

INSPECTION REPORT

KIMBERWORTH COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

Rotherham, South Yorkshire

LEA area: Rotherham

Unique reference number: 106948

Headteacher: Melvyn Whale

Reporting inspector: Denis Pittman
16976

Dates of inspection: 26th – 29th November 2001

Inspection number: 189454

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 to 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Roy Goodinson
Date of previous inspection:	30 th September 1996

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19740	Allan Smith	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20629	J Bryson	Team inspector	English English as an additional language	
22723	B Hartman	Team inspector	Mathematics	
1407	PJ Scott	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
31129	J Pickering	Team inspector	Art and design	
23891	P Slape	Team inspector	Design and technology	
14573	H Wareing	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Information and communication technology Geography	
28101	A R Lagden	Team inspector	Special educational needs History	
30911	J Barton	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages	
18846	P Priest	Team inspector	Music	
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17288	M A Warner	Team inspector	Religious education	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Kimberworth School is small comprehensive school, with 676 pupils on roll. It is situated close to the centre of Rotherham. In the area there are high levels of unemployment and social deprivation. The school is traditionally highly valued by the community it serves. The school has undergone two major reorganisation proposals within the last four years and is to be closed in 2004. The proportion of pupils who have free school meals, 32 per cent, is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, 19 per cent, is also high. The school is a mixed community with most pupils of white heritage backgrounds and nearly one fifth from Pakistani backgrounds. A small number of pupils are of black African or other heritage backgrounds. Pupils' attainment on entry has been consistently well below the national average; the present Year 7 indicates some improvement in basic skills following the introduction of literacy and numeracy strategies at Key Stage 2. Twenty-one per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is about average but the percentage with formal statements of need (1.92 per cent) is below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Kimberworth is a caring school. It effectively promotes the social development of most pupils and fosters racial harmony. The quality of teaching is usually satisfactory; it is sometimes good or better. However, standards in examinations are well below average and these do not compare well with other similar schools. The achievement and progress of pupils, especially in Years 7-9, is not as good as it should be. The leadership and management of the senior staff at the school are unsatisfactory; which leads to ineffectiveness in some areas. The school does not give satisfactory value for money. Although the school provides an acceptable quality of education it nevertheless has serious weaknesses.

What the school does well

- The support for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school values pupils and provides good pastoral care.
- The provision of a wide range of extra-curricular activities, particularly in sports, is very good, as are the opportunities for talented pupils and educational visits.
- The moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Relationships are very good.
- The quality of teaching in history, information and communication technology and physical education lessons is good.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment in the core subjects are low but particularly in English.
- Pupils are not making sufficient progress specifically in Years 7 to 9.
- The leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory.
- There is insufficient emphasis on and monitoring of literacy strategies in lessons.
- ICT skills and applications are not developed adequately in subjects across the curriculum.
- The use of information, such as data on assessment and attendance, is inconsistent and ineffective.
- The behaviour and attitudes to learning of a minority of pupils, primarily in Year 9, are unsatisfactory.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school's last inspection report was in 1996. The progress recorded on the key issues, identified at that time, has been unsatisfactory. Standards of attainment in GCSE examinations have declined to a position where they are well below average and are below the performance of similar schools. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 are underachieving; pupils' progress is not being consistently monitored because of ineffective assessment procedures in departments. Overall standards of literacy are low; whilst there are more opportunities to practise oral skills, the general quality of speaking and listening by the end of Year

9 is still unsatisfactory. Pupils' spelling and punctuation are weak. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and curriculum developments have not been consistently carried out by the senior leadership team or heads of department. In consequence initiatives that have been started, such as streaming by ability, teaching of literacy and the provision in lessons for the more able, have not been effectively reviewed and their impact has suffered. The quality of homework tasks and the regularity of it being set are still variable between departments. The school does not comply with the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship.

An appropriate performance management policy is in place and this is having an impact on improving the monitoring of teaching. A significant development has been the improvement in the provision and the quality of management in special educational needs. The provision for gifted and talented pupils is an emerging strength. The level of resources for information and communication technology is better but the application of skills in lessons is variable.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved at the end of Year 11 based on average point scores in GCSE examinations.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
GCSE examinations	E	E	E	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E

In 2001, attainment in the National Curriculum tests for English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 9 was well below the national average. In comparison with similar schools, attainment in English was below average, in science it was well below but in mathematics it was in line with the performance of these schools. In all other subjects, apart from design and technology and geography where results were below average, attainment in teacher assessments was significantly below national results. In general, attainment is below the standard of what is being achieved in similar schools. Despite the fact that attainment is relatively low on entry to the school, pupils are not making as much progress as they should be.

