school would wish. However, overall, parents' involvement in their children's learning is satisfactory.

34. Links with other schools and colleges are excellent. The relationship with local primary schools through Westfield's specialist science status is improving the profile of science and mathematics strengthening links in these subjects. The sharing of good quality information about primary pupils' learning and progress in all subjects enhances provision for these younger pupils when they join Westfield. Links with associated secondary schools ensure pupils are able to access a large number of vocational courses, which helps ensure many pupils are able to fulfil their potential. Very good links exist with Yeovil College in terms of curriculum, which helps pupils to make considered decisions about the next steps in their education after they leave Westfield. The school is also very good at giving effective support for newly qualified teachers and initial teacher training students and good relationships are forged with other teacher training institutions. This helps with recruitment.

35. The school has very good links with the community. Local companies and businesses contribute to work-related learning by providing many opportunities for pupil work experience, and also in the provision of learning mentors. A wide range of community activities takes place in the school, which benefits both the community and the pupil population.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall evaluation

Leadership by the headteacher and senior leadership team is excellent. Management is very effective. Governance is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leaders are innovative, realistic and generally working at the forefront of education.
- Some innovations are in the early stages of development but not neglected.
- Inclusion is very strong.
- Governors are a very strong supportive group who come from wide ranging backgrounds.
- The system for performance management is excellent.
- Approaches to financial management are very good.
- The school development plan is a very good detailed document.

Commentary

36. Leadership by the headteacher and Senior Leadership group is excellent. Leadership in science is excellent. All work at the frontline of education, taking on board revolutionary new initiatives which are transforming learning in the school. Some new developments are in the early stages of development but managers ensure that a steady implementation of these continues and that they are not neglected. Management is very effective. Middle managers are at least good across all subject areas. Consequently the school runs smoothly and a high standard of education is maintained.

37. Leaders and managers are very keen to ensure all pupils are included. The low level of exclusions proves that considerable effort is put into ensuring all pupils' needs are met. Some irritating behaviour found around school is low level compared with the potential disruption certain pupils could have caused if their behaviour had remained as it was when they entered the school. The concentration on the needs of the individual ensures that everyone is catered for at an appropriate level and frustration is minimal.

38. Governors are very good. They come from a range of useful backgrounds; they are loyal, supportive and intelligent. They come into school regularly, attend governor training sessions, have a strong committee structure and are self evaluative. The strong nucleus has recently been joined by some enthusiastic newcomers.

39. The school development plan is a useful and appropriate document. It is detailed and costed. It enables all to refer to the school's priorities and targets. All have a part to play in its production.

40. An excellent system of performance management is in place. It is very well led and managed. Targets are in place for all staff; the process is rigorously reviewed at the end of each cycle. The provision of whole school training for staff is excellent and both performance management and professional development are linked to the training requirements identified in the whole school development plan. The opportunities available for specific subject professional development are very good with only a few limitations. New staff are prepared well for their roles by effective mentoring and support. The arrangements for initial teacher training are effective in many subjects and mentors support trainees very well. Arrangements for managing the workload of staff are innovative and effective; as a result morale is high.

41. Financial control is very good. Strong systems are in place. The school's excellent leadership, very good curriculum, good teaching and very good pupils' attitudes combined with a relatively modest income per pupil ensures that the school provides very good value for money.

42. The many strands of the special needs department are very well managed. All reviews and referrals are properly carried out and documented and the progress of all pupils on the list is individually tracked through regular assessment. Teaching and support staff are well informed and have the opportunity to improve their qualifications. The department is so well led that it continued to function efficiently during the inspection week even though the co-ordinator was absent due to an accident.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	3,560,873	Balance from previous year	-45,415
Total expenditure	3,530,384	Balance carried forward to the next	-14,926
Expenditure per pupil	3,352.69		

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

Work related learning

Provision for work related learning is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is an excellent programme of off site learning.
- Specialist careers education programme is of a very high quality.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about their vocational experiences.
- There is well organised work experience for all Year 11.
- There are excellent relationships with the Yeovil Federation agencies developing cross-curricular work related links.

Commentary

43. The overall quality of provision for work related learning is excellent. It is well planned and organised in association with many outside agencies in the Yeovil community. The school coordinator for work related learning is very effective. Pupils are helped to develop lively and enquiring minds, take an interest in business, showing a willingness to explore new ideas, communicate effectively and demonstrate good organisational skills. There is a significant contribution in and out of school to pupils learning about work by their gaining a broad understanding of business and by studying selected areas in depth. The school plans for pupils to apply learning in a practical and realistic way and for the furtherance of key skills. Pupils are gaining in confidence through developed independent learning skills. This provision is effective and matched to pupils' needs through work experience in Year 10, work placed learning in Year 11 and through Young Enterprise. The Connexions programme is helping pupils to enter employment or higher education. The school is a lead member of the Yeovil Federation. A successful programme of college linked courses of Applied Business, Health and Social Care and Leisure and Tourism helps pupils to choose a career. Teachers are supportive and guide pupils to plan their work thoroughly. They regularly monitor progress. The work related learning programme is also developing the concept of 'citizenship'. The nature of the work is encouraging pupils to play a more active role in their community. Careers education is an essential part of the school curriculum and it is preparing pupils for living and working in an adult world.

44. Pupils who do not prefer conventional academic study benefit from the work related programme. There is a work experience coordinator who has developed excellent links in and around Yeovil. Pupils value this experience highly. The quality of placements is very good. Pupils are writing good reports, they gain confidence and they learn about the main business issues which confront society such as unemployment, free markets and economic growth. Pupils are very aware of the changes taking place in Somerset. The emphasis is on practical learning. There are additional work placements for vocational courses. The specialist teaching of careers in Years 9 to 11 consists of a one hour timetabled lesson in Years 10 and 11 and it is supported by a Years 7 to 9 tutorial programme. This provides excellent support to all pupils as do the community projects and the Somerset Firebreak scheme. A non-examination Child Development course is making an important contribution to helping a number of girls make an effective transition from the school to adulthood and employment.

