

# INSPECTION REPORT

## COVE SCHOOL

Cove

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116446

Headteacher: Ms M Davies Jones

Lead inspector: N A Pett

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> November - 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2004

Inspection number: 272075

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 - 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	985
School address:	St John's Road Cove Farnborough Hampshire
Postcode:	GU14 9RN
Telephone number:	(01252) 542 397
Fax number:	(01252) 524 223
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Carol Lloyd
Date of previous inspection:	11 <sup>th</sup> October 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This is an 11-16 co-educational school which serves the immediate area of established housing. A total of 985 pupils are on roll, making it broadly similar in size to other secondary schools nationally. Pupils come from the full range of socio-economic backgrounds, with a balance of those who experience social and economic advantage and disadvantage. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. About ten per cent of the pupils come from minority ethnic heritage but very few pupils require support for English as an additional language. Approximately a tenth of the pupils are identified with special educational needs, which is below average. The main categories are for moderate learning difficulties and for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The proportion of pupils who hold statements to address their specific needs is below average. There is a hearing impaired unit which supports a small minority of pupils. Attainment on entry is broadly average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
17331	N Pett	Lead inspector	
14756	J R Lovell	Lay inspector	
33160	N S Power	Team inspector	English English as an additional language
28028	P Wood	Team inspector	Mathematics
12890	T Jardine	Team inspector	Science Work-related learning
14841	M Duffy	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
8873	C Evers	Team inspector	History Citizenship
31218	T Allen	Team inspector	Geography
4372	R Fordham	Team inspector	Religious education
15304	R Fletcher	Team inspector	Music Drama Expressive arts
23418	R Yates	Team inspector	Art and design
4607	D Ward	Team inspector	Design and technology
15011	M Wallace	Team inspector	Physical education
17522	N Stiles	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
27424	D A Dobbins	Team inspector	Special educational needs Hearing impaired unit

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is an improving school which is moderately effective.** The good leadership and management of the headteacher, ably supported by the senior staff, is bringing better consistency to the provision. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, and although the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, there are examples of very good practice and improving consistency. Value for money is satisfactory.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership and management provided by the headteacher and senior staff are good.
- The procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning are effective.
- Provision for pupils with hearing impairment is very good.
- Pupils consider that the school has high expectations of them.
- The quality of pastoral care is good.
- The support for pupils' spiritual development, and the management of the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills in subjects across the curriculum are unsatisfactory.
- Extra-curricular activities are good and enrich the curriculum.
- Statutory curriculum requirements are not fulfilled in music in Years 7 to 9, religious education in Years 10 and 11, and for a daily act of collective worship for all pupils.
- Vocational opportunities in Years 10 and 11 are unsatisfactory.
- The quality of the accommodation is poor.
- The management of aspects of health and safety is unsatisfactory.

Improvement has been satisfactory since the last inspection in 1999. Restructuring of leadership and management has begun to have a positive impact. Middle managers are now more effective, and there is better provision for pupils with special educational needs. The quality of teaching has improved and is now satisfactory overall. Pupils' achievement is improving, supported by better assessment procedures. Statutory requirements are now met for design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT). Improvement has been unsatisfactory in respect of providing a daily act of collective worship and in meeting statutory requirements for religious education.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED - Year 11 results

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

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

**Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.** Standards on entry to the school in English, mathematics and science are broadly average. The results for GCSE examinations in 2004 were close to the national average. Pupils' performance overall was affected by staffing difficulties and a small minority of disaffected boys underachieved, which resulted in pupils performance lagging behind pupils in similar schools. Standards are higher by the end of Year 9, where pupils' attitudes are better, than by the end of Year 11, where they are broadly in line with the national average. Girls achieve better standards than boys. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs, those who are gifted and talented, and those who have English as an additional language, have satisfactory achievement. Pupils with hearing impairment do very well.

**Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are satisfactory.** The provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall, although provision for their spiritual development is unsatisfactory. Most pupils respond well to the high expectations set, although a significant minority have low standards, disrupting learning and

undermining the school's ethos by their overbearing attitudes towards other pupils. There has been a very high number of exclusions. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory overall, although there is a high level of unauthorised absence.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The overall quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory** and showing good improvement, with examples of good and very good teaching in a significant proportion of lessons. Assessment is satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory but not all statutory requirements are met, and the vocational opportunities in Years 10 and 11 are limited. Opportunities to enrich the curriculum, and links with the community, are satisfactory. The range and quality of extra-curricular activities are good. The quality of individual care and support is good, although guidance for the next stage of pupils' education is unsatisfactory. The induction of pupils into the school is good. There are weaknesses in the management of health and safety. Staffing is now good, resources are satisfactory, but accommodation is poor. Although there has been some refurbishment for design and technology and science, accommodation for many subjects has limitations, especially drama and expressive arts. Access to many rooms for physically disabled is poor.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good** overall, with examples of very good practice, and are developing strengths of the school. The headteacher has a good vision, which is very well shared and supported by the recently restructured senior leadership team. Staff with other key responsibilities are establishing good practice. The effective monitoring of teaching and learning has led to improved provision and is raising pupils' achievement. Higher expectations are also raising pupils' personal standards. There is good potential for continuing improvement. The governing body has several new members and governors are generally very supportive and enthusiastic to develop their role. Governance is unsatisfactory because of the statutory responsibilities which are not being met.

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

There was a good return to the questionnaire and good attendance at the pre-inspection meeting. The overall perception of parents is one of an improving school, but they do not feel that they are consulted sufficiently. Parents recognise that there is still some inconsistency in the provision for their children. Most pupils are proud of their school and older pupils welcome and recognise the improvements which have occurred. They feel that they are well taught and effectively supported, but they do not feel that their views are heard sufficiently. They also express concerns about the immature behaviour of some pupils.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- raise the standards of behaviour of the minority of pupils, particularly boys, who disrupt lessons and hinder pupils' achievement, and undermine the school's ethos;
- improve the overall provision for pupils' spiritual development;
- extend the use of and improve the management of literacy, numeracy and ICT in subjects across the curriculum;
- extend the links with the community to enhance learning opportunities;
- make better vocational provision for pupils in Years 10 and 11 and provide more guidance for them about their next stage of education;
- continue to seek ways to improve the quality of accommodation;
- reduce the level of unauthorised absence;

**and, to meet statutory requirements:**

- for religious education in Years 10 and 11, and music in Years 7 to 9;
- for a daily act of collective worship for all pupils; and
- for the management of health and safety.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, and standards are broadly average in relation to national expectations.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is improving.
- Hearing impaired pupils achieve well.
- The unsatisfactory management of literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum lowers achievement.

#### Commentary

1. Pupils' standards on entry into Year 7 are broadly average in relation to the levels expected for their ages in English, mathematics and science. Achievement and standards are improving following a decline since the last inspection through the improving quality of teaching and learning.
2. The results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9 (Key Stage 3) have been generally in line with the national average. In 2003, results were above average overall, although pupils' performance was below average in comparison with how well they did in the tests taken at the end of Year 6 in their primary schools. The trend for improving standards was broadly in line with that found nationally. In English, they did very well, with results being well above average, but in mathematics, results were low and in science well below average in relation to their Year 6 results. The pupils have underachieved in these two subjects. Girls performed better than boys overall, although boys did better than the national average results for boys. National results for 2004 have not yet been validated. The results received by the school show a drop in performance in English, a slight improvement in mathematics and no significant difference in science.

#### Attainment at 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	35.9 (37.1)	n/a (33.4)
mathematics	36.1(35.7)	n/a (35.4)
science	34.0(34.3)	n/a (33.6)

*Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. At GCSE, the overall results in 2003 were above average in comparison to all schools nationally for average points scores. In relation to how well pupils did at the end of Year 9, results were above average showing clear added value. However, the 2004 results show that the percentage of pupils gaining five A\*-C grades at GCSE has fallen, and the challenging targets were not met. Girls did significantly better than boys, and the school's analysis of performance clearly shows that a small minority of disaffected boys undermined results. Pupils' performance was below average in comparison with their results at the age of 11. Nevertheless, the average points score for both boys and girls was close to the national average, although the trend for improvement has been below that found nationally.



## Attainment at Key Stage 4

### Standards in Key Stage 4 at the end of Year 11 in 2004

GCSE/GNVQ	School results	National results
5 or more A*-C grades (%)	46 (53)	52 (52)
5 or more A*-G grades (%)	89 (95)	89 (88))
1 or more A*-G grades (%)	95(99)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil	39.6 (44.9)	41.4 (40.6)
Capped average point score per pupil	34.2 (37.7)	34.9 (34.7)

### GCSE and Equivalent Qualifications

	School results	National results
5 or more A*-C grades (%)	46	52
5 or more A*-G grades (%)	92	89
1 or more A*-G grades (%)	96	96
Average point score per pupil	325.6	340.3
Capped average point score per pupil	277.9	282.8

*There were 190 pupils in the year group, 98 boys and 92 girls. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and is improving. Several factors have exerted an adverse effect on achievement. There has been a series of staffing issues which have undermined the continuity of teaching and learning. A significant minority of pupils, particularly boys, have negative attitudes and they have disrupted the learning of themselves, and other pupils. The quality of the accommodation and resources has exerted a negative effect on achievement and standards, particularly in science, ICT and in design and technology. Good improvements in the overall provision in design and technology are leading to better achievement and standards, but progress has been only satisfactory in science and ICT. Although some staffing issues remain, for example in English and religious education, teaching is now more consistent. The improved monitoring and evaluation and strategic approaches are addressing the issues effectively.
5. Pupils' competence in language and literacy are in line with the national expectation, although a significant proportion of the pupils converse fluently and have a good understanding of appropriate subject vocabulary. Reading skills are generally sound but insufficient emphasis is given to ensuring accuracy in written work. Pupils' numeracy skills are adequate to meet the needs posed in subjects across the curriculum. Competence in ICT is below average for the pupils' ages; they have not had sufficient opportunity to cover all of the programmes of study in suitable depth. Insufficient use of ICT in subjects across the curriculum also limits their progress, although there is an improving trend brought about by the improved quality of teaching, and access to better resources. However, the management of literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory and this reduces pupils' overall achievement.
6. Achievement is good by Year 9 in English, mathematics, art and design, music, physical education, religious education and drama; it is satisfactory in all other subjects. Overall, standards by the end of Year 9 are broadly in line with the national average. Standards are above average in English and mathematics, and average in science, in relation to National Curriculum levels. This is an improving picture for mathematics and science. In religious education, pupils attain standards which are in line with those set in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards are above the national average in art and design, design and technology, music, physical education and drama, but are below average in geography and ICT. In other subjects, standards are average.
7. By Year 11, achievement is again satisfactory, but is not as secure as in Years 7 to 9. This reflects the fact that pupils' attitudes are not as positive and a minority of pupils underachieve.

In English, mathematics and science, achievement is satisfactory and standards are in line with the national average. Achievement is good in ICT and standards are in line with the national average. Religious education is not taught to about two thirds of the pupils, and thus no overall judgement about standards in this subject can be made. The best achievement, being consistently good, is to be found in art and design, music, physical education and expressive arts, and in the examination course in religious education. In citizenship, standards are broadly average for the pupils' ages at the end of Years 9 and 11.

8. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily. Achievement is better when these pupils are assisted by learning support staff, either through withdrawal sessions or in main classes. However, in the latter, teachers do not always match work well enough to ensure that the targets in pupils' individual education plans are addressed. Hearing impaired pupils achieve very well and make very good progress. Most lessons are taken with pupils in mainstream classes, where these pupils are very well supported by their classroom assistants, and by the use of the hearing aid technology. The pupils from minority ethnic heritage achieve as well as other pupils. Only a very small minority require support for English as an additional language, which is effective. Girls achieve better than boys overall, a reflection of their more positive attitudes, although both genders contain a minority whose attitudes are unsatisfactory, and this lowers achievement. Strategic action is being taken to address this issue by reviewing the curriculum and by teaching single sex classes, although it is too early to evaluate the overall impact of this development.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory overall, although levels of exclusion are very high. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory but levels of unauthorised absence are very high. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is broadly satisfactory, as is pupils' response.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils consider that the school has high expectations of them.
- Pupils respond well to opportunities to take responsibility.
- A significant minority of pupils behave in an unsatisfactory manner.
- Levels of exclusion are very high and have risen significantly since the last inspection.
- Levels of unauthorised absence are very high.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

9. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory overall, whereas they were reported as being good at the last inspection. Younger pupils, and the majority of the older pupils, have high standards but there is a significant minority of pupils from Years 9 to 11 who do not respond as positively to the school's high expectations. Almost all pupils feel that they are expected to work hard and to do their best; this was stressed by the pupils as an improving aspect of their school. They consider that Cove is a good school, but some pupils and parents have concerns about standards of behaviour. Relationships throughout the school are generally satisfactory and sometimes good. In lessons where teachers have high expectations and where work is well matched to pupils' capabilities, pupils' behaviour and attitudes are at least good, and sometimes very good. However, in a minority of lessons, pupils' behaviour and attitudes are unsatisfactory, and very occasionally, poor. These pupils behave in a silly and immature manner, sometimes challenging teachers' authority, and this can disrupt the learning of other pupils.
10. Most pupils move around the school in an orderly manner, but again a minority of pupils behave in an overbearing and boisterous manner. There is a significant amount of litter, showing that some pupils show little respect for their environment. These attitudes undermine

the school's ethos and make some pupils feel threatened, and a significant minority of them are reluctant to take their concerns to staff. Staff work hard to ensure that pupils behave sensibly, but the many corridors and style of the building are difficult to manage. Where any form of harassment is identified or brought to the attention of staff, they are quick to respond in a positive manner. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who have hearing impairment, do not express any concerns regarding the way that they are treated. Their behaviour and attitudes are good. Pupils with special educational needs display good personal qualities overall. Those who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties are well supported but can at times pose significant issues when their attitudes and behaviour are disruptive.

11. Pupils respond well to opportunities to take responsibility. This is reflected in the work of the school council, which has been very involved in canvassing pupils' views and contributing ideas to improve facilities, such as the external areas, for the benefit of the whole school community. Older pupils carry out their tasks as prefects and house captains with a very conscientious approach, supporting staff very well. Older pupils also enjoy supporting younger pupils in reading sessions. The support for extra-curricular activities is very good, and pupils enjoy their roles as ambassadors. However, not all pupils assume responsibility for their work, and for valuing the opportunities of other pupils to learn in lessons.
12. Pupils have a good understanding of the sanctions and rewards used to promote good behaviour and most parents have welcomed the introduction of home detentions, whereby they agree to supervise their children at home. During the last year, there has been a very significant number of exclusions involving 62 boys and 38 girls. These figures show a significant increase on those recorded in the year prior to the previous inspection. The school has an agreed exclusion policy and this sanction has been appropriately used to convey to pupils and parents that the high expectations are to be met. However, some pupils feel that exclusions are used too liberally and provide an opportunity for 'a few days lazing around at home' rather than serving as a punishment. Not all pupils who have been excluded understand the seriousness of their punishment, continuing to display poor behaviour and attitudes. Although there is a disproportionate amount of exclusions amongst pupils of ethnic minority backgrounds, pupils are treated fairly. Summary details of exclusions are shown in the table below.

**Ethnic background of pupils****Exclusions in the last school Year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	890	244	5
White Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	12	21	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	7	2
Mixed – White and Black African	1	1	0
Mixed – White and Asian	9	2	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	12	15	1
Asian or Asian British - Indian	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	11	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	3	11	0
Black or Black British – African	5	3	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	10	0	0
Parent/pupil preferred not to say	9	1	0
Information not obtained	0	0	0
Totals	985	305	8

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

13. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average, but has declined on that found at the time of the last inspection. Unauthorised absence has increased significantly and this may, in part, be explained by the lack of support from an education welfare officer (EWO) for the past four years. A new EWO has recently been appointed and is beginning to reduce absences. Older pupils are more prone to absence than younger pupils. A more rigorous approach is being adopted by the newly appointed directors of academic and pastoral support (DAPS), and this is beginning to improve pupils' attendance and punctuality patterns. Punctuality is satisfactory and pupils generally arrive on time at the start of the day. A minority of pupils fail to move between lessons with sufficient sense of purpose but this is generally well managed by the high presence of staff in corridors around the school. A table of attendance data is set out below.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting Year (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.2	School data	3.1
National data	7.2	National data	1.1

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

14. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. There is good awareness of the importance of this work, and the impact it has on pupils' progress, attitudes and achievement. This seen by the high expectations which are being set

for the overall ethos, but there is not a co-ordinated approach in terms of a shared policy for planning, teaching, monitoring and evaluation of these aspects.

15. Developing pupils' self-knowledge and spiritual awareness is unsatisfactory. Although religious education provides good opportunities for the spiritual development of pupils, insufficient opportunities exist in most other subjects to enhance this feature of personal development. Pupils have a respect for the beliefs of others and have a clear understanding of them. They reflect on issues of belief and form judgments that enable them to develop insights. Where opportunities are provided for reflection and discussion of spiritual matters, pupils clearly respect the views of others and most are willing to share their thoughts and feelings. Although there is a 'Thought for the Day' in place, it is used inconsistently by tutors to develop pupils' curiosity and awareness of the world's issues. Assemblies are based on these themes but there is not a consistent daily act of collective worship, either as a large assembly or in tutor groups.
16. Moral development is satisfactory, and there are links to the development of values and beliefs through whole-school expectations and in subjects across the curriculum. For example, work undertaken in religious education, geography, history and citizenship, contribute to the consideration of moral and ethical issues. Pupils are aware of right and wrong actions, and have a clear knowledge of what is expected of them. The school provides significant opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and develop social understanding, and most pupils respond well. Pupils are developing their self-confidence and most are developing very well as responsible members of the community, although a minority do not respond sensibly.
17. The provision for social development is good. Most subjects contribute effectively towards developing pupils' social awareness. For example, pupils work very well together and many opportunities are provided for them to express their views in pair work, group work and general discussion. The extra-curricular activities and school performances enable pupils to support each other in team contexts, and the wider community. Pupils are aware of their own cultural heritage and that of others. They demonstrate in their lessons a sound knowledge of their own cultural heritage, but there are missed opportunities in most subjects to raise pupils' cultural awareness. Pupils demonstrate respect and tolerance in their relationships. However, departments do not do enough specific planning to ensure that they prepare pupils for the diversity in our multicultural society.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The overall quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory and is well enhanced by extra-curricular activities. Pastoral care is good. The accommodation is poor, and there are shortcomings in the management of health and safety.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and show improvement since the last inspection. Assessment procedures are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is good improvement in the quality of teaching.
- Teachers do not use ICT well enough to support their teaching.
- Pupils with hearing impairment are well taught.
- Work set does not match the differing capabilities of pupils well enough.
- Assessment procedures are improved and are satisfactory overall.

## Commentary

18. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. During the inspection, it was at least satisfactory in well over nine out of ten lessons, and at least good in nearly two thirds, with examples of very good teaching in a significant minority of lessons, and very occasionally, outstanding. There has been good improvement since the last inspection; the amount of unsatisfactory teaching has been halved, from ten to five per cent.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 129 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (1%)	18 (14%)	64 (49%)	40 (31%)	6 (5%)	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.*

19. The overall judgement of satisfactory takes into account the quality of teaching and learning over time, and this has not been as effective as that seen during the inspection. Staff absence and difficulties of staff recruitment and retention, have disrupted continuity and progression in pupils' learning. The more effective monitoring and evaluation of teaching by senior staff has also initiated improvements. There is little difference between the quality of teaching and learning across all year groups, although the teaching in Year 9 was weaker than in the other year groups. The most consistent teaching was seen in art and design, design and technology, physical education and music. The teaching of ICT is improving, but not all teachers are making sufficient use of cross-curricular opportunities to use ICT to support learning. Good progress has been made since the last inspection for modern foreign languages, but there is still inconsistency for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and religious education. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning makes a satisfactory contribution in preparing pupils for the next stage of their education. The climate for learning is sound.
20. When teaching and learning are good or better, pupils respond well to their opportunities. In the best lessons, as seen, for example, in physical education and art and design, work is well planned, and objectives are clearly stated, so that pupils understand what they are expected to achieve. Expectations for work are good. The work set meets the needs of the pupils well so that pupils of different capabilities are well challenged, and thus able to achieve well. In many lessons, teachers use their good subject expertise well as they extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. The range of activities, and pace of the lessons, hold pupils' interest and they enjoy their learning. This was well demonstrated in a Year 10 mathematics lesson, and pupils made good progress. Again, where teachers use effective question and answer sessions, they develop pupils' thinking skills and their literacy skills. Pupils have to frame their answers appropriately, and most respond well to the challenge, as seen in some English and drama work. The good use of group work, pair work, role play and independent research are techniques which most pupils respond to well. There is satisfactory use of homework, and where it is good, it extends pupils' learning. However, it is not consistently used. These most effective lessons are also brought about because of the good quality of relationships between teachers and pupils. Class management is good, and pupils understand what is expected of them.
21. Where teaching and learning are not as successful, it is because the work set is not appropriate; it is either the same for all pupils, too hard or too easy. Pupils become bored, and they begin to misbehave. These disaffected pupils are disrupting their own and the learning of others. Occasionally, pupils encounter vocabulary that they do not understand, and this reduces their achievement when teachers do not explain it well. However, where teachers recognise and plan effectively, they use the word banks on display and add to the development of language and literacy through the use of writing frames and other structured approaches. Because there is not a cohesive whole-school approach to literacy and language,

pupils' standards are adversely affected. Similarly, there is no cohesive approach for numeracy and ICT; thus, pupils do not use their skills appropriately to enhance their learning.