The proportion of Year 11 pupils gaining five or more A* to C grades (19 per cent) at GCSE was well below the national average and below the performance of similar schools. Given their prior attainment higher-attaining pupils did not achieve as well as expected. The proportion gaining five or more A* to G grades was below the national average but was well above that of comparable schools. The number of pupils achieving one or more GCSE grades was in line with the national average. The trend of improvement in GCSE performance is significantly below that of the national picture. The attainment of boys is better than that of girls, a feature which is not usually found nationally. The results in English were significantly low; standards in mathematics and science were well below national averages but were broadly the same as the performance in similar schools. The school did not meet its target of 25 per cent for its GCSE performance at A* to C in 2001 but exceeded its broader target for pupils achieving one or more A* to G grades. The target for 2002 of 34 per cent in the higher grades is unrealistic on the evidence from the inspection.

Pupils achieve well in physical education throughout the school and attain well above average in games by Years 10 and 11. Attainment in geography and information and communication technology is at least satisfactory and often good. Standards in religious education are in line with national expectations in Years 7 to 9 but well below expectations by the end of Year 11 because there is insufficient time to cover the syllabus adequately. Standards are below national expectations in history and design and technology, and well below national expectations in art and design, modern foreign languages and

music. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make satisfactory progress because they receive good support.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. The vast majority of pupils work well. However, the current situation, relating to the decision to close the school and the increasing number of supply teachers, is unsettling for pupils, some of whom are very concerned for the future. The overwhelming majority of pupils spoke well of their school: many with affection.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. The majority of the pupils behave well, in and around school. However, a significant minority shows unsatisfactory behaviour, which adversely affects their own and other pupils' progress.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The generally mature attitudes and helpfulness of most pupils towards each other and their teachers are good features. Relationships between pupils are very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory. This is partly due to the school's sustained attempts to raise awareness of the importance of good attendance. Whilst most pupils are punctual, lateness still remains a problem with some.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7 – 9	Years 10 – 11
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory in all years. Of the 131 lessons seen during the inspection, most were at least satisfactory with a significant proportion of them being good or better. A small amount of unsatisfactory teaching occurred, mainly in Years 9 and 10. The overall picture is the same as at the last inspection.

The teaching of English is satisfactory across the school. Teachers are knowledgeable, have a good understanding of their subject and generally have high expectations of pupils. However, the teaching of basic literacy skills is unsatisfactory; there are limited strategies in place for the teaching of these skills. The teaching of mathematics and science is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 and 11. The planned provision for numeracy and the teaching of numeracy skills across subjects is weak.

Teaching is good in history, ICT and physical education in both key stages. It is good in art and music in Years 7 to 9 and in mathematics and science in Years 10 to 11. In physical education, teachers manage pupils very well and make very good use of time and resources. Teachers' expectations are not high enough in design and technology. The quality and use of assessment to inform planning is unsatisfactory in design and technology, geography and modern foreign languages.

In the best lessons, the quality of teaching matches the quality of learning. Learning, overall, is satisfactory. It is good in information and communication technology and in physical education in both key stages. Learning is also good in science and English in Years 10 to 11, but it is unsatisfactory in modern foreign languages and in art and design and music in Years 10 to 11.

Teaching is better than learning in some lessons because pupils show unsatisfactory attitudes, are inattentive, concentrate only for short periods of time or lack skills such as the ability to listen carefully. Learning is also unsatisfactory when pupils are not aware of the level at which they should be working.

The quality of teaching in higher-attaining sets is at least satisfactory but the teaching of lower-attaining sets varies. Whilst there are examples of some good teaching of these groups, there are also examples of poor teaching, when levels of acceptable behaviour have not been established. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Teachers are aware of pupils' needs and give deserved praise and encouragement. The learning and progress of pupils with English as an additional language and of gifted and talented pupils are also satisfactory.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Overall satisfactory. Appropriate breadth and range in Years 7 to 9. In Years 10 to 11 there is good provision of vocational courses to reflect the needs of average and lower-attaining pupils. National Curriculum requirements for religious education are not met in Years 10 and 11 and provision for ICT in subjects across the curriculum is inadequate. Cross-curricular aspects of literacy are not fully implemented. The time allocated to art and music in Years 7-9 is low.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum. Pupils with statements of special need are effectively supported and reviewed annually. Pupils benefit from a good range of support from external agencies. There is an appropriate balance between support and withdrawal of these pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision is good and reflects the school's strong inclusive approach to education.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good, overall. Provision for pupils' social development is very good and for moral development it is good. Many opportunities are given to pupils to discuss moral issues and reach informed conclusions of their own. There is good cultural and multicultural provision. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The arrangements that the school has to ensure the general health, safety and welfare of its pupils are good. The procedures for promoting pupils' personal development are good. Pastoral care is a strength of the school. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory but the use of assessment to guide curricular planning is unsatisfactory.

The school has developed a good number of constructive links with partner institutions, business and the community. There are strong links with local and regional sporting clubs. Local institutions of further and higher education are involved in a number of initiatives with the school. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents and guardians is satisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Unsatisfactory. The school lacks a strategic direction and a focussed approach to monitoring its priorities. The delegation of responsibilities is inefficient. Induction procedures and support for new staff are weak.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Although the governors are supportive, they have not monitored and evaluated the school's work rigorously. Communication between the school and governors is open; committee groups are effective. Governors do not have strong links with departments. The school fails to comply fully with some statutory curriculum requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. Procedures for evaluating performance are not consistently applied. Monitoring and subsequent reviews are not reflected in precise action planning.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Material resources are used effectively; less effective is the deployment of specialist staff.