Community provision

45. The school has far ranging links with the neighbouring community and has now appointed a business link co-ordinator and a community links panel. The connections make a notable contribution to pupils' personal growth and the standards they attain. There are numerous well developed links with local businesses and organisations, which enrich the curriculum, especially in art, design and technology and science, which held a science day supported by fourteen business partners. In addition to the programme of work experience for Year 11 pupils.

46. An established mentoring scheme supported by local business personnel has been further developed by an innovative e-mentoring scheme with Exeter University. Young Enterprise groups encouraged by local business have won awards for the last four years. Working with adult learning and leisure, the school has been successful in recruiting adults back into education. The establishment of a Federation and appointment of a Director have resulted in a co-ordinated approach to education services, which aims to develop collaboration and extend provision across the town. The action safety panel has a multi-agency approach and the Director promotes the school within the community and identifies how the school can help the community.

47. Augusta Westland continues to help the school in many ways, for example sponsorship, work experience and design technology projects,. There are close associations with many other companies and organisations and Yeovil College. There is a comprehensive community education programme at the school. Numerous local organizations rent the school's facilities for running short courses such as First Aid and Food Hygiene and for sport and leisure.

48. Pupils also contribute effectively to their local community by helping with education activities at the school and, by community work as part of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. Recently the choir performed to help raise funds to repair the roof of the local church.

49. The last inspection commented on good links with parents and the community. These have been developed and expanded and are a strength of the school.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4.

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well overall; they achieve very well in Years 7 to 9.
- Teachers use a very good variety of teaching methods that enable pupils to learn well.
- Levels of concentration could be improved in some lessons.
- The department is very well led and teachers work very well as a team.

Commentary

50. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Results in National Curriculum tests have greatly improved and above average standards have been maintained in GCSE examinations.

51. Results in National Curriculum tests in 2003 were well above the national average and much better than results in similar schools. These standards were maintained in 2004. Current standards in Year 9 are above nationally expected levels. Pupils express their ideas confidently but rarely at length in class discussions. When they do, other pupils' listening skills are satisfactory overall, but a few do not listen attentively enough to the teacher or each other. Pupils' writing is very good. Nearly all can write imaginative, descriptive poetry and prose. Higher attaining pupils show an excellent command of a range of writing styles. Teachers' emphasis on the quality of descriptive writing also results in pupils developing a very good understanding of how writers use language for effect. Some pupils read quite widely and use the English department's reading room to extend their interest in books, but the development of reading for pleasure is hampered by the lack of easy access to the library in the upper school.

52. GCSE results in English and English literature in 2004 were above the national average and in line with results in similar schools. Current standards are also above those expected nationally. Pupils speak confidently, although their opportunities to contribute at length to class discussions can be limited by the comparatively poor listening skills of a minority. Most have a very good awareness of the techniques used by poets and can point out their effect on the reader with good insight. Pupils' original writing is very creative and imaginative. High attaining pupils produce lengthy, well-structured essays. However, average and lower attaining pupils tend not to write at sufficient length to show their full understanding of coursework questions.

53. Pupils achieve well overall. Progress in lessons is good in all years, but over time, achievement is better in Years 7 to 9 than in Years 10 and 11. Very effective extra support for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, through the teaching of literacy progress units and booster classes in Years 7 to 9, helps many to achieve higher levels. By comparison, some pupils are slow to complete GCSE coursework and this limits the time available for examination revision. Girls do better than boys in all years, but the difference between boys and girls is less than that found nationally.

54. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers use a very good variety of activities to involve pupils and help them to develop a personal response to texts. They prepare a wide range of resources that enable pupils with different levels of attainment to learn well. However, teachers do not always insist enough on pupils listening, or concentrating when they are working in small groups. This and a lack of consistent homework mean that a few pupils do not take enough

responsibility for their own learning. Teachers mark work regularly and make positive comments that help pupils to understand their own learning, although pupils would also benefit from clearer identification of how they can improve. At the start of lessons, teachers explain the purpose of the work clearly, but do not always ask pupils to record this in their exercise books or help them to evaluate how well they have achieved at the end of the lesson.

55. The department is very well led. The head of department is well aware of strengths and areas for development in the subject. He encourages and enables very good teamwork and teachers have worked especially hard recently to cover for unavoidable staff absences. Management is good and is improving now that staffing is more stable, allowing more delegation of responsibilities and consequently improved work loads for staff.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. Teachers help pupils to develop their language and literacy skills well in most subjects. Literacy progress units are very well taught to enable pupils with weaker literacy skills to make very good progress. All teachers emphasise the importance of subject-specific vocabulary, displaying and referring to key words in classrooms. They provide good opportunities for pupils to participate in discussions, although they do not always insist enough on the equal importance of listening. Support for the development of pupils' writing skills is inconsistent. In geography, science and design and technology, for example, teachers help pupils to structure their writing effectively, but in religious education there is little support for pupils' extended writing. In several subjects, incorrect spellings are not marked so pupils do not learn from their mistakes. This lack of consistency results in part from the lack of a school literacy policy. The present literacy coordinator does not have sufficient time to monitor the effectiveness of provision so it is unclear how well some departments are doing.

Modern Foreign languages

Provision in French and German, is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in German and achievement in French is improving
- Very good assessment raises standards; pupils know how to do well
- The department has first-rate ways of looking at and criticising its own performance
- Leadership and management are very good
- ICT is under-used and unsatisfactory accommodation hinders learning

Commentary

57. Pupils achieve very well by the end of Year 9 in German and well in French. The same pattern continues in Years 10 and 11, where, however, achievement in French is catching up because of good teaching that gives pupils similar experiences in the two languages. Standards seen during the inspection suggest that the well above average results in GCSE German and the now above average ones in French are likely at least to continue. Girls do better than boys, but boys' standards are way above those of boys nationally, as are girls'. In school, girls do better in languages than in other subjects. Boys do about the same as they do in other subjects, which, in both cases, is commendable. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve well in Years 7 to 9, but discontinue languages study thereafter.