22. The teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory; this represents limited improvement since the last inspection, where teaching was a key issue. The pupils do well when they are withdrawn and in the lessons in which they are supported by learning support assistants, who are very capable. However, in the lessons when they are not supported, they do not achieve as much as those who are able to complete the lesson tasks. The way that the support staff are used is not always effective enough. In a small number of lessons, pupils do not make sufficient progress because all pupils are expected to complete the same tasks irrespective of their capability. Individual education plans are not consistently used for planning.
23. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory. Monitoring of provision for these pupils has yet to be implemented. Pupils who do not have English as their mother tongue are generally satisfactorily supported, although they also do not always have work tailored to their needs.
24. The teaching and learning of pupils with hearing impairment are good; this provision has been well sustained since the last inspection. They are occasionally withdrawn for support but most of their teaching is in mainstream classes. Because teachers make very good use of the soundfield system, these pupils achieve as well as their peers. The learning support assistants use their skills and experience very well in reinforcing existing learning. They are also very effective when they work with pupils to prepare them for new learning.
25. Assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection, when they were unsatisfactory and inconsistently applied. Assessment is now satisfactory overall. The school has worked hard to establish systems to check on pupils' progress but the effectiveness of assessment is still developing. Teachers assess their pupils' work but there is not yet a consistent approach in all subjects and year groups. When assessment is effective, each pupil's individual profile is updated regularly and targets for improvement set. As a result, pupils know where and how to improve. Ongoing assessment is used in order to review pupils' progress towards meeting their targets. When assessment is good, for example, in mathematics, expressive arts, music, art and design and drama, it is well linked to National Curriculum criteria and self-assessment is well established. Some records are very good, such as those in expressive arts, art and design, music and drama, but are unsatisfactory in ICT and religious education. In physical education and dance, pupils have regular opportunities to give their opinion on how well they and others have done and to identify how they can improve.
26. The quality of marking is variable; where it is good, teachers challenge pupils in their marking and pupils know what they have to do to improve. However, some marking is cursory and does not identify what pupils need to do to meet their targets. There has been satisfactory progress in developing systems for the assessment for pupils with special educational needs, but assessment to meet the needs of gifted and talented pupils is underdeveloped.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Staffing is satisfactory, as are resources. Accommodation is poor.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Statutory requirements are not met in music in Years 7 – 9 and in religious education in Years 10 and 11.
- The use of ICT in subjects across the curriculum is unsatisfactory.
- Curriculum enrichment is good, but vocational links are unsatisfactory.

- The learning opportunities for pupils with hearing impairment are very good.
- Accommodation is poor.

## Commentary

27. The overall quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. There is a balanced curriculum for pupils of all capabilities in Years 7 to 9. Courses provided meet the requirements of the National Curriculum, except in music, where there are not the resources to teach the ICT aspects of the work subject. The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory, although the statutory requirements for religious education are not met. Two thirds of the pupils are not taught this subject; this is a significant weakness, and there has been no improvement since the last inspection. There is a good range of GCSE courses but the opportunity for vocational elements is unsatisfactory. This is recognised and the school is undertaking a curriculum review to address this issue. There are satisfactory links with a local college to provide vocational courses in hairdressing and motor mechanics. However, the limitations in the provision undermine pupils' preparation for the next stage of their education. Within the overall curriculum, the management of the development of pupils' language and literacy skills, numeracy and ICT competence, are unsatisfactory. This is particularly so for ICT, undermining pupils' achievement.
28. The curriculum caters satisfactorily for pupils' differing capabilities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Withdrawal sessions are well planned. The targets in pupils' planners provide clear information on the specific areas of English and mathematics they are working on and, for many pupils, on how they can improve their personal and social skills. For some pupils, these are working very well, for others, they work less well because in some lessons teachers do not give them sufficient regard when they plan their lessons. Support for pupils with hearing impairment is very good, and most work effectively at the whole curriculum, being well integrated into mainstream work. Those pupils with English as an additional language are helped to integrate well. Where weaknesses occur, it is because teachers' planning does not ensure that the curriculum is designed well enough to enhance achievement, as for example, the satisfactory provision for gifted and talented pupils. Overall, access and equality of opportunity are satisfactory.
29. The programmes for citizenship, PSHE, careers and work-related learning are satisfactory. Statutory requirements are met. Good links exist between PSHE and citizenship to ensure that pupils cover elements of sex education, drug and alcohol abuse, and smoking. Equally, there is coverage of relationships and values, but this work is not monitored and evaluated consistently to ensure that all pupils are taught the subjects adequately. Careers education is integrated into the PSHE course throughout the school. All pupils take part in this programme, which is supported well by external agencies and a wide range of local businesses that provide work experience opportunities. Careers education is linked into the work-related learning course, which is being effectively developed.
30. Enrichment through extra-curricular activities is good, and is well supported by the pupils. They benefit from a wide range of opportunities to participate in activities beyond lessons. Extra-curricular sport is good and well supported by pupils. There are inter-school and in-school competitions in most major games. There is good provision in the arts, where music, drama and expressive arts make a significant contribution. A significant minority of pupils take instrumental lessons. Pupils have the opportunity to participate in school performances. Good use is made of visitors for PSHE, and visits are made to art galleries, and for outdoor activities and fieldwork. Pupils from Years 7 to 9 have the opportunity to participate in annual visits to France and Germany, and there are ski trips. A party of pupils visited the sites of the Holocaust and subsequently produced a very professional CD-ROM.
31. There is now a good match of number, qualifications and experience of teachers to the needs of the curriculum. Issues still occur because of staff absence but there is now better continuity, except in English. The quality of staffing provision is very good in religious education, design



and technology and the hearing impaired unit. The provision of support staff overall is satisfactory. However, in a minority of lessons, the deployment of staff to support pupils with special educational needs is not always efficient, leading to some pupils not achieving well enough.

32. Accommodation is poor. The school is cramped and consists of many buildings, some that date from the 1930's that are in relatively good repair, to 1960's buildings that leak rain water from their roofs and ill fitting windows. There are several blocks that were built as a temporary measure in the 1950's. Much of the school has reached the end of its natural life. There has been little upgrading to comply with the Disabled and Disability Access regulations. Much of the site has uneven paving or worn out and crumbling asphalt. In the last twelve months, the refurbishment of two food rooms and four science laboratories, together with new windows to sections of the 1930s quadrangle buildings, have begun to negate many years of neglect. Both pupil and staff toilets are in need of refurbishment. They frequently lack paper and soap. Catering arrangements are barely satisfactory, lead to pushing and a need for constant control. Accommodation for specific careers guidance is adequate for private interviews but, because of its limited accessibility, is not suitable for the display of information and resources or for individual research. The acoustics of the hearing impaired unit do not conform to the required standards. Rooms where mathematics and English are taught are cramped, restricting group work. Music rooms and facilities for the expressive arts are unsatisfactory. In several departments, there are matters relating to health and safety that require attention.
33. There is a satisfactory range of resources for teaching. Digital projectors and interactive whiteboards are available in each department, although not in every room. There are three ICT suites with up-to date computers; older machines have been dispersed across the school. Teaching staff report that at times these arrangements lead to software conflicts and pupils cannot then access information stored on the principal server. Other resources have been renewed but textbooks are limited in science, geography and mathematics, and this hampers pupils' progress. Resources for careers education are unsatisfactory.

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

Pupils are provided with good support, advice and guidance based on good monitoring of their personal and academic development. There are satisfactory arrangements for seeking and acting on pupils' views. The individual pastoral care of pupils is good, but the management of health and safety is poor.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pastoral support is good.
- The school council is an effective means of actively involving pupils and gaining their views.
- Arrangements for the management of health and safety are poor and risk assessments are insufficiently developed.
- Outside agencies provide good support for pupils.

### **Commentary**

34. The school continues to provide good pastoral support and guidance since the time of the last inspection. Pupils are cared for well and arrangements to support their personal development are good. Pastoral staff work very effectively as a team and provide effective support for pupils and class tutors. They are good role models. Relationships between pupils and staff are satisfactory and often good but there is reluctance on the part of many pupils to share concerns with staff. The monitoring of pupils' personal development, attitudes and academic progress is sound, as it is recognised that inconsistencies between individual tutors need to be addressed. Staff seek to work closely with parents and pupils to ensure that any problems in meeting the expected standards are effectively supported. The school council provides a good opportunity for pupils to involve themselves in the wider community of the school. There are good arrangements to support the induction of pupils through sound links with local primary

schools and the designation of a senior member of the pastoral team taking overall responsibility for these pupils.

35. In Year 9, pupils are well supported in making their GCSE option choices and have opportunities to discuss them. In Year 10, pupils are prepared for a period of work experience. Careers education is integrated into the PSHE course throughout the school, and is supported well by external agencies and a wide range of local businesses. Careers-related units develop pupils' skills of decision-making, completing personal statements and interview techniques. However, there are inconsistencies in teaching. In Year 11, pupils are effectively prepared for their transition to work but the support for pupils who wish to transfer to post-16 education is unsatisfactory. Resources to support careers education are unsatisfactory and are not readily accessible to pupils. The careers co-ordinator is committed and enthusiastic but has not had appropriate training to develop the necessary understanding and knowledge. There is no cohesive development plan to improve the provision.
36. There is sound provision for pupils with special educational needs. Statutory requirements that relate to pupils with a statement of special educational need, including annual reviews, are met in full. The special educational needs co-ordinator has established very good relationships with many pupils with special educational needs. She provides very good advice and guidance and great encouragement to enable them to continue to try their best. Pupils in the hearing impaired unit are very well cared for and this supports their integration into mainstream classes.
37. Arrangements for child protection meet requirements, although some non-teaching staff have not received any training; this weakness has been brought to the attention of the school. There are effective liaison arrangements with outside agencies. An appropriate policy for the use of intervention to control or restrain pupils who are in danger of harming themselves or others is well used. The provision for first aid is generally satisfactory, and well supported by a full-time school nurse, who also provides welfare support. Coverage after school hours is not co-ordinated well enough and details of qualified first aiders are not displayed. First aid boxes are available throughout the school, but these are not regularly checked and restocked. Accident records contain insufficient detail to enable formal monitoring to identify potential risks, although there is some monitoring.
38. The management and co-ordination of health and safety are unsatisfactory, and there are breaches of statutory requirements, representing a significant decline since the last inspection. Staff have not received appropriate training. Although formal risk assessments are prepared for visits, there is not enough understanding of whole-school risk assessments and there is insufficient attention to identifying and formally recording assessments. Departmental risk assessments, such as those for physical education, expressive arts and drama are insufficiently detailed. A number of health and safety issues were identified during the course of the inspection and brought to the attention of the school, and it initiated immediate action.

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

The partnership between school and home and with other schools is sound, although management arrangements for the shared vocational provision with the local college are unsatisfactory. Links with the community are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Overall, parents consider that the school is improving.
- The quality of information provided to parents about pupils' progress is good.
- Local businesses provide good support for the school's work experience programme.
- Arrangements for the management of courses linked to the local college are unsatisfactory.