The commitment and work of the pastoral teams are good. The guidance and support provided make a significant contribution to establishing positive relationships in the school. The leadership and management of most departments are satisfactory; it is particularly effective in history and special educational needs. The management of art and music is unsatisfactory. Staffing provision is unsatisfactory, a direct consequence of the planned closure of the school. The overall quality of accommodation is poor, particularly the provision for physical education. The provision of learning resources is satisfactory overall.

Financial control is satisfactory. The school improvement plan requires more financial information relating to expenditure. The school tries hard to achieve the best value in its financial decisions. It appropriately consults a range of people about financial matters and obtains resources at a competitive price.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents feel comfortable when coming to the school with questions or a problem. • Their children makes good progress • Their children like coming to school • The school has high expectations of their children • The teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The behaviour of some pupils • The consistency of setting homework • They would like to be better informed about their child's progress • They would like the school to work more closely with parents

Inspectors agreed with the supportive comments about the approachability of the staff and the fact that the majority of pupils enjoyed coming to school. However, progress was not as good, overall, as parents believed and expectations about behaviour and pace of lessons were not always sharp enough. It is true that the behaviour of a significant minority of pupils is unsatisfactory but most pupils are well behaved. The regularity of homework is variable. Inspectors found that the school does work hard at involving parents in all aspects of their children's education.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When pupils first enter the school their overall standards of attainment are well below the national average. The profile of attainment of the group of pupils recently joining the school shows some improvement in achievement in basic skills.
2. In 2001, attainment in the National Curriculum tests for English, mathematics and science was well below the national average. In comparison with similar schools, attainment in English was below average, in science it was well below' but in mathematics it was in line with the performance of these schools. In all other subjects, apart from design and technology and geography, attainment was significantly below national results. In general, attainment is below the standard of what is being achieved in similar schools. Despite the fact that attainment is relatively low on entry to the school, pupils are not making as much progress as they should be.
3. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more A* to C grades (19 per cent) was well below the national average and below the performance of similar schools. Given their prior attainment, higher-attaining pupils did not achieve as well as expected. The proportion gaining five or more A* to G grades was below the national average but well above that of comparable schools. The number of pupils achieving one or more GCSE grades was in line with the national average. Overall performance in GCSE examinations was well below the national average and below average in comparison with similar schools. The trend of improvement in GCSE performance was significantly below that of the national picture. The attainment of boys is better than that of girls, a feature which is not usually found nationally. The results in English were significantly low; standards in mathematics and science were well below national averages but were broadly the same as the performance in similar schools.
4. The school did not meet its target of 25 per cent for its GCSE performance at A* to C in 2001, but exceeded its broader target for pupils achieving one or more A* to G grades. The target for 2002 of 34 per cent in the higher grades is unrealistic on the evidence from the inspection.
5. Overall attainment in English is well below national expectations. Standards of literacy are low. The standards achieved by girls are generally higher than those achieved by boys. By the end of Year 9 most pupils are not capable speakers and listeners. However, the handwriting of higher-attaining pupils is usually fluent, joined and legible; they are able to spell accurately. In Years 10 and 11, pupils' standards of achievement are well below the national average. The standard of pupils' reading is unsatisfactory. A high proportion of pupils do not read aloud with confidence, fluency or expression. Some pupils are beginning to improve the accuracy of their writing with re-drafting. Generally, handwriting is poor and punctuation and spelling are weak. Pupils are not making sufficient progress in both key stages.
6. Standards of attainment in mathematics for Years 7 to 9 are below national expectations but given their relatively low starting point, progress is generally satisfactory. Standards of numeracy are satisfactory; these skills are generally more effectively developed in the earlier years of the school. In Years 10 and 11, pupils make better progress in geometric and statistical topics than algebraic work. Overall attainment in mathematics is below national expectations.