58. A scrutiny of written work shows good progress, which is the result of the good teaching. Writing in French and in German helps pupils' literacy well: they become aware of structure, spelling, tenses and the need for accuracy. By Year 8 higher attainers can use relevant tenses to make writing interesting and by Year 9 these pupils' very readable work is often of good length. Most of the lower attainers try, but the work is often very rudimentary in content and quality. Good progress is seen through continuing accuracy and sophistication in writing in Years 10 and 11. The

work shows that pupils are also given insights into relevant aspects of citizenship and of French and German culture. Carefully nurtured, well-marked scripts reach standards that equate with high grades, A/A*, in GCSE.

59. Standards in class match the written work; they are generally above average in listening, speaking, reading and writing, with good achievement by the ends of Years 9 and 11 in both languages.

60. In Years 10 and 11, cohesion characterises the good quality of teaching and learning. It is found in first-rate preparation and sharing of stimulating learning materials; in lessons that all have inter-related stages, taking careful heed of the different ways pupils learn and in how teachers negotiate work with pupils. Good, active learning, which gets the pupils on their feet, helps them to learn well. Similarly, very good, helpful assessment procedures and searching self-criticism by teachers and pupils raise standards and give each confidence in what they are doing. In a Year 11 German class, for example, the teacher successfully got the pupils to mark their own and others' work against examination criteria to help them get inside the examiner's head and to see how to score well. Learning is better in Years 10 and 11 because all the pupils have selected languages and see the possibilities they bring.

61. In Years 7 to 9 teaching sometimes gets the balance between passive, simple listening exercises and active oral work, wrong. As a result, some pupils' learning is frail; inability to express ideas ensues, mainly among those in Year 9 who have been guided to select other courses. More frequently, lessons make great demands on pupils and the best teaching is not restricted to the higher years. Rapid pace, high expectations, enthusiastic encouragement, target setting and analysis of strengths and weakness are more or less the norm. In the best cases the rate of learning and the well above average standards pupils reach are remarkable. In an excellent Year 8 German lesson, engrossed pupils built up their ability to talk engagingly about their own and others' likes and dislikes, enquiring of their peers, searching for clues and then racing against the clock to say as much as they could without repetition; the results were outstanding.

62. The department is very well led and managed; it questions its own performance and the action taken to improve, not least through the use of the national framework for languages training materials, is excellent. The quality of teamwork is very good; all teachers contribute to devising stimulating materials and benefit from sharing and evaluating their effects on the pupils' already good learning. The main barrier to learning is unsatisfactory accommodation in huts or unsuitable practical rooms that preclude the full use of ICT and are inflexible. Improvements since the previous inspection are very good; standards have risen and identified weaknesses resolved.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are in line with national averages and rising.
- Achievement is good overall from a starting point that has generally been below average.
- Teaching is good and often very good.
- The department is well resourced. Staff are experienced subject specialists.
- Marking is inconsistent in regularity and quality.
- There is a need for more systematic monitoring of teaching and standards.

Commentary

63. The standards achieved in 2004, in statutory tests at the end of Year 9 and in GCSE mathematics at the end of Year 11, are in line with national averages. The standard of work seen during the inspection was broadly average; it was higher in Years 7 to 9, especially in Years 7 and 8 where more able groups are being accelerated. Standards are improving especially at GCSE. The rate of improvement in the standards at GCSE of girls has been faster than that for boys so that girls now reach standards significantly higher than girls nationally. Nevertheless, pupils continue to perform less well in mathematics examinations than they do in other subjects. There was no significant difference in the standards of boys' and girls' work seen. Some pupils who performed well in the examinations failed to achieve a C grade because of unsatisfactory coursework. Pupils who appear very able when working at number, shape and space and data handling have weaker algebra skills; as a result fewer pupils than would be expected achieve levels 7 and 8 at the end of Year 9 or A/A* grades at the end of Year 11.

64. Achievement is good overall. In recent years pupils have joined the school in Year 7 with below average standards. By Year 9, however, standards are in line with national averages; this represents good achievement during Years 7 to 9. In 2002, standards at the end of Year 9 were in line with national averages as were standards at the end of Year 11 in 2004; this represents satisfactory achievement during Years 10 and 11. Pupils with Special Educational Needs make progress at least as good as other pupils.

65. Teaching and learning are good resulting in good learning and achievement. Teaching is often very good. Two excellent lessons were seen in which peer mentors are successfully used with all parties involved benefiting from increased confidence and oral literacy. All teachers are well qualified to teach mathematics. There are two Advanced Skills Teachers who have made significant contributions to improvements in teaching and learning. Teachers collaborate well to create well planned and often stimulating lessons. They employ a wide range of teaching and learning styles tuned to pupils' needs. Teachers establish a good climate for learning through the development of very positive relationships with their pupils. There is a consistent structure to lessons creating a secure learning environment. The emphasis on oral and practical work in lessons enables pupils with weaker literacy skills to achieve well in mathematics. Pupils are interested in lessons and behave well; they feel that teachers support them very well. Homework is set regularly. It usually takes the form of exercises to consolidate learning. Where teaching is very good, homework is used effectively to develop independent learning.

66. All teachers use ICT in the form of interactive whiteboards to enhance teaching and learning using high quality visual images, video clips, and other on line resources. In the best lessons, pupils use the board confidently for kinaesthetic learning and when presenting their work to the rest of the class. Spreadsheets are used in mathematics GCSE coursework.

67. Assessment is satisfactory overall but in some classes books go unmarked for long periods with incorrect work left uncorrected. There is insufficient guidance to pupils showing what they need to do to improve. End of unit assessments, related to national standards are used effectively to adjust provision. ICT is beginning to be used to track pupils' progress. Where teaching is very good, informal assessment of pupils' responses to high quality questioning is used to adjust planning.

68. Leadership and management are good. Since his appointment, the head of department has led the department through a period of rapid change, which is already resulting in improved standards. Senior management has reviewed departmental performance but there is insufficient monitoring of teaching and standards of work within the department.

69. Overall progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory. In recent years, the department has experienced persistent staffing difficulties during which time standards declined. The department is now benefiting from good leadership. It is fully staffed with enthusiastic and specialist teachers. As a result, pupils are making good progress. Standards are improving but they have not yet returned to the levels seen at the previous inspection. All the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been addressed.