## Commentary

39. The partnership between school and home and with other schools and the community was considered a strength of the school at the time of the last inspection. Those links are currently satisfactory.
40. Overall, parents feel that the school is improving after a period of decline. They state that their children like school and that staff have high expectations. These views reflected those expressed by pupils. However, parents consider that the information which they receive about pupils' progress, the efforts that the school makes to seek parents' views, standards of behaviour and homework need to be more consistently managed. Inspectors judged that the information provided to parents about pupils' progress is good and that the use of homework is satisfactory. They supported the view that further improvement is needed in the other areas identified by parents.
41. The school seeks to involve parents in supporting their own child's behaviour and learning by direct contact and the use of 'praise cards' and home detentions. It does seek parents' views on issues affecting its community and the improvements which are planned and taking place. The school recognises that it could still do more to extend the dialogue involving parents so that their views can be used to contribute even more extensively to the school improvement planning process. The school usually manages to resolve any concerns of parents informally, although there is an appropriate complaints procedure. The parent teacher association successfully raises funds to support teaching and learning, and its efforts are greatly appreciated by pupils and staff.
42. Pastoral and teaching staff are accessible to parents, and consultation evenings to discuss pupils' progress are very well supported by parents. Pupils' annual reports are good, and free from educational jargon. Targets enable parents to understand what their child has to do to move to the next stage of their learning, although the quality of the targets is inconsistent and the best examples are not used to inform practice throughout the school. Other information provided to parents is good, and has improved since the last inspection.
43. Links with the community are satisfactory overall. There is good support from local businesses for the work experience programme, which is effectively co-ordinated by an external provider. A range of activities, under the auspices of Young Enterprise and the British Aerospace Challenge, have led to pupil involvement in competitions in which they have enjoyed success. Whilst local agencies contribute well to the PSHE programme, links to benefit pupils' social development, and the use of the local area in learning are underdeveloped.
44. Links with feeder schools are satisfactory overall and regular meetings between staff provide curricular links and support the sound transfer arrangements for pupils at age 11. The school is funding a science teacher to work in local junior schools to support this work. Links with further education are sound but insufficient importance is placed upon providing pupils with information and opportunities to help inform and prepare them for post-16 education.
45. Links with the local college regarding vocational courses are unsatisfactory and do not help pupils to gain the maximum from their chosen course. A learning support assistant and a teaching assistant accompany pupils to the college, and teaching staff and their managers at the school arrange a class to support the work of the college's motor mechanics and hairdressing courses. However, the school staff do not know the course content or have a copy of the scheme of work. The lack of communication means that, although the school is well equipped to support the college, staff cannot directly impact on pupils' learning, although their provision is good in isolation.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is good overall. The headteacher and senior staff are leading well. Management is effective. The governance is unsatisfactory as governors do not fulfil all the statutory requirements:

the curriculum for music and religious education does not meet requirements; the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship is not met; and health and safety requirements are not met in full.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good leadership of the headteacher and senior staff.
- The leadership and management potential for improvement is good.
- Governance is unsatisfactory.
- Strategic planning is good.

### **Commentary**

46. The headteacher has a clear vision and sense of purpose. She leads the school well. Since her appointment two years ago, she has worked in a purposeful and determined way to secure the commitment of staff to improving the school. She provides the driving force, being well supported by the recently restructured senior management team and the governing body, for improving the ethos of the school and the quality of provision. The quality of teaching has improved well since the last inspection. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.
47. The potential in leadership and management is good. The headteacher is well supported by the leadership and management skills of the senior leadership team. They share the vision and work consistently together to ensure that expectations are maintained. Their approach to line management is good and is developing into a rigorous monitoring and evaluation process. This is good improvement since the last inspection, and thus the potential for further improvement in the overall quality of education is good. Leadership amongst key staff with subject and pastoral responsibilities is good. A substantial number of these staff are relatively new to their roles, although they are accepting their responsibility well, and evolving their management roles, which are satisfactory overall. Where practice is very good, staff work well as a team, are very good role models and share a clear vision for raising achievement. The special educational needs co-ordinator leads the provision for special educational needs very well and manages it well. Since her appointment, two years ago, she has worked hard to establish procedures to meet the needs of pupils with a wide range of special educational needs. The provision is much better than at the time of the last inspection. However, there is insufficient analysis of how well pupils with special educational needs achieve in comparison with others in the school, or comparable pupils in equivalent schools. The hearing impaired unit is very well led and managed. Where there are weaknesses in management, it is for a cohesive approach to the development of cross-curricular literacy, numeracy and ICT.
48. Governors are very supportive of the headteacher, and the chairman is an experienced member of the governing body and provides strong leadership. The role of the governing body has been through a period of transition during the last two years. Several governors are new, and they are taking advantage of opportunities to participate in training to develop an effective role in the school's strategic management and monitoring of its work. There is an awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses, but governance is unsatisfactory overall. Governor involvement in longer-term development planning and contributing effectively to determining the school's future direction and setting priorities is satisfactory. It is being developed through the developing partnership with the headteacher and senior staff. Governors are not meeting their statutory responsibilities in a number of areas. They have not ensured that all pupils participate in a daily act of collective worship or that the school's provision for music in Years 7 to 9 and religious education in Years 10 and 11 meets National Curriculum requirements. Governors also fail to monitor those procedures for ensuring that the school meets all relevant health and safety legislation. Governors recognise that some statutory requirements are not fully met but have not, for example, identified health and safety as a concern.

49. Not meeting some statutory requirements was an issue at the last inspection. Governors do have an agreed policy and procedures to ensure inclusion and equality and are appropriately involved in exclusion procedures, and monitor the exclusions in relation to ethnicity.
50. The school works efficiently on a day-to-day basis and administrative arrangements are effective in supporting the work of the school. Administrative staff are clear about their responsibilities and carry them out in a positive and helpful manner. Performance management is well established and is contributing to improve teaching and learning because teachers' objectives tie in with those for whole-school priorities. There are good procedures for supporting newly qualified teachers, who also derive good support from the LEA. The procedures include a good amount of classroom observation and discussion about practice observed. The procedures for teachers' continuing professional development are sound. Non-teaching staff also receive appropriate support and training and their increasing awareness of different ways in which children learn is increasing their effectiveness. There are successful links for school-based initial teacher training.
51. A very recent audit recognised the good accounting systems. It noted the limited involvement of governors in setting and monitoring the budget and the absence of finance detail in the four-year strategic plan. This limits the monitoring of progress in achieving identified priorities against success criteria. However, careful budgeting has enabled the recovery from a situation where there was significant deficit. Finance is now supported by a transitional grant to assist in addressing the school's financial commitments. Spending is now under control but it has not been possible to fund some identified educational priorities. The funding for pupils with special educational needs is used effectively and appropriately, as are other additional monies. Although the governors do not have a best value statement, they seek and obtain best value in expenditure, but the way that they compare performance and challenge senior staff is broadly satisfactory. Taking account of pupils' achievement, standards and the overall quality of education, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

***Financial information for the Year April 2003 to March 2004***

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	3,185,370	Balance from previous Year	-4944
Total expenditure	3,125,025	Balance carried forward to the next year	55,401
Expenditure per pupil	3,134		

**HEARING IMPAIRED UNIT**

Provision for pupils with hearing impairment is **very good**.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve very well and make very good progress.
- The very good way in which pupils are fully included in all aspects of lessons.
- The very good leadership and management.
- The unsatisfactory quality of the accommodation.

**Commentary**

52. The unit for hearing impaired pupils is one of four units designated by the Hampshire Local Education Authority for secondary-aged pupils. The approach is totally aural, with no signed support. In lessons, teachers and teaching assistants are very good at using radio microphones to provide amplified sound to pupils through their own radio aids. Nine pupils attend the unit. Five are from the northeast region of the county and four are from the neighbouring county of Surrey. Because of the severity of their hearing loss, all pupils are in receipt of a statement of special educational needs. Most of the pupils are transported to and

from school. They achieve very good standards in their learning and in their personal development.

53. Hearing impaired pupils achieve very well and make very good progress in their learning in subjects and in their personal and social development. Most lessons are taken with pupils in mainstream classes. Pupils are withdrawn to the unit for only a small number of lessons. The head of unit is a specialist teacher for pupils with hearing impairment. The four learning support assistants have completed basic training in supporting pupils with hearing loss. They use their skills and experience very well in supporting pupils in mainstream lessons and when they provide specific help in the withdrawal sessions. In these sessions, pupils make very good progress in reinforcing existing learning and, innovatively, when they are being prepared for new learning. For example, one pupil gained a very good understanding of the roles of different teeth in breaking down food in carnivores and herbivores, in preparation for a science lesson scheduled to take place the following day. Gaining prior knowledge of the names, for example canines, molars and pre-molars, made the lesson easier to understand and learning was more effective because of this.
54. Pupils in the unit are fully included in all aspects of lessons. Their learning is advantaged because mainstream teachers are very accomplished at using radio microphones. They understand issues to do with teaching hearing impaired pupils very well because of the training provided by the head of unit. They do simple things well, including looking forward when speaking and making sure that directions for lesson tasks are clear to pupils and the teaching assistants. Many classrooms have been fitted with a soundfield system, which minimises background noise. This helps all pupils to listen better, but is especially helpful for hearing impaired pupils who need to amplify the teacher's voice, and are able to do so without making extraneous noises louder as well. The unit's very good staff-pupil ratio of five staff to nine pupils means that pupils are supported in most of the lessons.
55. Leadership and management are very good. The head of unit is committed and motivated to secure the most effective education for pupils in the unit. She has made a significant contribution to the better quality of teaching and learning and improvement in the effectiveness of the unit since the last inspection. Day-to-day the procedures operate very smoothly. She and all teaching assistants have excellent relationships with the pupils. They take advice and guidance easily and this is helping them become increasingly mature as learners and young people and in accepting and coping with their hearing loss. The expertise and knowledge of the staff of the unit focus almost entirely on pupils with hearing impairment. This is sensible and appropriate because these pupils are the prime responsibility. However, others, for example those with language difficulties or specific learning difficulties/dyslexia, can also benefit from the skills and experience of the staff for hearing impaired pupils. This can be achieved through establishing closer links with the learning support department.
56. The base room for the unit is unsatisfactory, as it does not meet the minimum requirements for sound quality as recommended by building regulations. The unit's leader, the headteacher of the school and relevant staff in the local authority are aware of the details and of the progress being made in rectifying this.

## **WORK-RELATED LEARNING**

Provision for work-related learning (WRL) is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The contribution of PSHE, careers and work experience is good.
- Pupils studying ICT and expressive arts benefit from good provision.
- There are some good examples of enrichment activities.
- The contribution from other subjects is inconsistent and unsatisfactory.
- The leadership and management are unsatisfactory.