7. Attainment in science is below the national average for pupils aged 14; their progress from entry to the end of Year 9 is unsatisfactory. Pupils have a weak understanding of scientific ideas and have difficulty in retaining the associated technical language. Pupils' observational drawings are of a low level of competence. Pupils with statements of special educational needs and whose first language is not English make satisfactory progress because of the close attention provided by learning support assistants. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory overall even though standards are low. Pupils' retention of knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas previously met are better.
8. Standards of attainment in physical education (PE) are above national expectations in Years 7 to 9. Boys develop high standards of skill in activities such as basketball, cricket and gymnastics. Girls show good skills in hockey with many girls applying them well in games. In Years 10 and 11 attainment in games is well above average. Results of inter-school competition in soccer, cricket, basketball and hockey are very good. In all year groups, pupils make good progress.
9. Attainment in geography and information and communication technology (ICT) is in line with national expectations in Years 7 to 9. In geography pupils show a good understanding of geographical features and how these affect the lives of people. Pupils present their work well. In ICT lessons, pupils can create sound files combining these with text and scanned images to create multimedia presentations. In both subjects, pupils make good progress in these early years. In Years 10 and 11 pupils' ICT skills are further developed enabling them to create web pages as part of a personal on-line magazine. Year 10 pupils show good geographical skills of map reading and apply these well to locating and describing places. Achievement is satisfactory at Key Stage 4.
10. In religious education, standards of attainment in Years 7 to 9 are in line with expectations, but are well below expectation by the end of Year 11. In the earlier years, pupils have a developing awareness of major world religions. They are able to discuss with increasing confidence religious and moral issues. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is adversely effected by insufficient time to cover the syllabus adequately.
11. Standards of attainment in history and design and technology are below national expectations. In design and technology, pupils have an improving understanding of the design process. Pupils are able to work from their own design plans that can range from simple drawings to detailed freehand design briefs. They have an increasing confidence in the use of technical language. In the work seen in Year 11, current standards of achievement are below average, but this varies within the specialisms. In textile technology, standards of attainment are closer to the national expectation. In history lessons, most pupils can select and use information from a variety of sources in order to describe events but find it harder to give reasons for why events happened. Progress is satisfactory in both subjects.
12. Standards of attainment in art and design, modern foreign languages and music are well below national expectations. In art, drawing from observation is underdeveloped; pupils do not use their sketchbooks sufficiently for research or experimentation into methods and materials. The pupils' use of colour is based on intuition rather than knowledge. Achievement is unsatisfactory in both key stages. In modern languages, pupils develop confidence in oral work at an early stage and pronunciation is relatively good. However, standards of writing and competence with grammar are below expectations. In music, pupils can correctly identify symbols and terms and can read

basic rhythmic notation. The limited opportunities for individual writing and research of ideas impedes progress.

13. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, in line with other pupils, in mainstream classes and in the learning support centre. This enables most of them to complete GCSE courses successfully. There are examples of pupils with special educational needs making good or very good progress. Two pupils in a Year 10 science lesson were observed to make good progress when skilful teaching enabled them to develop the criteria for observing and recording scientific phenomena whilst another two made very good progress in developing football skills in a Year 11 physical education lesson. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and pupils who are identified as gifted and talented make satisfactory progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils' attitudes to Kimberworth School are satisfactory, overall. The majority of the pupils show positive attitudes in and around school. There are good policies in place for the management of pupils' behaviour and for the guidance of pupils who find school life difficult. The current situation, relating to the decision to close the school, is unsettling for pupils, some of whom are very concerned for the future.
15. The vast majority of pupils work well. However, there has been a significant number of exclusions. These have been necessary because of the disruptive conduct of these individuals, in defiance of the school's behaviour policy and despite teachers' efforts to maintain positive order. The problems currently experienced have been exacerbated by the uncertain position of the school's future. This situation has overshadowed an overall positive picture. Nonetheless, unacceptable attitudes, anti-social behaviour and low attendance from some pupils confirm that a small number lack enthusiasm for the school. This has a severe impact on their attainment and the progress that they make.
16. Pupils' attitudes to different subjects vary: often they are very good. For example, in many lessons, where the teachers' subject knowledge and enthusiasm fully involve and thus motivate the pupils, there is considerable interest shown and pupils make a positive effort to succeed. This was clear in a physical education lesson where many pupils demonstrated very mature attitudes and benefited from the teacher's very good relationship with them. During discussions with inspectors, several groups of pupils noted, with some concern, that the large number of supply teachers was having a disturbing effect upon the school, as a whole. Pupils' learning is hampered in some years and subjects by the disruptive attitudes of a comparatively small group of pupils. There are occasions when the immature attitudes, disrespectful and challenging behaviour of these pupils make the pace of learning unsatisfactory. This occurs particularly in Year 9 and contributes to pupils' underachievement. However, where pupils are fully engaged in their activities, they make satisfactory progress. In practical subjects such as art, some good work is being produced. The generally mature attitudes and helpfulness of most pupils towards each other and their teachers are mostly positive.
17. The behaviour of the pupils at break and lunch times is generally good. They mix together quite easily and comfortably. The inspectors did not see any racist behaviour, although the school's behaviour records indicate that there has been an occasional incident. The school promotes the positive principles of tolerance and understanding well enough. Pupils are aware that the school will not tolerate bigotry. The overwhelming majority of pupils spoke well of their school, many with a significant volume of affection. The school promotes a strong sense of moral values and this

contributes to the good levels of knowledge and understanding of what is right and wrong.