Mathematics across the curriculum

70. There is no whole school policy or supported departmental policies to ensure that this provision contributes to all subjects and that all subjects take responsibility for raising numeracy standards. Consequently standards are only average. Good practice of linking the curriculum was seen in a Year 7 science lesson when pupils who had been studying ratio and proportion in their mathematics lessons had the opportunity to apply their skills to solving problems relating to cogs and wheels.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent leadership provides very clear direction for sustaining and raising standards.
- Very good management ensures that pupils are given every opportunity to achieve.
- Teaching is very good and pupils achieve very well.
- Curricular opportunities for pupils are excellent and a rich programme of experiences complements normal lessons.
- Pupils do not always know what they need to do to improve.

Commentary

71. The 2004 national test results for Year 9 were above national standards. They were in line with those for similar schools base upon attainment levels on entry to the school. The results were below those for English but similar to those for mathematics. Results have been above average for the last three years and have shown a slight decline. This decline is consistent with the changing standards on entry into Year 7. The results show little difference between boys and girls. Results for the 2004 GCSE examinations were well above average. Pupils performed better in science than in most subjects and girls did better than boys overall. The results have been similar for the last three years.

72. The standards of work seen in Years 7 to 9 were above average. Upper set Year 9 pupils are able to construct models of hydrocarbon molecules and use these to illustrate processes used in the plastics and refining industries. The standards of work seen in Years 10 and 11 were well above average. Upper set Year 11 pupils were able to describe eutrophication and plan well for sustainability in forestry, fishing, and agriculture.

73. Achievement is good in Years 7 to 9. By the end of Year 9 pupils obtain higher grades in the national tests than those predicted based upon their attainment levels on entry to Year 7. Achievement is very good in Years 10 and 11. Pupils obtain far higher grades than those predicted from their national test results in Year 9. These levels of achievement are enjoyed by all pupils including those with special educational needs and those with gifts and talents.

74. The teaching is very good and, as a result, pupils achieve very well. Nearly all the teaching seen was good or better and more than half was very good or better. An example of excellent teaching was seen. Teaching is characterised by very high expectations for learning and behaviour. Lessons are very well planned and include a variety of 'hands-on' activities that match pupils' different learning styles. Teachers' use of ICT is very good. As a result, pupils are motivated, behave well and enjoy science. A minority of pupils attempt to disrupt lessons but are dealt with effectively by their teachers. Although pupils know their target levels and grades, they do not always know what to do to improve. Since the last inspection teaching and learning have improved.

75. Excellent leadership and very good management have contributed well to pupils' learning. Thorough evaluation and forward planning has resulted in innovative action particularly in curricular

provision. An excellent range of curricular opportunities is in place to meet the needs of all pupils and a wide range of extra activities and support is provided outside normal teaching time. After school lessons are provided for high attaining pupils who wish to take all three sciences as separate subjects. The Science College aims of the school are very well supported by the department. The department takes a leading role in raising achievement and promoting a scientific culture both within school and beyond. The curriculum has been extended since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **very good**

- The quality of teaching is very good
- Monitoring and assessment of pupils in Years 9 to 11 taking the GCSE courses is very good
- The provision of GCSE courses for all pupils in Years 9 to 11 is very good
- Standards in Year 9 are above national expectations
- There needs to be increased access to ICT equipment for other departments

Commentary

76. The standards achieved in 2004 in Year 9 exceed national expectations. Attainment in Year 11 in 2004 was just below national expectations. However, two Vocational GCSE candidates were identified as amongst the 'top ten' candidates in the country. Also the standard seen in lessons in both the short course GCSE and Applied GCSE are now above average.

77. Progress of all pupils is very good. Pupils with special educational needs and high achieving pupils make very good progress. Girls perform better than boys in Year 9 but both groups are above national expectations. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 persevere with all tasks set and co-operate well. Pupils taking GCSE demonstrate the ability to work independently. This is demonstrated by the production of high quality extended tasks.

78. Teaching and learning are very good in all years. Teachers deploy a wide range of strategies, have excellent questioning skills and have good subject knowledge. Peer assessment, self assessment and staff assessment, particularly the monitoring and assessment of the GCSE Applied and short courses, enable pupils to have a clear understanding of how to progress. There are three computer rooms which provide good access except on occasions when the biggest classes are present. The school has detailed plans to address the increasing requirements of other departments seeking additional access to ICT equipment as the usage across the curriculum becomes embedded.

79. Leadership is very good. The school has a clear vision for improving access to information communication technology equipment across the school. The head of department leads innovative practice in the classroom. Management is very good. Staff are effectively supported in their work by the provision of good resources, useful monitoring and evaluation and good technical support.

80. The provision of GCSE Applied and short course for Years 9 to 11 enables all pupils to receive their curricular entitlement. All pupils are made aware of the importance of information communication technology for their career prospects.

81. Since the last inspection the number of computers has been further increased. The department has changed to more appropriate GCSE courses. The access to ICT across the curriculum has improved. Pupils have additional access to a computer club at lunch time, to GCSE workshops several nights a week after school and to computers in the library at lunch time and after school.

Information Communication Technology across the curriculum

82. The pupils' Information communication technology skills are developed and consolidated throughout the school. They are able to use Internet to access virtual field trips and CD resources very effectively in geography. Pupils research global warming in science, view cells using a digital microscope and have opportunities for data logging. The mathematics department is utilising the potential of their interactive whiteboards with very effectual specialised software. The art department uses specialised software and the music department makes very good use of electronic keyboards and specialist music software. Pupils have opportunities to experience control and computer aided design in the design technology department. The provision of numerous interactive whiteboards has improved standards and learning opportunities in many departments.

HUMANITIES

Provision in geography is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are being raised by imaginative teaching strategies.
- Pupils do not have enough experience of investigations and fieldwork from Year 7 onwards.
- Very good assessment procedures have been introduced.
- Very good leadership and management are transforming the department.