## Commentary

57. The quality of the provision is satisfactory. Pupils learn through work by taking part in the work experience programme, through school enterprise activities, part-time jobs and vocational contexts. They learn about work through careers education. They learn for work by developing skills for enterprise and employability through problem-solving activities, work simulations and mock interviews during PSHE and careers education. Statutory requirements are met.
58. Pupils learn about employment and work from Year 7 in PSHE, which includes careers education. The programme is well matched to pupils' maturity, starting with general matters and becoming more specific in later years. The PSHE provision identifies the WRL components in each year. The work experience programme in Year 10 pays due attention to preparation for work, health and safety and security, expectations of behaviour at work, informing parents, and taking account of pupils' part-time jobs. The learning objectives are couched in terms of pupils' personal development. Pupils are briefed before, visited during and debriefed after their work experience placement. One or two pupils proceed to an extended work experience programme.
59. The curriculum support by other subjects is unsatisfactory. There are some good experiences in ICT, expressive arts and in enrichment activities. In GCSE ICT, pupils have to create websites, databases and stationery to improve the performance of a fictional company. In GCSE expressive arts, pupils have made commercially commissioned training videos for local government, national businesses and international companies. Design and technology and science also contribute through a technology/science week and a design week supported by the Design Council. Extra-curricular activities such as entries for competitions in science that have won major prizes and projects in design and technology, supported by industry, enrich the curriculum and motivate pupils. Satisfactory links with employers have been created through the work experience programme.
60. The management is unsatisfactory. The effect of WRL on pupils' achievement has not been evaluated. All pupils take part in a two-week period of work experience in Year 10, which takes account of pupils' part-time employment. However, there is no evaluation of its impact on pupils' achievement. Twenty-four pupils are taking either a hairdressing course or a motor mechanics course at Farnborough College of Education. The school reports that these opportunities, which were introduced this academic year, have improved attitudes to learning and attendance. The PSHE component is well organised and led. However, there is no clear policy and strategy for the implementation of WRL. There has not been an audit of provision, and no formal training of staff to implement WRL.

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4**

#### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

##### **English**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- Teaching and learning are good in Years 10 and 11.
- Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported.
- Staffing difficulties have had an adverse effect on continuity in teaching and learning.
- The department is well led.

##### **Commentary**

61. Results in the 2003 National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Year 9 were well above average at the expected level. Pupils gained a very high proportion of the highest level scores. In relation to their prior attainment at the age of 11, results were well above average. Girls performed better than boys, although the boys considerably outperformed boys nationally. Provisional results for 2004 indicate above average attainment. Results were much better than those in mathematics and science. GCSE English results in 2003 were in line with the national average for A\*-C grades, and pupils gained a high proportion of A\* and A grades. Boys and girls did as well as their national counterparts. English Literature results were in line with the national average. Again, pupils, especially girls, gained a higher proportion of A\* and A grades than their national counterparts.
62. The achievement of pupils is satisfactory overall. Standards by Year 9 are above the national average; lower than previous test results but reflecting the overall capability of the pupils in this year group. Pupils write fluently and answer questions crisply and with understanding. They have an effective grasp of simple rules of grammar. Pupils' achievement is adversely affected by the long-term absence of key members of the team, as the more experienced teachers are moved to cover Year 10 and Year 11 classes. By Year 11, standards are in line with the national average. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is generally good, because teachers build a good relationship with pupils and ensure that tasks are carefully explained in a calm atmosphere. These pupils make good progress against their targets, especially when they are supported by teaching assistants, although in a minority of lessons where there is not support, their progress is slower. The achievement of higher-attaining pupils is satisfactory, reflecting the fact that not all teachers consistently challenge their pupils. The achievement of pupils with hearing impairment is well supported as teachers make very good use of the soundfield system which amplifies speech and reduces the background noise.
63. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with examples of very good teaching. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teaching is strongest in Years 10 and 11, where experienced teachers take classes. In Years 7 to 9, lower-attaining pupils learn literacy skills well through paired reading schemes, where Year 10 pupils hear Year 7 pupils read, and through booster classes and reading challenges. In the best lessons, where teachers have good expectations and which are well planned, there is a strong focus on literacy skills, as seen in a Year 10 lesson where the pupils did well as they unpicked fact from opinion. In a Year 8 lesson, the consistency with which the teacher brought the pupils' attention to the use of verbs throughout the lesson ensured good achievement. Where teaching and learning are not as effective is because the work set does not always challenge different capability groups of pupils sufficiently and consistently. Where class management is not effective enough, the



noisy behaviour of some pupils hinders their own learning and that of the class as a whole. The small size of classrooms has an adverse impact on learning as group work is difficult to arrange.

64. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall. Teachers provide accurate grades, showing they share a good understanding of examination criteria. Formally-assessed tasks are consistently carried out half-termly, but this does not always provide an adequate picture to all pupils on how well they are achieving. Some pupils are therefore not able to practise their spelling and punctuation with frequently corrected pieces of work. The quality of marking varies and is sometimes not sufficiently precise to provide pupils with clear guidelines on how to improve.
65. The leadership and management of the department are good. The head of department keeps the department working as a team in spite of long-standing staffing difficulties and her other duties as assistant headteacher. The monitoring of teaching and learning are effective. She is aware of the need to raise the achievement, especially of boys, and is currently experimenting with such innovative techniques as single-sex classes in Years 10 and 11. Teachers are using materials which maintain boys' interests, but not to the cost of the involvement of girls. She provides effective support for newer and less experienced colleagues.
66. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Teaching in Years 7 to 9 was also less effective than in Years 10 and 11 at the time of the last inspection. The pattern of results was similar, too, with results at the end of Year 9 exceeding the national average, and GCSE results in line with the national average. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs has improved through the good work done by support staff.

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

67. Standards are in line with the national average. Provision for language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory. The teacher in charge of developing good practice across all subjects, though currently absent, has made a start by offering colleagues guidance in promoting spelling strategies and in the importance of focusing on important subject-specific words. Not all subject departments are aware of the importance of fully incorporating literacy skills into their planning and practice. Reflecting their capability on entering the school, pupils read and comprehend satisfactorily. However, their spelling and written presentation are addressed only in some subjects. Good practice occurs in drama, art and design, expressive arts and physical education for both correct writing and good speaking skills. In most subjects, there is good provision of technology to support pupils with hearing impairment.
68. Pupils' speaking skills are better than their written capabilities. In discussions, most pupils can express their views clearly, and on occasions, quite forcibly. They have a sound level of vocabulary, which they can use appropriately. The library is a satisfactory resource and is a pleasant area for study. The librarian encourages new pupils to make use of it. However, there are far too few books, especially subject-specific reference works, for the numbers of pupils using it. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. Seven pupils are identified as being at an early stage of learning the language. Pupils' needs are identified on entry through reports from primary schools, and through national tests. Later entrants are referred to for baseline assessment. However, pupils are not always placed in appropriate teaching groups, or withdrawn for extra support, so that work can be tailored to their needs. Resources are limited, although there are bilingual dictionaries in the library.

## Modern foreign languages

Provision in modern foreign languages is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons well.
- Marking of pupils' work is not thorough enough to show them how to improve.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory.

### Commentary

69. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were below average for the levels expected, as is also the case at the end of 2004. These standards were lower than in all other foundation subjects. Standards for the current Year 9 are broadly average for the levels expected. There is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls. The majority of pupils undertake structured work where they identify key points and some details in reading and listening material, for example, about daily routine tasks or the characteristics of friends. They are more successful at listening and reading activities than at speaking and writing. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, have satisfactory achievement and progress.
70. GCSE results at grades A\* - C were above the national average in French and German in 2003 and at national averages for grades A\* - G. The provisional results for 2004 show a decline in standards in both languages in grades A\* - C. There is no significant difference between boys' and girls' performance. The apparent decline in standards in 2004 is because the pupils who opted for modern foreign languages were of average capability compared with the more highly attaining 2003 cohort. Standards by the end of Year 11 for the current pupils are in line with national averages. Achievement is satisfactory because pupils of all groups, boys and girls, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, attain standards which match their capabilities. Pupils can accurately describe what they do to earn money and write extended paragraphs about their school, themselves and their daily routine. They gain confidence in using the language to write about past events and future plans, but they generally lack confidence in speaking, and standards are below average.
71. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, teachers provide a good range of learning activities which include listening, speaking, reading and writing tasks and which motivate and encourage the pupils well. However, in spite of their good knowledge, most teachers do not use the foreign language sufficiently in class to demonstrate to pupils that it is possible to communicate effectively for real purposes in the foreign language. Teachers prepare pupils very well for their GCSE coursework requirements, but their marking does not regularly indicate basic language errors and rarely shows pupils how they can improve. In a minority of lessons where teaching is unsatisfactory, it is because class management is not effective enough. The unsatisfactory attitudes and behaviour of a small number of pupils interfere with their own learning and that of the class as a whole. In Years 7 to 9, too many pupils do not take a pride in their work and are satisfied with untidily presented or incomplete written work. The unsatisfactory accommodation in huts precludes adequate use of new technologies to support pupils' learning, although opportunities are wherever possible taken to use ICT to support pupils' learning. Shared arrangements for teaching the same class pose extra responsibilities and difficulties on teachers.
72. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The head of department has researched examination requirements, and adopted a modular scheme which has the potential to meet pupils' needs better. She has a clear educational vision set on raising pupils' achievement and increasing the numbers of pupils studying languages in Years 10 and 11, which are currently

very low and decreasing. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory; schemes of work and procedures for assessing pupils' progress are now in place.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement is good in Years 7 to 9.
- Unsatisfactory resources for ICT limit learning opportunities.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory and has a detrimental impact on ethos of subject.
- The management and provision for mathematics across the curriculum is unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

73. Results in 2003 National Curriculum test at the end of Year 9 were in line with the national average in relation to all schools and low in relation to similar schools based on prior attainment, and pupils underachieved. There were no significant differences between boys' and girls' results. The results were similar to those in science but below those in English. Provisional results for 2004 show a higher proportion of pupils gaining the expected level. The 2003 GCSE results for both boys and girls were below the national average for all schools. This shows unsatisfactory progress from Year 9 to Year 11. Results in tests and examinations have been adversely affected by the inconsistency in teaching and learning due to staffing problems. 2004 results indicate a more successful picture.
74. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Their attainment on entry is broadly in line with the national average, and standards are above average in relation to national expectations by Year 9. This is sound achievement. In Years 10 and 11, standards are average and achievement is satisfactory across all levels of capability. Coursework already done by pupils in Year 11 is of good quality. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress. Use of ICT to enhance the learning opportunities of pupils is restricted by the lack of resources in the department and access to computers suites in other parts of the school.
75. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In Years 7 to 9, teaching is generally good; the National Strategy is fully in place. The three-part lesson is effectively used, and plenary sessions enhance pupil learning opportunities. In Years 10 and 11, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations, and share the aims of lessons with pupils well so that they understand what they have to do. Good attention is paid to pupils' individual needs. There is effective use of praise, which is raising pupils' confidence and their levels of achievement and enjoyment of the subject. Timed tasks are used to keep the pace of the lesson brisk, and this helps to maintain pupils' concentration very well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and, where teaching and learning are most effective, they use a range of teaching strategies with appropriate levels of challenge. These lessons are well planned to ensure that pupils develop their skills and understanding effectively. Pupils work well independently and increasingly well in collaborative tasks. The satisfactory lessons, especially in Years 10 and 11, did not have a sharp focus and brisk pace, lowering the quality of learning. In some classes, particularly in Years 9, 10 and 11, and mainly in middle-attaining sets, a small minority of pupils disrupt the learning of the other pupils. Class management is not effective enough. However, where pupils' attitudes are good, effective learning takes place, and most pupils complete their work.
76. Assessment procedures are good, but not consistently applied. Teachers have assessment data available for all pupils, which is generally shared with them. Where this occurs, the pupils know what their targets are and what they have to do to improve. Marking is satisfactory, yet not consistent across the department. Where it is good, this feedback motivates pupils to further improve their work, improving achievement.

77. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The subject leader has a clear vision for improving the work of the department and raising the profile of mathematics but management strategies are not effective enough. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is satisfactory. With support from the school's professional development tutor, new members of staff are well inducted into the department. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, reflecting the fact that provision fell and has only recently begun to improve. Staffing is now more settled. Assessment is central to raising standards and is now used as a tool to inform both teachers and pupils how to improve further. However, the quality of accommodation is unsatisfactory; rooms are small and limit teaching strategies. The facilities for display are poor, and this restricts raising the pupils' self-esteem by displaying their work. Recent access to interactive whiteboards has been of benefit to teaching and learning approaches.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

78. Although numeracy standards are satisfactory, and sufficient to support learning in other subjects, the overall provision is unsatisfactory. There is not a rigorous approach to managing the provision and thus the work of other subjects is not monitored or evaluated adequately. There has not been any whole-staff awareness raising of numeracy teaching, and there is no numeracy policy. Where subjects do recognise the importance of this work, activities are planned to include numeracy in a variety of areas. Good use of numeracy skills occurs in geography where bar graphs and population statistics are used to enhance work. Use of scale occurs in art and design, and in science good use is made of calculations, equations and graphs. Limited use of numeracy skills is also made in physical education, history and modern foreign languages.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

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

- Immature behaviour by pupils leads to unsatisfactory achievement in some classes.
- The range of extra-curricular activities is good.
- The use of ICT to develop pupils' skills is unsatisfactory.

#### **Commentary**

79. Standards in the 2003 National Curriculum tests for 14-year-olds were average. Boys' and girls' results have been similar for several years. The proportion of pupils exceeding the expected level was average. In comparison with similar schools, results were below average and well below average in comparison with pupils' prior attainment at the age of 11. Results were below those in English but similar to those in mathematics. Provisional results for 2004 show a broadly similar picture. About 20 pupils take three separate sciences at GCSE and the rest take the double award. The proportion of pupils gaining grades A\*-C in at least one science subject was broadly average. In the double award, results were below the national average, with girls doing much better than boys. Almost all pupils gained a grade and the proportion getting the highest grades was average. In 2003, GCSE results in science were better than those in mathematics but below those in English. In 2004, girls again performed better than boys and the provisional results are again below the national average. This is a reflection of the fact that the school reports that a significant minority of boys underachieved because of their attitudes.
80. Pupils' achievement is currently satisfactory, and standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 9 and 11. This is in contrast with recent test and examination results which suggested pupils were underachieving. This improvement in achievement reflects the fact that there is now a full complement of permanent staff after a long period of

staffing turbulence. Boys and girls achieve as well as each other during Years 7 to 9 but girls achieve better than boys during Years 10 and 11. Through support from senior staff, the department are using assessment procedures to target underachievement amongst boys, and using this information to improve the quality of work being set. Gifted and talented pupils, pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups achieve as well as others. In Year 7, pupils can explain diffusion and expansion in terms of the kinetic theory and can identify everyday examples of them. In Year 9, pupils can select and draw the best type of graph to display continuous and discontinuous information about inheritance. Some pupils are able to identify the National Curriculum level of their work. In Year 11, pupils know which of a series of metals is the most reactive and can explain why in terms of the structure of the atom. They display good practical skills, for example, they are able to set up an experiment to help decide the best wire to use for an investigation into electrical resistance, although some are unsure about the underlying theory of electrical circuits.

81. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers share the learning objectives with the pupils, which enable them to concentrate on what they are expected to learn. Imaginative methods are used, for example, role play to help pupils understand what happens to atoms during chemical change and quizzes to reinforce learning. Challenging approaches are used, as for example, when pupils are expected to observe and to try to explain what they see during lessons, or to decide which of three explanations best explains a scientific phenomenon. They are expected to think for themselves, teachers say 'you tell me' when pupils ask a question they could probably answer themselves. Data projectors are well used to enliven learning and capture pupils' interest, for example, in a Year 11 class on electricity, various models of voltage and current were displayed to deepen pupils' understanding of these concepts. Due attention is paid to health and safety during practical sessions. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, it is because teachers fail to impose acceptable standards of behaviour due to weak classroom management. In some classes, pupils are reluctant to settle down and listen in spite of the best efforts of the teacher and achievement suffers. Lessons that proceed at a slow pace are more likely to suffer from disruptive behaviour. The presence of careless and unfinished work in pupils' books, especially in Years 7 to 9, shows that some teachers' expectations are still not high enough. Lack of access to ICT equipment in laboratories means that pupils do not get enough opportunity to develop their ICT skills.
82. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The newly appointed curriculum leader has made a good start but has not had enough time to impact significantly on standards and achievement. He is strongly supported by the staff, and they are working effectively to raise standards and achievement. New and inexperienced staff feel well supported and valued. The performance of the department has been carefully analysed and patterns identified. Plans are in place to establish systematic revision classes for pupils taking external examinations and to improve the management of coursework. The scheme to forge closer curriculum links with primary schools has the potential to significantly improve achievement in Years 7 to 9.
83. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Although standards at GCSE are similar, progress during Years 10 to 11 is better, and investigational work in Years 7 to 9 and its assessment have improved. The monitoring of teaching and learning is now more systematic, and much of the accommodation has been refurbished. Extra-curricular activities such as the science club and entries to competitions that have resulted in the winning of major prizes motivate pupils. There remains a shortage of textbooks but staff work hard to ensure that this does not hold back pupils' progress.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good in Years 10 and 11.
- Standards by Year 9 are below the national average because there is not enough time available.
- The provision of ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory.

### Commentary

84. Pupils enter the school with varying experiences in using ICT but overall standards are below average. Teacher assessment in 2004 for Year 9 shows standards are below average and these match the standards seen in the inspection. Insufficient time is allocated for discreet ICT in Years 7 and 8 and there is no uniformity of provision, although National Curriculum requirements are broadly met. As a consequence, the progress that individual pupils make varies considerably. Their achievement overall by the end of Year 9 is satisfactory.
85. GCSE results in 2003 were well above average. Boys performed better than girls. Provisional results for 2004 were average for girls and just below average for boys. Disruptions in staffing, together with a lack of motivation amongst boys, in particular, resulted in a failure to complete coursework, leading to this weakness in standards. Standards by the end of Year 11 broadly match the national average. The achievement of both boys and girls is good. This is because good teaching, focused upon examination requirements, helps them make up the shortfall in their knowledge and skills, a consequence of the inconsistent provision in Years 7, 8 and 9.
86. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 and 11. In Years 7 and 8, teachers attempt to cover the national strategy programme but the time allocated to different groups varies due to the teaching of ICT as part of a carousel of subjects. In Year 9, all pupils have one lesson per week. They make progress but they do not achieve the higher levels because teaching is focused upon learning basic skills missed in Years 7 and 8. Teachers have good control and maintain good relationships, encouraging good behaviour and good attitudes in pupils. The current storage and presentation of work limit the effectiveness of teacher assessments and make it difficult for pupils to consolidate their learning given the fragmented nature of the provision. Teaching and learning in examination classes in Years 10 and 11 are satisfactory or better in classes seen and in scrutiny of work. Staffing is now more stable and teachers are knowledgeable and focused upon examination requirements. Pupils are set clear objectives with appropriate time frames and their work is continually monitored. The majority of pupils are able to work independently and there has been an improvement in the completion rates of coursework. Topics covered add considerably to pupils' knowledge of the world of work and business. Some excellent work was seen on the construction of business databases. The motivation of some boys still remains a problem, particularly when they are dealing with abstract concepts such as 'health and safety' or 'legal responsibilities' rather than with real situations. Across the year groups, less capable pupils find it more difficult to work independently and require more structure to assist their learning. This is particularly applicable to pupils with special educational needs, who do not always receive adequate support. More capable pupils are not always challenged adequately.
87. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is clear vision and recognition of what is needed to improve standards and very good support is given to the newly qualified teachers in the department. Other factors outside of the control of the department, such as resources, staffing levels, and timetabling restraints, are, however, limiting the current effectiveness of management. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Technical support is now good and staffing and resources have improved.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

88. Leadership and management responsibilities for cross-curricular ICT are unsatisfactory. Consequently, there is no monitoring of pupils' progress in ICT across subjects and in Years 7, 8 and 9, the assessment of pupils' ICT capability is limited to work in discreet ICT lessons. Similarly, in Years 10 and 11, for the small number of pupils not taking GCSE, there is no monitoring or reporting of their progress. There are significant variations in the use of ICT across subjects. Very good use is made of digital technology in expressive arts and good use is made of graphics and computer-aided design in design and technology. Teachers in mathematics, geography and English are using interactive whiteboards well to improve teaching. In other subjects, the use of ICT is satisfactory but is limited by access to resources. In religious education and music, the use of ICT is unsatisfactory. Whilst teachers have been provided with laptops, the national training provided for teachers has had only a minimal impact on teachers' confidence in using ICT.

## HUMANITIES

### History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in most lessons motivates pupils to learn well.
- Effective leadership has led to good improvement since the last inspection.

### Commentary

89. In Year 9, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected nationally. A significant number reach above average standards. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 7 to 9, and in individual lessons, many often achieve well. High attainers are set suitably challenging work, and usually achieve well as a result. Very occasionally, a few pupils do not achieve as well as they should because they are not prepared to do as their teachers ask them, or to show any commitment to hard work. Most pupils in Years 7-9 have good knowledge about the past. Most see and explain well the reasons for past events. The highest attainers use and evaluate competently a wide range of historical sources. The lowest attainers struggle to understand much beyond simple information in a source. This is usually because their basic literacy is weak. Spelling is weak among a significant minority, although this is sometimes the result of careless copying of words spelt for them.
90. The GCSE results in 2003 at grades A\*-C were in line with the national average for all schools. Significantly, more girls than boys gained the highest grades. The provisional results in 2004 were lower than 2003, although the proportion who gained an A or A\* grade rose. The differing standards reflect reasonably well the capabilities of the pupils who opted to take the subject in each year. The standard for the current group of pupils in Year 11 is in line with the standard expected nationally. The majority of pupils achieve satisfactorily in lessons because teachers set suitable tasks and expect pupils to work hard. Most pupils concentrate, work well and many make good progress. The highest attainers achieve well, because their teachers have high expectations and set appropriately demanding tasks. The lower attainers are supported well by their teachers and support staff, and achieve satisfactorily. The majority of pupils in Years 10 and 11 have sound knowledge of the topics they are studying. They explain successfully why events have happened. The highest attainers make valid deductions from historical sources and see and explain changes over time. They ask perceptive questions and argue a point of view articulately. The knowledge and understanding of the lowest attainers are frequently patchy.
91. The teaching overall is good and leads to good learning. It is never less than satisfactory. The

best teaching is characterised by high expectations of hard work and good behaviour, which establish a constructive learning atmosphere in lessons. Relationships are good, and combined with effective class management, they create respect and a wish to learn among the pupils. Teachers plan their lessons well; they take good account of the differing capabilities of their pupils. Lessons proceed at a good pace, and finish with a short session in which pupils and teacher review together what has been learned. Pupils' work is marked regularly, but the comments on pupils' books do not always make it clear how they can improve their future work. The teaching arrangements in Years 7 to 9, where a minority of classes is shared between two teachers, and a minority of pupils are taught in sets which are not appropriate for their capability, hamper the achievement of these pupils.