18. Attendance is now just satisfactory, overall. This is partly due to the school's sustained attempts to raise awareness of the importance of good attendance. The majority of pupils attend regularly. The school does not yet, however, sufficiently analyse the data available to define potential areas for improvements. When teachers have to go over work with pupils whose attendance is poor so that they can catch up, this affects the progress of other pupils, as lessons have to be taken at a slower pace. Whilst the majority of pupils are punctual, punctuality still remains a problem within the school. Several pupils arrive late for lessons, both at the start of the day and during the day. They show no urgency in getting to their classrooms and consequently learning time is lost during the school day.
19. Pupils identified as having special educational needs display satisfactory attitudes to learning in mainstream classes and in the learning support unit. They work co-operatively and their behaviour enables them to respond to the opportunities offered by the school, including the extra help given by learning support assistants and others. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties often respond well to the strategies employed by staff.
20. Overall, pupils' personal development and relationships are good. There is an absence of oppressive behaviour, including bullying, sexism and racism. Pupils respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others. They also understand the impact of their actions on others.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory in all years. Of the 131 lessons seen during the inspection, most were at least satisfactory with a significant proportion of them good or better. However, there were more very good or better lessons in Years 7 to 9 than in other years and a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching, mainly in Years 9 and 10. The overall picture is the same as at the last inspection.
22. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of their subjects is good. They use this well to introduce and explain topics and, consequently, to extend pupils' own knowledge and understanding. In the most effective lessons, where teachers show enthusiasm together with secure subject knowledge, pupils respond well and make good progress.
23. Teachers manage pupils well in most classes. Their good classroom management skills are used to establish clear classroom procedures and create an orderly learning environment. However, classroom management skills are often weaker amongst supply teachers and in some lower ability sets. Sometimes this is because teachers have had less time to build secure working relationships with pupils, such as when on supply, or have not established agreed boundaries for behaviour such as in religious education.
24. In most lessons in Years 10 and 11, teachers have high expectations and use a good variety of appropriate teaching methods. In the best lessons, a challenging range of well-timed activities ensures a clear focus and a good pace to learning.
25. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, in all subjects. In English, teachers are knowledgeable, have a good understanding of their subject and very high expectations of pupils. However, the teaching of basic literacy skills is unsatisfactory; there are

limited strategies in place for the teaching of these skills. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 and 11. However, the planned provision for numeracy and the teaching of numeracy skills across subjects is weak. Teaching is good in history, information and communication technology and physical education in both key stages. Teaching is also good in art and music in Years 7 to 9 and in mathematics and science in Years 10 to 11. In physical education, teachers manage pupils very well and make very good use of the time and resources available to them. Teachers' planning is unsatisfactory in music and modern foreign languages. Teachers' expectations are not high enough in design and technology, whilst the quality and use of assessment to inform planning is unsatisfactory in design and technology, geography and modern foreign languages.

26. As a result of satisfactory teaching, pupils' learning, overall, is also satisfactory and they consequently make appropriate gains in the skills, knowledge and understanding required in each subject. Teaching and learning are slightly better in Years 7 to 9 than in other years. However, aspects of this learning are unsatisfactory: such as pupils' interest, concentration and independence in Years 7 to 9, and pupils' knowledge of their own learning in all years. Because of the school's ineffective assessment policies and target-setting procedures, pupils do not have sufficient knowledge of what National Curriculum level they are working at or what level they have reached in their GCSE course.
27. Learning is satisfactory, overall. It is good in ICT and in physical education in both key stages. Learning is also good in science and English in Years 10 to 11, but is unsatisfactory in modern foreign languages and in art and design and music in Years 10 to 11.
28. Individual lessons help to illustrate the strengths in the school's teaching. In a Year 11 English lesson, lower-attaining pupils were studying the text *Of Mice and Men*. The teacher's excellent subject knowledge and enthusiasm was instrumental in capturing their interest, which they maintained throughout the lesson, and stimulated them to ask questions. All pupils made good progress; they engaged very successfully with the text and produced interesting writing as a direct consequence of the teacher's subject knowledge, planning and delivery of the lesson.
29. The management of a lower-attaining set of pupils is very good and was an important factor in the success of a Year 8 geography lesson. Clear classroom procedures ensured an orderly start to the lesson and pupils very quickly became motivated and involved. They were attentive and participated in the class discussion in a very mature way. This enabled them to demonstrate their very good understanding of the reasons for population distribution and change.
30. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. The most effective teaching is where expectations are high and where appropriately challenging tasks are set, which enable pupils to succeed. Teachers are aware of pupils' needs and give deserved praise and encouragement. Good practice was observed in a Year 7 religious education lesson where the teacher's support for pupils with special educational needs enabled them to make significant contributions to a 'question time' session on Islam. The use of education support assistants is satisfactory overall, with some teachers, for example in mathematics, using their training, commitment, experience and skills effectively. In the learning support centre, appropriate support for individual pupils' needs, and the monitoring of their progress, create a stimulating and purposeful learning environment. Overall, the learning of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and in line with that of other pupils. The teaching and

learning of pupils with English as an additional language and of those identified as gifted and talented are also satisfactory.