Commentary

83. In 2004 GCSE results for grades A* to C were below the national average, those for A* to G were above the average. These results were significantly below the results for other subjects in the school but show an improvement over the previous year. The below average results can be attributed to several changes of leadership and teaching staff in the department over the previous three years, a situation that has now been stabilised. As a result, standards of work seen during the inspection are average and above average and pupils are achieving well. The work of the highest attainers shows a very clear understanding of the topics they have been studying. The work of the lower attainers suffers from weak organisation which leads to incomplete learning.

84. In 2004, standards at the end of Year 9 were above national expectations, though there has been no significant improvement over the last 3 years. Girls' assessment results have been consistently better than boys but not by more than the national expectation. Standards seen during the inspection are average, showing that pupils have achieved well considering that they came into the school in Year 7 with below average attainment. By Year 9, pupils have produced very good extended descriptions and explanations of the phenomena they have studied and show a wide knowledge of world issues. However, because they have not had enough experience since Year 7 of collecting, analysing and interpreting data in the field, their skills in this area are not sufficiently well developed.

85. Teaching and learning are good overall, and some very good teaching was seen. Very good planning incorporates active learning strategies that take account of the differing learning styles of pupils and encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning. These also contribute very well to pupils' social and moral development because co-operation and empathy are required. Unfortunately, not all pupils are yet ready to take advantage of this style of teaching and there is often some minor inattentive behaviour. While this is well dealt with by teachers in accordance with the school's behaviour policy, it does tend to slow the pace of some lessons. Teachers are skilled at assessing immediate learning through questions and short "quiz" activities. The department has recently introduced an innovative marking procedure that automatically leads pupils to discuss their progress in class so that they assess their own and other pupils' work in an open and productive manner.

86. ICT is a very strong feature of the teaching and learning. Extensive use is made of the interactive whiteboard to give structure to lessons and to bring up-to-date images into the classroom; for example, lessons on economic aid were illustrated by recent news photographs of

the Indian Ocean tsunami. Homework features research from named websites, and pupils use their ICT skills to present their assignments.

87. The present Head of Department has been in post since September, after a period of instability in the management. He is managing and leading the department very well, introducing strategies to raise attainment and achievement and introducing new teaching methods. However, although some monitoring of other teachers is taking place, there are not enough opportunities for these new methods to be shared through a programme of mutual lesson observations.

88. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. Standards are rising, achievement is now good and the standard of teaching has improved. The department is now strongly placed to improve further.

History

The provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The trend in results over time has been good.
- Pupils achieve well in comparison with their previous attainment.
- The teaching of history is good. Subject knowledge is a strength. Marking of work is well used to extend pupils.
- Pupils are industrious and most have a positive attitude to learning.
- Tasks do not always match the capabilities of low attainers as well as they might.

Commentary

89. Standards of work seen during the inspection are average or above. These standards are achieved because the teaching is good. Pupils' achievements, in relation to standards on entry to the school, are above average. The clear assessment strategies and the positive attitudes of most pupils also cause the quality of their learning to be good. Pupils make good progress as they move through the Years 7 to 9 and beyond. Standards of work seen in Years 10 and 11 in lessons, and from studying samples of written work together with interviewing a representative sample of learners, are judged to be above average overall.

90. Standards on entry to the school are below average. Standards in Years 7 and 9 are average or above. Pupils respond to the dynamic nature of modern history teaching and they are able to separate and compare conflicting perspectives on the historians' need to study both change and continuity over a period of time. They maintain good notes and show appropriate study skills in selecting and synthesising information. The processes of good academic research fascinate the higher attainers. Those of middle or lower attainment feel less secure in their grasp of knowledge. A greater differentiation in tasks set for the lower attainers would help. Verbal skills are in many cases stronger than those of writing. Teachers check files to ensure pupils are consolidating their learning. As not all files are complete this is a difficult task.

91. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 show good knowledge of chronology which helps them to understand the importance of timelines in relation to the supposition of events and actions of people. Pupils make effective use of the subject specific vocabulary they are required to learn. Not all pupils are able to make full use of the electronic media to gather relevant and up-to-date data on history. Access to ICT is often difficult. However, some Year 7 pupils were able to use Google and type in King John 1199 and discover more for themselves. The higher attaining pupils appreciate the clear writing in the quality journals they read and frequently quote them as sources. They use the history reports of the BBC appropriately to support their own writing. Good discussion, argument and writing occur in most classes. Many pupils are capable of thinking their way through a problem. The more astute learners quote recent high profile events in the world as history in the making. This provides pupils with an international perspective thus enhancing the awareness of their being

citizens in the UK, Europe or of the world. History is making an important contribution to pupils' understanding of the role of the citizen.

92. By the end of Year 9 pupils are at a standard expected nationally and many are above that standard. Examination results at GCSE are average overall for a three year period. The most recent results have been above average and reflect good gains. Current pupils are expected to maintain this standard. By the end of Year 11 most pupils have made significant progress and surpass the expectations made of them. In 2004 the proportion of higher grades gained was close to average. For the grade range A* to G results were above average. Girls have out-performed boys for the higher grades because they work harder and more consistently.

93. The quality of teaching is good in all years and there is some excellence in the methods used. Teachers try hard to ensure that all pupils are challenged and supported effectively and that they are fully involved in the lesson. A Year 9 class examined the rats, lice and mud as problems in the 1914-1918 trenches and they gained new insights into the misery of World War 1. There are good opportunities in most lessons for pupils to think analytically and show the product of their thoughts. A few learners need to show more independence in their work particularly in their homework. Pupils are expected to show initiative and research facts for themselves. There is a minority who copy what has already been provided for them. Group work is well structured and it is generally productive. A variety of tasks is normally introduced so that pace and momentum are maintained. As a result of this effective teaching and positive attitudes of most pupils their learning is good. Most pupils are aware of their roles as citizens. The teachers of history are committed to raise even higher the standards reached in the subject.