92. The department is managed satisfactorily and led well. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are good. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection in improving the quality of teaching, the schemes of work and the monitoring and support of the work of the department. Pupils still do not use ICT often enough in class time to support their own learning because the department lacks computers for pupils' use and cannot always book the central facilities at suitable times.

## Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The overall good quality of teaching and learning.
- Limited opportunities for fieldwork.
- Strong commitment of the staff to raising standards of attainment.
- New staffing arrangements working as a coherent team.
- Good use of computers in teaching.

### Commentary

93. In the 2003 GCSE examinations, results for the percentage of pupils gaining A\* to C grades were below the national average, although a significant proportion of pupils achieved results in line with or above their predicted grades, indicating satisfactory achievement overall. The 2004 results showed a further decline over the previous year. The standard of work seen for pupils by the end of Year 11 is below national expectations but with signs of improvement. From inspection evidence, standards at the end of Year 9 are below national expectations. Bearing in mind that the attainment of pupils in geography on entry to Year 7 is below expectations, their achievement by the end of Year 9 is satisfactory. Problems with staffing over the past two years have had an adverse effect on the standards of pupils' work across the school. High staff turnover, reliance on non-specialists, temporary and supply teachers resulted in lack of continuity and lowering of standards generally. Pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress and achieve as well as other pupils because of the support they receive.
94. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Lessons are very well planned, including reference to opportunities for citizenship, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Work matched to the prior attainment of pupils is also planned but provision for gifted and talented pupils is inconsistent. The good subject knowledge of the teachers is used effectively to challenge the pupils and encourage them to express opinions. In a lesson on living with hazards, the pupils had to justify their choice of living either near a volcano or in an earthquake zone. A range of teaching styles is used, including paired and group discussions as well as student multimedia presentation of their project work. Year 8 pupils successfully used role play as individuals with particular interests to reach agreement demonstrating how different factors influence the location of settlements in specific locations. Starter exercises are effectively used to get pupils thinking and to set the tone for productive work in all lessons.



Homework is regularly set, thoroughly marked with suggestions for improvement. Although newly-acquired whiteboards are being used in most lessons, computers are not available in classrooms for the student to use. However, the pupils' work contains ample evidence of the use of computers to enhance their learning. The enthusiasm of the staff, very good management skills and generally good behaviour of the pupils, create a good atmosphere for learning and enjoyment of most lessons. However, a minority of pupils present challenging behaviour which sometimes slows the pace of learning. Although planning includes additional activities for gifted and talented pupils, the staff recognise the need to improve its application.

95. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The recently appointed part time head of department has a clear vision for improving standards of attainment and ensuring that the pupils appreciate the relevance of the subject to real life situations. Dedication and commitment to the department and the school provide a good role model for the staff, who show very good team spirit, sharing resources and supporting each other. Fieldwork provision for pupils is limited but the department recognises the need to increase opportunities for this valuable element of the subject. The high quality of displays, including up-to-date newspaper reports on topics being studied, enhance the learning environment. Close liaison with staff and good support for whole-school policies such as citizenship, literacy, numeracy, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, help to give the subject a valuable role within the school.
96. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved from overall satisfactory to good, with no unsatisfactory teaching observed. Most staffing difficulties have been resolved, all four teachers being specialists, although two are on part-time contracts. Schemes of work have been revised to reflect the needs and interests of the pupils. Resources are satisfactory; they have been well developed, although there are insufficient textbooks, and this has a negative impact on learning. The provision and good use of a data projector in each classroom has enhanced teaching. All teaching is now in specialist rooms which contain good displays of pupils' work.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good.
- Teaching is good.
- Statutory requirements are not met in Years 10 and 11.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory.
- Leadership and management are good and bringing about improvement.
- The good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### Commentary

97. Pupils' achievement in Years 7 to 9 is good. By Year 9, standards are average in relation to the Hampshire Agreed Syllabus, an improvement since the last inspection. Given pupils' below average standards on entry to the school, this represents good achievement. Pupils are well able to link their knowledge of religion with their everyday experiences.
98. Results in the GCSE full course were above average in 2003. In 2004, standards were below average where 50 per cent of pupils achieved A\* - C. Whilst this was lower than the previous year, the limited amount of available specialist teaching was an important factor. By Year 11, standards are average in the GCSE full course. Pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of how they can learn from religion and apply it in their lives. They make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of religious concepts. They are achieving well. Pupils do not always question and explore their own attitudes in depth owing to the lack of time. Achievement and standards are being adversely affected because the subject does not

receive enough time for the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus to be taught. Furthermore, the subject is only currently taught to about one third of pupils in Years 10 and 11; this means that these pupils do not receive their proper entitlement and statutory requirements are not met. However, provision for those pupils who do receive their full entitlement is good. They achieve well. Pupils' spiritual and moral awareness is good. They show respect for the views, faiths and traditions of each other.

99. Teaching is good and has improved since the last inspection. The teachers' good use of discussion and questioning enables pupils to express their opinions and form clear judgements about religious and moral issues. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good, because pupils are provided with good support and work that matches their needs. The use of key words and subject-specific language enables pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills. Pupils make good progress as a result of the teachers' good knowledge of the subject and an awareness of individual pupils' needs. The teachers' use of effective teaching methods, coupled with clear expectations and challenge, enables all pupils to make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of religious and moral issues. Homework is well used to allow for individual research and to extend pupils' understanding. Assessment is unsatisfactory. Although the procedures provide a general basis for assessing what pupils know and understand, there is no specific assessment on learning from religion. Not enough work is done to set detailed targets and so pupils are unclear about the standards they are reaching and what they need to do to improve.
100. Curriculum leadership is good with a clear purpose and direction. The head of the department has a clear view of the needs of the subject. The subject is managed satisfactorily, with good planning and monitoring of pupils' work, although assessment is unsatisfactory. However, because of the fact that statutory requirements are still not met, which is a senior management decision, improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory overall.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good in Years 7 to 9.
- The wide range of GCSE subjects in Years 10 and 11.
- Accommodation for food technology rooms is good but is unsatisfactory for resistant materials.
- Leadership is very good.

### **Commentary**

101. Pupils' achievement in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory. On entry to the school, their standard of work in graphics is in line with the national average and written work overall is satisfactory. Pupils attain best in practical tasks and are quick to replicate the skills that their teachers have ably demonstrated earlier. By the end of Year 9, pupils' skills are in line with the national expectations, although their written work is often restricted in length, a direct consequence of a department policy to allocate available time to practical activities. Attainment by the end of Year 11 is in line with national expectations and achievement satisfactory overall. In the lessons seen and in the folders studied, achievement varied from very good to unsatisfactory. Written work varied from well-presented, word-processed folders to mediocre, quickly assembled hand-written sheets. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are generally good, although on occasions pupils do not listen to their teachers and accept the good advice given. Practical skills are in advance of theory and design, except in child care and electronics, where there is a better balance between the two elements. Computers are used well in electronics and graphics for presentation and pupils' layout skills are developing in other subjects. In 2003, GCSE results were close to the national average but well above in graphics and in systems and control. Many pupils attain the higher A\*-A grades (twice the national figure) and for

many pupils design and technology is their best examination subject. Provisional results for 2004 have maintained this picture. When given the opportunity, pupils often discuss the topic in hand and bring in fresh perspectives. There is a significant difference in the attention span of boys and girls: boys show a tendency to misbehave, if insufficiently challenged by the tasks set for them.

102. Teaching and learning range from very good to satisfactory and are good overall. The strengths of teaching lie in the planning, ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities and an insistence on high standards of behaviour. When pupils are inspired (as in food, graphics and systems and control), most have positive attitudes to both theoretical and practical tasks. They work independently and require the minimum of teacher supervision. This is not the case in resistant materials where pupils require consistent teacher inputs. They are content, for example, to have everything provided for them by the teacher. There was significant evidence of the use of ICT in work and this is increasing following the installation of the graphics suite. Pupils' mathematical skills need refining and greater accuracy stressed when measuring out, as seen in a Year 7 graphics lesson. Most work has been checked by staff and in Years 10 and 11, detailed recommendations are appreciated by pupils. Pupils frequently carry out self-evaluations against National Curriculum objectives. Progress through the levels, however, is uneven, indicating that teachers' feedback and target-setting have not been consistent. Written work is generally well presented, although spelling errors are often missed. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory.
103. The leadership of the subject is very good. There are strengths in curricular planning and evaluation. A good range of topics in Years 7 to 9 provides a good springboard for studies in Years 10 and 11. Management is satisfactory. The implementation of assessment procedures is progressing well but not adopted by all staff. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are satisfactory, as is the process of self-evaluation. Accommodation in the materials block is in need of refurbishment, contrasting with the excellent facilities for food and textiles. The provision of, and access to, computers is good across the department. Technicians work hard and are used to good effect in class as well as in the preparation of materials. Health and safety weaknesses are recognised by the school. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

### **Art and design**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement is good.
- Teaching is good.
- The department is well led and managed.
- Provision for and use of ICT to develop pupils' and staff skills is unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

104. Overall, pupils' achievement is good in Years 7 to 9. Their skills on entry are below those normally found in Year 7. At age 14, standards are above average when compared with those expected for the age group, showing good progress. This is confirmed by the teachers' assessments in relation to levels in the National Curriculum. Pupils' creative ideas are respected and developed as a consequence of skills being developed systematically. Some very good work was seen in Year 8 where pupils wrote a magical story based on spiritual and cultural traditions, beliefs and ideas and transformed these concepts into very powerful masks.

105. By Year 11, standards are above average for pupils' age, and achievement is good. In the 2003 GCSE examinations, results were below the national average at grades A\*-C, and provisional results for 2004 indicate a similar situation. However, all pupils entered for the examination were successful in attaining a grade between A\*-G. The increased range of media and scale, linked to the individualised learning programmes steered by the teachers, underpin the significant rise in GCSE results in recent years. Students' work in ceramics is a real strength and, as a result of very good teaching, much work is outstanding. Workbooks are used very effectively as research tools and clearly show the progress pupils make in Years 10 and 11.
106. Teaching and learning are good. In the best lessons, particularly in the older year groups, an extensive variety of materials and methods is available and pupils are encouraged to develop their work in individual directions. For example, in a Year 11 lesson, pupils worked in pencil, collage and oil pastel and thought beyond the usual sizes of drawings and paintings. Pupils were carefully guided to follow their personal strengths and interests and to build on them to create work in a variety of styles, leading to very good learning. In Years 7 to 9, where teaching was good, pupils made very good progress as a result of carefully crafted planning. Very good use was made of time and the ongoing assessment meant that most pupils knew exactly what they needed to do to improve. A good balance of direct teaching and individualised learning ensured that work was well matched to pupils' differing needs. This increased the pace of learning and the good rate at which pupils acquired and practised new skills, including those experiencing learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language. The department is fully inclusive and this is reflected in the good response of pupils to both the subject and the staff. Assessment of pupils' work is accurate and pupils are provided with opportunities to annotate and talk about their work, which encourages self-criticism. Teachers ensure that pupils understand the vocabulary and this supports pupils' literacy development. However, pupils of average capability are not always sufficiently challenged by the work. The use of ICT to develop pupils' skills is unsatisfactory. There is no provision for pupils to access ICT in the department. This is a significant weakness.
107. Leadership and management are good, providing clear and sensitive direction for both staff and pupils. There is now effective monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. As a result of a consistent approach to planning, and a focus on assessment for learning, improvement since the last inspection has been good. There is good capacity to improve further.

## Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership and management.
- Pupils' achievement is good.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Extra-curricular provision is very rich.
- Statutory requirements are not met in Years 7 to 9 for ICT aspects of the subject.

## Commentary

108. On entry to the school, pupils' standards of attainment are below the national average. Standards are average by the end of Year 9, representing good achievement, although a few pupils have difficulty with some important musical concepts. The majority have greater confidence in singing and playing, both as individuals and in larger groups. The focus of pupils' attention, especially when listening to music, is significantly better and provides a secure foundation for those who elect to follow GCSE courses. By the end of Year 11, pupils' musical skills are very well developed and this is reflected in the increasing numbers electing to pursue examination courses, currently 37 in Year 11 and 40 in Year 10. Above average

results in GCSE in 2003 sustained a good record, although provisional results for 2004 are slightly below average. Given pupils' prior levels of attainment, their achievements are good. Inspection evidence confirms this and augurs well for rising standards in the future.

109. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school, with several very good features. In all year groups, the impact of very well qualified teachers and expert musicians is clearly seen in detailed planning, preparation and presentation of lessons. Teachers' high expectations of pupils' engagement with music in performing, composing and critical listening are characterised by sensitivity to the needs of individuals. This engenders very positive attitudes, behaviour and attention to the task in hand by pupils who clearly value their music lessons highly. Lapses in such very high standards are very rare and very well managed by the teachers. Consequently, every lesson observed had positive outcomes, especially in the good levels of achievement seen. The teachers and pupils demonstrate their enjoyment of music making and their commitment to the life of the whole school by their involvement in a wide range of instrumental and vocal ensembles, performing in school concerts and productions and further afield in the local community.
110. The department is well led with very clear vision and high levels of commitment and energy. Management is good. Planning for improvement is very well sustained despite the cramped accommodation and limited resources, especially ICT, to the extent that the subject fails to meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum in Years 7 to 9. In this respect in particular, the progress made since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. The high expectations of teachers have the potential to improve standards rapidly if this issue is remedied.

## **Drama**

Provision in drama is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good leadership and management.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Pupils' achievement is good.
- Extra-curricular provision is good.
- Standards are constrained by unsatisfactory accommodation and resources.

## **Commentary**

111. On entry to the school, pupils' experience of drama is limited and standards are consequently below expectations. Standards are above average by the end of Year 9, representing good achievement. The majority of pupils have greater confidence improvising and performing, both as individuals and in larger groups. The focus of pupils' attention, especially when evaluating their own and others' work, is significantly better and provides a firm foundation for those who elect to follow GCSE courses. By the end of Year 11, pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are well developed and this is reflected in the increasing numbers electing to pursue examination courses, currently 41 in Year 11 and 50 in Year 10. Results in GCSE in 2003 were below average, although provisional results for 2004 are better. Given pupils' prior levels of attainment, these achievements are good.
112. Teaching and learning are good, with examples of very good teaching. Teachers use their subject expertise very well. Lessons are well planned, and pupils respond well to the high expectations set. Class management is good and when pupils do challenge, the issues are capably dealt with. Assessment is good. Pupils' involvement in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including workshops, theatre visits and performing in school productions, adds significantly to their learning.

113. Leadership and management are good. The head of subject, who is relatively new to the post, has a clear vision and monitors and evaluates effectively. The quality of accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory overall. In this respect in particular, no progress has been made since the last inspection, and it is because of the quality of teaching that achievement is good. There are several health and safety issues in the accommodation which have been brought to the attention of the school.

### **Expressive arts**

Provision in expressive arts is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is very good leadership.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Pupil achievement is very good.
- Health and safety issues have not been adequately managed.

### **Commentary**

114. Expressive arts is not that traditional amalgam of art, dance, drama and music that combines one or more of those subjects. It is the retained title of a GCSE syllabus to accredit, amongst other things, the making of videos – media, communication and production – and is here only offered as a new study in Years 10 and 11.

115. On entry to the course in Year 10, pupils' experience of expressive arts and video production is limited. High expectations and outstanding examples of past work quickly set high standards and promote very good achievement. All pupils quickly gain confidence, both as individuals and in larger groups, planning, producing, developing and editing their work with increasing skills and efficiency. The focus of pupils' attention, especially when evaluating their own and others' work, is rapidly improved. By the end of Year 11, pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are very well developed and this is reflected in their very good and often outstanding results. Results in GCSE in 2003 were very well above average, although provisional results for 2004 were only average and out of keeping with the department's record. Given pupils' prior experience, these achievements are very good. In recent years, pupils have gained the highest marks in the country. The course is a popular option in Years 10 and 11.

116. Teaching and learning are very good. In both year groups, lesson planning is meticulously detailed. The high expectations for both work and behaviour engender pupils' very positive attitudes, behaviour and attention to the task in hand; they value their lessons highly. Lessons observed had positive outcomes, especially in the high levels of achievement seen. The expressive arts teacher and pupils demonstrate their commitment by their concentration, and the significant amount of extra time that pupils put into their studies. Assessment is very good and pupils are shown effectively how to develop their work.

117. The subject is very well led with very clear vision. Management is good, although issues relating to health and safety matters were brought to the school's attention. Planning for improvement is very well sustained despite the cramped accommodation and limited resources. In this respect in particular, no progress has been made since the last inspection.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education **is good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Provision for extra-curricular activities is good.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory.
- Leadership and management are good.

### Commentary

118. Pupils' achievement is good. The majority of pupils enter the school in Year 7 with attainment below the expected national level. Standards by the end of Year 9 are in line with national average. GCSE pupils in Years 10 and 11 make very good progress and continue to build on their prior attainment. Standards are above average in physical education and in line with national average for dance, showing good achievement for these pupils. Pupils who are not entered for national tests achieve well. There is no significant difference between girls and boys, different ethnic groups or pupils for whom English is a second language. Pupils with special educational needs make the same good progress as their peers. Gifted and talented pupils are not identified, although some achieve well at county and national levels.
119. GCSE results have been generally above the national average except for 2003, when standards dipped. A rigorous analysis identified that attainment in the practical components of the course were strong, but there were weaknesses in learning the theory and in the quality of teaching. Teaching methods have now been improved to ensure consistency throughout the whole course. Inspection evidence confirms pupils are well on course to attain standards above the national average in 2005. Pupils in Year 11 who are entered for GCSE dance have made very good progress over the two years, especially as they did not have dance lessons in Years 7 to 9. The majority are now achieving standards broadly in line with national expectation.
120. The quality of teaching and learning is good with instances of very good quality. All teachers are very good role models and they have a good relationship with all pupils; consequently, pupils respect their teachers and work hard during lessons and extra-curricular activities, making at least good progress. Teachers manage their classes well. Lessons are well planned, and teaching points are given clearly and appropriately, and this motivates pupils well. For example, in a Year 10 badminton lesson and in a GCSE theory lesson, teachers matched work well to the differing needs of the pupils. They challenged them consistently and sensitively through the use of very effective questioning, and the difficulty of the practical task. The use of ICT is satisfactory, although the staff recognise the need to develop this work further. Literacy and mathematical links are satisfactorily supported. However, whilst assessment is satisfactory, the quality of marking is inconsistent; inaccurate spellings and punctuation are not always identified to improve presentation. The standard of written work for dance is good and indicates a good level of challenge.
121. The contribution to pupils' personal development is good. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities: badminton, football, basketball, netball, athletics, rugby, cross-country and dance. These sessions are well attended and contribute to pupils' developing active lifestyles. They provide good opportunities to work with pupils from different year groups and to compete against other schools locally. Resources are satisfactory but accommodation is unsatisfactory. There are adequate playing fields, a sports hall and gymnasium. However, staff often have to waste valuable teaching time ensuring the field and assembly hall, which is also used for lessons, are clear of litter and provide a safe working environment after break and lunch time sessions. Changing room provision is poor; it is too small and not ventilated.

122. Leadership and management are good. The head of department has a good vision and this is well supported by the staff. Curriculum provision is effective, with appropriate plans to improve links with local feeder primary schools. Monitoring and evaluation are good. Teachers are closely monitored and guidance given on strengths and weaknesses, and this is helping to raise the quality of teaching and learning. Improvement since the last inspection has been good, especially in the provision for dance.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

### **Citizenship**

Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching is too variable.
- The programme of work is well planned and structured.
- Leadership is good.
- Opportunities for citizenship in other subjects are not taken up well enough by teachers.

### **Commentary**

123. There are no national norms available for this subject, against which pupils' attainment and experience can be measured. The available evidence from pupils' work and lessons seen indicates that pupils' overall attainment is broadly what is expected from pupils aged 11-16. They demonstrate understanding of such issues as drug and alcohol abuse, the role and powers of the police, and the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. They understand the problems of relationships and how to manage emotions and resolve conflict. They are aware of global problems such as threats to the environment.
124. The achievement of pupils varies from unsatisfactory to good, but is broadly satisfactory overall. This inconsistency is linked closely to the quality of teaching. Whilst most pupils are keen to contribute in class, many do not take the subject seriously enough to ensure that they achieve well.
125. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Citizenship is taught by form tutors. Whilst this has the benefit of helping to form a good relationship between pupils and their tutor, it means that teachers do not always have appropriate expertise for specific topics. As a result, the quality of teaching is inconsistent. In the best lessons, teachers use their own knowledge effectively, where appropriate, to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding and to hold their interest. Pupils are encouraged to put forward their own views as part of class discussion. In a minority of lessons little learning takes place because pupils' attitudes and behaviour are poor and the teacher does not deal with this effectively enough.
126. Pupils contribute to the running of the school by their involvement in the school council and through their work as prefects. A small number of prefects work closely with the headteacher to bring forward issues and to respond to her suggestions. In the past two years, some pupils have taken part successfully in a mini-United Nations project with local schools.
127. The department is led well and management is satisfactory. The programme of work is planned and structured well. The head of department monitors the teaching, and she has identified the need to eliminate the inconsistency. Good use is made of the expertise of outside agencies. The school has identified many opportunities for citizenship in other subjects. As yet, however, teachers rarely make pupils aware of such opportunities when they arise.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

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

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>4</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	5
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

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