31. Where teaching is less successful, it often lacks adequate planning and preparation, a variety of appropriate strategies or effective pupil management skills. In a Year 9 drama lesson with lower-attaining pupils, inadequate planning by the teacher, combined with unsatisfactory behaviour-management strategies limited opportunities for learning. A lack of strategies to engage lower-attaining pupils, in a Year 10 English lesson, resulted in unsatisfactory behaviour and learning. Less effective teaching sometimes occurs when supply teachers are inadequately prepared. This was the case in an unsatisfactory Year 10 science lesson where the teacher was given insufficient basic information about the length of lessons, the needs of individual pupils and the topics to be covered.
32. In the best lessons, the quality of teaching matches the quality of learning. However, teaching is better than learning in some lessons because pupils demonstrate unsatisfactory attitudes, are inattentive, concentrate for short periods of time or lack skills such as the ability to listen carefully, work in groups or learn independently. In a Year 8 art and design lesson, with lower-attaining pupils, underdeveloped basic skills such as looking, analysing and recording through drawing, prevented pupils from developing their work to an appropriate standard, or from knowing how well they were doing and how they might improve.
33. Some parents raised concerns about homework. The inspectors' judgement is that the quality and use of homework are satisfactory overall. However, it is used well in religious education in Years 7 to 9, and in geography, physical education and information and communication technology in Years 10 to 11. It is unsatisfactory in physical education in Years 7 to 9 and in art and design in Years 10 to 11.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

34. Overall, the school curriculum provision is satisfactory but it has some unsatisfactory features. The National Curriculum requirements for religious education in Years 10 and 11 are not met and the cross-curricular aspects of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are not being implemented fully.
35. The school does, however, offer a broad curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 9. It meets their needs in most subjects. The school offers a sufficiently wide range of learning opportunities to provide satisfactory equality of access and opportunity. However, as reported at the last inspection, the time allocated to the teaching of art and music remains low and limits the range and depth of pupils' learning. The curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 9 appropriately offers some degree of flexibility. Lower-attaining pupils have their literacy and numeracy skills strengthened through a reduction in the time for learning of modern foreign languages with an equivalent increase in the teaching of English and mathematics. In preparation for the transference of some pupils when the school closes, French has been introduced as the principal modern foreign language in Year 7. Spanish will continue for pupils already studying the subject and as a second language for the most able pupils in Year 7.
36. The curriculum for pupils in Year 10 and Year 11 provides the pupils with an appropriate range of courses from which to make sensible choices to follow courses which lead to GCSE and vocational qualifications. The curriculum is broad. Balance is achieved for individual pupils to meet their aptitudes and aspirations through good

counselling and advice. Since the last inspection, the curriculum for pupils in Year 10 and Year 11 has been developed by the inclusion of an improved range of pre-vocational and vocational courses to match more closely the needs of average and least able pupils. These skill courses lead to GNVQ, NVQ and CITB qualifications. Overall, the curriculum for Year 10 and Year 11 offers pupils good access to a wide range of suitable learning experiences. No pupil on the register of special educational needs is disapplied from any aspect of the National Curriculum.

37. In Year 7, pupils are placed in groups mainly in accordance with their prior attainment in Year 6 national tests. These streamed groups form teaching groups for English, mathematics and design and technology. All other curriculum areas teach the pupils in three broad bands based upon the attainment of the pupils in the subject. Personal and social education is taught to mixed ability form tutor groups. In Year 8 and Year 9, a similar arrangement to that in Year 7 is used for grouping the pupils. The introduction of this initiative to stream by ability has not been consistently evaluated.
38. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who have English as an alternative language, are grouped as are other pupils but they are assisted in class by learning support assistants. However, not all departments are using the targets set in individual education plans to support the learning for the individual pupil. Gifted and talented pupils have their curriculum extended through numerous subject initiatives, many of which are extra-curricular. The provision for these pupils is very good. Pupils who have weak literacy skills are withdrawn from some lessons for focused teaching. There is a good balance between support and withdrawal of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an alternative language. The school is conscious of the need to ensure continuity of access for all pupils. In Year 10 and Year 11, arrangements for teaching groups depend largely upon the size and number of groups. However, in the core subjects and design and technology, an arrangement for grouping in broad bands by ability is used to form teaching groups with similar levels of attainment. Grouping and subject arrangements are well considered and offer equality and access to all pupils.
39. Strategies for the teaching of literacy are not consistently implemented in subjects. However, the school has successfully introduced a literacy acceleration programme in Years 7 to 9. In order to determine which pupils have 'adequate' literacy skills all Year 7 pupils are given the NFER Group Reading Test in the Autumn Term. Pupils with low levels of literacy have literacy lessons. These pupils effectively work in groups and individually follow a structured programme of reading for meaning, phonics, spelling, reading for enjoyment and computer assisted reading for fluency. The planned provision for numeracy is unsatisfactory which means that pupils' experiences of numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics are left to chance. This state of affairs is recognised by the school, and numeracy training for the teaching body is soon to take place along with a whole-school numeracy audit.
40. The school makes good provision for pupils on the special educational needs register. All pupils with special educational needs have full access to the National Curriculum. The provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs meets the needs of their statements and these are monitored and reviewed annually. Pupils benefit from good support from a range of external agencies. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs in art and design is enhanced by the provision of an NVQ Skillpower course.
41. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is satisfactory and has some good elements. Form teachers teach a structured course in Years 7 to