94. There has been good improvement in the provision of history since the previous inspection. All reported issues have been dealt with. Leadership and management are good. The teacher in charge of history monitors all the work associated with the subject. A variety of strategies is used to assess the quality of learning and these include classroom observations. Planning is good and it is effective. High expectations are communicated to pupils. Routines are established which support the development of history.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The staffing is very good
- Improvement since the last inspection has been very good
- The department has produced an extensive range of excellent resources. These resources are not always used to their best advantage
- Marking of pupils' class-work is insufficiently rigorous

Commentary

95. Progress since the last inspection has been very good as all pupils now follow a GCSE course. At the end of Year 11 in 2004, the standards of attainment in the GCSE short course are broadly in line with the national average. The results are similar to the previous year. Very large numbers of pupils are entered for the examination so these results are very creditable. The standards seen during the inspection are in line with the standards expected nationally and in line with the standards indicated in the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils can talk with confidence about a range of topics from the examination syllabus. These include moral issues such as abortion and euthanasia, and philosophical issues such as the problem of evil and the existence of God. Their written work done in the class is not well developed. Pupils use information technology in some of their work. The standard of girls' work is better than that of boys. Overall the achievement of pupils is satisfactory.

96. At the end of Year 9, standards of attainment are broadly in line with the standards indicated in the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils can make intelligent reference to various aspects of world religions. These include the concept of commitment in Christianity, environmental issues in both Christianity and Islam, and rites of passage in a variety of other religions. At times their knowledge and understanding of learning from religions is stronger than their learning about them. Overall the achievement of pupils is satisfactory. The written work done in the class is not well developed. Across all years the progress of pupils who have special educational needs is satisfactory, as is the progress of the more able pupils.

97. Overall the teaching is good. Some is satisfactory. All lessons are thoroughly prepared and contain a range of activities to put across the learning. Excellent resources have been produced for use in the classes. These have clear and strong content drawn from a range of world religions. At times these resources are not always used to their best advantage particularly when moral and social issues crowd out the more specifically religious ones. The lessons have a good range of objectives and so the learning is strong. At times the learning is not always consolidated at the end of the lesson. Overall the work is sufficiently demanding but this is not consistently so for some of the older pupils. At times during group work activities, some pupils are not on task. In the main, however, pupils work well and show an interest in their work. Homework is set and an active assessment policy is in place. The marking of pupils' classwork is unsatisfactory as pupils do not always know how they can make improvements in their work. The teaching makes a good contribution to pupils overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The expertise of the teachers is strong and so they put across the learning content with clarity and confidence. The teachers are strongly committed to the subject and to good teaching practice.

98. The leadership and management are good. The department is well staffed. The time for religious education has also been increased. Learning is enhanced by very good resources and accommodation.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and Technology

Provision in design and technology is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE results have improved because assessment has been well used to set targets and provide effective feedback to pupils about their progress.
- Good teaching which is underpinned by a good understanding of the requirements of each GCSE course has helped raise standards.
- The department does not consistently apply procedures for assessing National Curriculum levels in order to promote higher standards in Years 7 to 9.
- Pupils' expectations of their contributions to course booklets are not always sufficiently demanding, particularly when designing.

Commentary

99. GCSE results in 2004 for both boys and girls were above average. Girls do better than boys and the gap between them is similar to that seen nationally. Well above average numbers attain the highest A* and A grades. There has been an improving trend over the last three years in all technology subjects with the exception of resistant materials.

100. Entering the school with a knowledge and understanding of technology which is below expectation, pupils in Years 7 to 9 achieve well, attaining standards that are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 9. This is because the structure of the curriculum in Years 7 and 8 ensures pupils have a consistent exposure to all design and technology subjects and opportunities to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding in design and make situations in Year 9.

Responding well in lessons Year 9 pupils of all abilities are able, for example, to apply skills of bread making within the context of their own design solutions which are well researched and graphically well presented. When pupils make things in resistant materials such as in the Year 9 mechanism project, making skills meet expectations but much of the design work is superficial with below expected skills of visualisation and invention.

101. Improvements since the last inspection have been good. The weaknesses identified then have been addressed which has resulted an increase in the number of pupils now obtaining the highest grades at GCSE. Standards seen in Year 11 in all GCSE subjects are above average with the exception of resistant materials which are below average. This is because lower attaining pupils, mostly boys, opt for this area. These pupils, show enthusiasm for making and are achieving well. In food, textiles, graphics, systems and control lessons, standards are above average and achievement good. Folders are well presented with many pupils using ICT well to present data, as in food and textiles, or to aid both design and manufacture in graphics and systems and control. Good standards of making were seen with pupils having a good understanding of quality, as in the electronic dice project, of attention to detail, seen in the garments in textiles and the ability to match well, product to need, as seen in the wide range of food products.

102. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned and teachers' knowledge of their subject is well used when demonstrating skills and processes, seen for example in a resistant materials lesson where pupils bend plastics - resulting in good learning. Teachers have a good overview of workshop activities and are effective in supporting individual pupils in their learning. Technician support and support from teacher assistants is well used by teachers to support pupils' additional learning needs. The teaching of some younger pupils in full tutor groups has a negative impact on learning because the numbers accessing the often small specialist rooms and limited equipment are too big. The way teachers negotiate with pupils their GCSE targets is a particular strength. This, coupled with effective feedback they give to pupils about how well they are doing, and what they need to do to improve their coursework, has raised standards and promotes independent learning, seen particularly in Year 11 textiles lessons. A significant factor in raising standards is the very good understanding teachers have of the GCSE technology subject requirements, and the way these are translated into effective courses. Younger pupils are involved in evaluating their work, identifying their National Curriculum levels and setting targets for improvement. Currently this approach is unevenly used and as a result does not impact enough on standards. Course booklets produced by teachers for younger pupils are effective in imparting information, but the contribution pupils are required to make is not demanding enough, with the result that design work in particular is often of a lower standard than it should be.

103. Leadership and management are good. Targets for development have been clearly identified in the department development plan and reflect the shared vision of the head of department and other teachers. Management is good, supported by an effective system of review and evaluation which is open and self critical. Data is well used to identify strengths and weaknesses and has been effective in raising GCSE standards. The school's specialist science status has been enthusiastically embraced by the department. Learning resources for systems and control and structures have been improved as a result, and planned joint science and technology projects show imagination and a positive desire to enhance learning opportunities.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching and very well structured projects lead to very good achievement overall.
- Very good leadership and management of the department values and encourages teachers' individual strengths.
- Very good procedures for recording assessments and monitoring progress aid planning and target setting.

Commentary

104. Pupils enter Year 7 with very varied standards in art and design ranging from well below to well above average. The majority of pupils show limited awareness of materials and techniques. Assessment at the end of the first term shows pupils to be broadly below average though evidence from sketchbooks suggests that rapid progress has been made in that time. By Year 9 standards seen are average, representing an improvement and at least good achievement over Years 7 to 9.

105. GCSE results in 2004 were above the national average for A* to C grades with most pupils gaining around half a grade higher in art and design than their average in their other subjects. Results for the vocational, applied art course were well above average with all pupils gaining the higher A* to C grades. The department does not select pupils for GCSE so pupils enter the courses with a broad range of aptitudes and abilities but overall standards are average. By Year 11 standards are above average for the majority with many examples of well above average and excellent work in both the fine and applied art courses. Strengths continue in textural work and mixed media collage with very effective uses of ICT in vocational projects. Girls attain better than boys overall but both are represented at the higher levels. Achievement over the GCSE courses is very good and has improved.

106. The quality of teaching and learning are very good overall; it is good in Years 7 to 9, very good in Years 10 and 11. They have improved since the last inspection. Very well structured projects that clearly focus on developing and reinforcing skills are the basis for good learning in the earlier years. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are very well supported by one-to-one guidance. In Years 10 and 11 projects build very well on skills learned and emphasise a more personal, expressive challenge to which higher attaining pupils in particular respond well. Teachers have a very strong knowledge and understanding of the subject and examination requirements and use a good range of teaching styles and expertise to enrich pupils' experience. Excellent teaching was seen in one-to-one tutorials and in a briskly paced lesson where the teacher's energy and enthusiasm generated commitment and urgency among pupils. Verbal assessments are very good and promising ways of recording these are being trialled. Longer-term recording of assessments is very good due to the very effective use of ICT that aids analysis and target setting.

107. Leadership and management are very good. The head of department is very knowledgeable and experienced and supports his staff in developing their own strengths and teaching styles. He presents a very good role model for staff and pupils to follow. The department is very well managed with effective and increasing use of ICT to record and access information and monitor its progress.

Drama

Provision in drama is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching enables pupils to learn and achieve very well in Years 10 and 11.
- Standards of performance in Year 11 are well above nationally expected levels.
- The school provides good opportunities outside lessons to encourage pupils' interest and enthusiasm for the subject.
- Some poor accommodation affects the quality of teaching and learning in some lessons.

Commentary

108. Pupils enter the school with little experience of drama. By Year 9 they reach standards that are in line with those expected nationally. They can present a short, coherent performance effectively and develop good skills of self-evaluation. However, their knowledge of common drama techniques and conventions is insecure.

109. GCSE results in recent years have been well above average, but were close to the national average in 2004. Current standards of performance in Year 11 are well above those expected nationally. In one lesson, pupils portrayed moments of tension in key scenes of cruelty from Denis Potter's *Blue Remembered Hills*. They showed excellent concentration and explored characters' emotions and status through well controlled movement and facial expression.

110. Achievement is good overall. It is very good in Years 10 and 11 because most pupils have very positive attitudes and work hard and productively. In contrast, a few pupils in Year 9 begin to lose interest in the subject and do not concentrate sufficiently to improve.

111. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers plan lessons very well and devise a very good progression of activities that enable pupils to develop their skills. Very good class management ensures that most pupils move quickly from one activity to another with a minimum of fuss. An impressive feature of teachers' work is their ability to ask incisive questions that enable pupils to evaluate their own work and that of their peers with honesty and insight. Teachers have to teach some lessons in the hall or dining hall when another class is using the drama studio. Poor acoustics and a lack of display areas adversely affect the teaching and learning in these lessons.

112. Leadership and management of the department are very good. Clear vision for the development of drama has already led to an increasing number of pupils choosing to study the subject at GCSE level. Teachers work very effectively as a team and this has recently enabled them to overcome difficulties caused by unavoidable staff absence. Assessment procedures for pupils in Years 7 to 9 are developing well, so that pupils are becoming more aware of the standards that they are trying to achieve.

113. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Standards have improved. A drama club, regular productions, theatre visits and good links with a local college are further developing many pupils' interest in the subject.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and sometimes very good.
- Increasing numbers of pupils are opting for GCSE and performing above national average.
- There is good use of ICT to support learning.
- There are very good opportunities for extending learning through instrumental tuition and extra curricular activities.
- Assessment is insufficient to consolidate learning and progress in lessons.
- Planned strategies to make tracking and support of pupils at Years 7 to 9 secure are not yet implemented.

Commentary

114. The school has worked hard to raise standards of attainment especially for Years 10 and 11 where results have improved year on year. Numbers taking GCSE have increased and standards in

2004 are above the national average with 55 per cent Gaining A*-A grades and higher than average A*-C grades. Although pupils in Year 7 come in with low levels of attainment they achieve well and make good progress in the subject at all levels regardless of gender or ability.

115. Pupils respond enthusiastically to the subject. By Year 9 they demonstrate a growing confidence in working with rhythm and are able to interpret notation accurately. Those who learn instruments out of class demonstrate high levels of musicianship and a commitment to perform well. Although some enter the GCSE course with a limited experience of practical music making by the end of Year 11 pupils are competent musicians having gained sound skills in performance, composing and music technology.

116. The quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good. Strengths include positive pupil management and very good subject knowledge. Skilled musicianship is a key feature and this coupled with enthusiasm for music from both teachers ensures the interest of pupils is maintained. Lessons are well planned but the conclusion of lessons is often open ended and not used sufficiently to consolidate learning in the lesson. Teachers are making very good use of ICT to enhance teaching and learning styles. Pupils work with obvious interest and enjoyment, are motivated and interested. They are encouraged to cooperate with each other in their practical tasks and this makes a good contribution to the development of social skills.