9. The course includes health, sex and drugs education in accordance with statutory requirements. In Year 10 and Year 11, the course content extends to include a greater emphasis on the pupils' understanding of themselves and the environment. The requirements for the provision of careers education and preparation for the world of work are included in the comprehensive and well-conceived schemes of work. Citizenship is to be introduced into the personal and social education scheme of work in 2002. The curriculum is well supported by external agencies including the police, the local authority careers advisory service and representatives of organisations within the local community.
42. Careers education, reported as a strength of the school at the last inspection, suffered a decline in effectiveness when key staff left. Recently, improvements have been made and an appropriate teacher has been appointed and is being trained as co-ordinator. Currently the provision for careers education is satisfactory. The arrangements for work experience are good. All Year 10 pupils are offered the opportunity to undertake a three-week placement in industrial, commercial, public or service establishments. About nine in ten pupils are allocated a place. Amongst the reasons for some pupils not being placed for work experience are: meeting parental wishes, a few pupils declining the opportunity, and refusal by the external organising body, in instances where the pupil's behaviour and attitudes would limit the learning opportunities. Since the last inspection, changing external initiatives have affected the work and skills related curriculum. The Compact and Transitions schemes are no longer influencing the curriculum and the opportunities offered by Project Trident have changed. The school has responded well by introducing Skillpower courses for some of the least able pupils. However, this innovation has removed some teaching of science to these pupils who continue to follow the double science course. The school is aware of this unsatisfactory arrangement and is addressing the issue.
43. Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good and is a strength of the school. Opportunities for participating in games activities are excellent and high standards are reached in competitive sports. Most subject departments contribute to a wide and varied range of extra-curricular activities. Residential visits to Spain are organised by the modern languages department, fieldwork enhances the history curriculum and there are many visits to local events and conferences. Drama is a popular curriculum subject and contributes to many events including musical productions. There are many visitors to the religious education department and an artist in residence is currently contributing to the work of the art department. External funding has meant that pupils identified as gifted and talented are receiving many appropriate extra-curricular activities at lunch-time and after school. For example, pupils with musical talent are being taught the theory and practice associated with African drumming and gifted mathematicians receive extra classes to extend their learning. Homework clubs are organised by a number of departments and there are numerous occasional extra-curricular events organised at lunch-time and after school.
44. The school has developed a good number of constructive links with partner institutions, business and the community. There are strong links with local and regional sporting clubs. Local institutions of further and higher education are involved in a number of initiatives with the school. Teachers in training learn their profession at the school and give much back to enrich the curriculum. The school has recently been successful in links with schools in Sweden and Hungary through a design project competition in which the school was successful. Pupils in Year 7 undertook a project, to the improvement of local cemetery helped by the clergy, this which resulted in a better understanding of the feeling of others and improved attitudes towards the sanctity of the church grounds.

45. The school's curriculum policy group, which was active at the time of the last inspection, has recently been replaced by four governing body sub-groups to address issues identified as in need of attention. These include raising standards, developing information and communication technology, improving behaviour and addressing issues relating to social inclusion. More recently, in preparation for the closure of the school, a curriculum group comprising the heads and chairpersons of the schools involved has commenced planning the curriculum for the transition. A common curriculum is to be introduced for the next school year and heads of departments are soon to meet to plan for curriculum continuity in subjects. These preparations are at an early stage of development and senior staff are conscious of the need to protect pupils' learning by providing for seamless curriculum continuity for all pupils involved in the transition.
46. Improvement in curriculum planning and implementation since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The governing body reviewed the school's policy statement and made it compatible with the local authority's curriculum statement. The limited curriculum times for music and art in Years 7 to 9 remains the same. Cross-curricular policies for literacy and information and communication technology have been written, but their impact as yet is to be felt throughout the school. A cross-curricular policy for the use of numeracy in curriculum subjects has yet to be developed. The monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum provision remains unsatisfactory.
47. Overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. However, provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory. The school does not meet statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship or for religious education. All pupils attend collective worship once a week, but the time is taken out of lessons and makes the following lesson considerably shorter than it should be. As a result, it is seen as an imposition by teachers whose lessons are, as a result, shortened. However, a number of visitors speak at assemblies and the school has good links with the local church. The school works hard to raise pupils' self-esteem and build a harmonious community. This was evident in a very good assembly led by the local vicar where the importance of caring for others was excellently conveyed. Examples of how people have succeeded in crossing the racial divide were illustrated very well, through the story of Ruth in the Bible, the freeing of Jews because Christian leaders stood by them in Bulgaria in the Second World War, and the more recent 'Good Friday' speech by Senator Mitchell in Northern Ireland. Whilst the vicar successfully met the requirements of the act of collective worship in a multi-faith school the school has difficulties in putting this into practice on a regular basis. However, the school's values are strongly promoted through religious education and the PSHE programme. All subjects are more 'enquiry based' than at the last inspection, with an aim to develop pupils' sense of curiosity. However, pupils' self-esteem has plummeted since the closure of the school has been announced.
48. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. In Year 7, time is spent studying the need for rules and compiling class rules. There are clear procedures for rewards and sanctions, known to pupils. In English, in both key stages, pupils consider the behaviour of characters and draw conclusions about moral choices and appropriate behaviour. Through literature and discussions, pupils are frequently presented with opportunities to consider important human problems and make their own choices. In science, moral issues are often discussed, such as those related to genetics, global warming and fossil fuels. In music, respect for other people's property and the importance of honesty are particularly emphasised. The PSHE and the religious education programmes provide many opportunities for pupils to discuss further moral