117. Pupils are offered a very good range of opportunities outside lessons. There are many musical groups from choirs, orchestra and bands. Pupils take part in public performances in a variety of settings and tour abroad. Pupils also benefit from instrumental tuition provided by the school. This not only ensures that music plays an important part in the life of the school and community but enriches pupils' musical experiences outside the formal curriculum.

118. Leadership and management are good. The head of department has a sound understanding of issues to be addressed to further raise attainment. Resources and accommodation are good and support subject development. The scheme of work is being reviewed to provide sufficient emphasis on elements of musical styles both recent and across the world to encourage analytical listening. This will ensure that progress and breadth is formalised and the template for tracking progress is secure. The assessment procedures involve recording pupil work and a recording studio would enable high standards of recording to be made and extend pupil experience in technology. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Standards have risen in Years 10 and 11, increasing numbers of pupils are opting for GCSE courses and ICT is regularly used and both teachers and pupils are confident and competent users. There is evidence of sustainable growth and development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very good leadership and management.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, expertise, and enthusiasm.
- There are insufficient strategies for improving the standards of pupils studying for GCSE.
- There is no formal accreditation or record of achievement for Year 11 pupils not studying for GCSE.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes and behave very well.
- Inadequate accommodation for some aspects of the subject affects achievement.

Commentary

119. Pupils enter Year 7 with very varied experiences of physical activities and games. As little information is received from feeder primary schools, the department has no detailed knowledge of the pupils' attainment on entry. During their time at the school pupils have the opportunity to experience a wide range of physical activities and games, and benefit from being taught by knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject specialists. In response to effective teaching pupils make good progress and achieve well. By the end of Year 9 standards of attainment are good and above national expectations. Pupils develop the understanding, skills, techniques and strategies that enable them to participate confidently in a number of physical activities and games.

120. The 2004 GCSE results for pupils in Year 11 were below the national average at A* to C grades, and were not as good as the previous year's. The results were adversely affected by the number of pupils entered for the examination who did not complete the course work. Some pupils who chose to study for GCSE did not realise how academically challenging it was, and found the theoretical part of the course difficult. The strategies to assist pupils in improving their written work, and the procedures to monitor their progress, are insufficiently rigorous. In practical activities, standards and achievements are good, both for pupils studying for GCSE and for those who are not. A significant number have well above average skills, as evidenced by the success of individual pupils at local, regional, and national level, and by those who play for successful school teams. Whilst some pupils do receive awards for work and effort, for those not studying for GCSE there is no formal accreditation or record of achievement that would provide a focus for, and recognition of, their efforts. Although the department has facilities that allow for several activities to take place simultaneously, accommodation for the subject overall is inadequate. There is no subject base for the teaching of theory, storage and office space is insufficient, and, as identified in the previous report, the girls' changing area is unsuitable for large groups.

121. The quality of teaching, and its impact on learning, is good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Activities are well planned so that pupils improve their performance by building logically on previously learned skills and strategies. Teachers provide good demonstrations that help pupils to improve their understanding and performance. Very positive relationships encourage learning at all levels, giving pupils the confidence to try new activities in a safe, caring environment. Behaviour is very good because pupils are interested in the lessons, are eager to improve, and enjoy learning. Teachers are enthusiastic and pass this enthusiasm to their pupils. Assessment procedures are effective, providing information for pupils to improve their performance. The teachers give freely of their time, both at lunch time and after school, to provide a variety of very well attended physical activities and games where pupils can further develop their interests and expertise.

122. Both the leadership and management of the department are very good. The teachers work well together, with the head of department providing clear educational direction. Areas for improvement have been identified and a plan for the development of the department is in place. The regular monitoring of teaching enables good practice to be shared and problem issues to be addressed. All the department's staff have joined the school in the last two years. Team spirit is high with all the staff working closely together in organising and managing the tasks necessary for the smooth running of the department. Progress since the last inspection is good. In particular, very effective leadership and management are having a very positive impact on the provision for the subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship

123. Citizenship is taught through the various subjects of the curriculum, including the tutorial programme. During the inspection there was insufficient teaching to observe on which to base judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. It is not possible therefore to give a full subject report for school's provision in citizenship other than to indicate the present strengths and weaknesses. An audit has been carried out across the subjects of the curriculum and departments

have indicated where they make a contribution to requirements of this national curriculum subject. The tutorial programme makes a particularly valuable contribution to this, as does the teaching of careers. Some monitoring is carried out and there are various systems in place for its assessment, recording and reporting to parents. Overall, citizenship has an insufficiently high profile in the school and pupils are often insufficiently aware of their entitlement and when they are being taught citizenship. Teachers similarly show some uncertainty as to how it is to be delivered and taught in their lessons. Many lesson plans and teaching documents indicate citizenship content but often it fails to get beyond this and pupils lose out on consciously learning about the various 'knowledge' aspects of citizenship as well as its skills. Citizenship has yet to be seen and understood as a distinct subject in its own right. The leadership and management of citizenship are insufficiently clear. Various people are involved in this and it leads to some confusion of roles and lack of efficiency in delivering citizenship across the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
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	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	1
The leadership and management of the school	1
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	1
The effectiveness of management	2

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

EXAMPLES OF OUTSTANDING PRACTICE

Example of outstanding practice

Example of excellent practice in mathematics

Average attaining Year 10 pupils settled immediately to individual work having been greeted with a personal comment. Pupils confidently shared their solutions to linear equations, which enabled the teacher to check recall and clarify objectives. The class quickly moved on to solving harder equations. Pupils' were willing to work at the limit of their abilities and take risks understanding that incorrect responses would be used to correct misconceptions. Pupils were empowered to take responsibility for their own learning by choosing where to start in a set of problems increasing in difficulty. They sustained high levels of concentration throughout supported by a teacher who demonstrated in depth knowledge of the personal challenges pupils faced. Assessment using whiteboards showed that pupils were now able to solve equations with negative coefficients and unknowns on both sides. Foundations were laid for the next lesson with a brief discussion of how to solve equations involving brackets.