issues such as euthanasia and abortion. In religious education, this is related to the beliefs of different faith groups.

49. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. The school prides itself on being a 'pastoral school' and says that parents choose this school especially for the pastoral care given to pupils. Muslim parents are said to make the school their first choice for their child. Pupils work well in groups or pairs in class. For example, in English, pupils are encouraged to interact and share ideas. They are encouraged to support each other through collaborative learning, respect themselves and others. In music there is good provision for their social development through ensemble performances in class. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 learn to take personal responsibility for learning and progress. The many sports activities and visits, both local and abroad, develop pupils' social behaviour very well. Residential visits include activities such as canoeing, archery, cycling, billiards and dancing. A Citizenship programme is being gradually introduced where further opportunities are provided for pupils to work in groups, such as when planning a holiday together; they come to realise the outcomes of their actions. Relationships are very good and Year 11 pupils interviewed, clearly showed that they appreciate the way teachers go out of their way to help them. Although the school council is not running at present it has influenced changes in the past, such as the way dinners are served, the decorating of toilets and a change in the uniform. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities such as being library monitors. They also provided a 'listening service' (trained peer counselling) to help with low-key problems such as swearing, bullying or friendships difficulties. Pupils have raised money for charities, the minibus and equipment through, for example, sponsored walks round the Rother Valley.
50. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. For example, in English, pupils are encouraged to read a range of English and foreign literature. In art, NVQ pupils make African masks and in mathematics, Italian mosaics and tile patterns are studied. In music, Year 9 pupils learn about Latin American music and in religious education different faiths are studied and pupils of those faiths are encouraged to talk about their religion and the cultural traditions connected with them. Various theatre groups and Asian dancers have visited the school. A Hindu mother is a storyteller and dancer and has visited Year 7 classes. Ongoing 'Excellence in Cities' funding pays for African drumming lessons after school. Eid parties are held each year as well as Christmas parties and Moslem mothers spend a day in the food technology room preparing food. Many cultural visits are organised by the history and geography departments such as to Chester, The Armouries in Leeds and Lincoln, and pupils who attend the summer school study Hadrian's Wall. Those studying modern foreign languages visit France and Spain. In design and technology, through the Comenius project, links with schools in Sweden and Hungary have been established and a visit to Budapest to visit a school in another country impressed pupils with the ability of young Hungarian pupils to speak good English.
51. The school affirms and supports ethnic, cultural and social diversity and successfully promotes good personal, community and race relations.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

52. The arrangements that the school has to ensure the general health, safety and welfare of its pupils are good. The procedures for promoting pupils' personal development are good. The procedures for promoting good behaviour and attendance and for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. The monitoring of pupils' academic and personal development and the educational and personal support and

guidance for pupils are satisfactory. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning and the procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are currently unsatisfactory.

53. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. All staff have been trained in these procedures and child protection is a regular agenda item at staff meetings. The designated person is the deputy headteacher, who is knowledgeable and vigorously pursues any concerns. He has received suitable training and actively follows up any suitable training in order to widen his knowledge and understanding. Staff are aware of their responsibilities and consequently are alert to the welfare needs of pupils. The staff handbook gives clear directions on how information should be exchanged.
54. Health and safety requirements are appropriately carried out and there are regular risk assessments throughout the school. Risk assessment has been instigated on subjects for the safe operation of machinery and analysis of all aspects that the school has liability for, for example school trips and visits.
55. The school has a clearly laid out code of conduct and its rules are well understood and adhered to by the majority of pupils, who are fully aware of the consequences of their actions. Classroom rules are clearly displayed in all classrooms. The school's behaviour policy indicates what is acceptable behaviour and the sanctions to be adopted by staff if this is not followed. Most staff consistently follow these procedures, however, some supply teachers are not made fully aware of the school's methods and expectations.
56. The school has an established Learning Support Unit. This caters for pupils who are at risk of exclusion, returning from exclusion or have poor attendance or behaviour records. An isolation unit has recently been introduced as part of the positive behaviour policy. The unit is currently under review, with the school noting how far it has had an impact on the level of unacceptable behaviour in the classrooms.
57. During the course of the inspection, a small number of incidents of wilful disobedience by a few pupils were observed in lessons but they were managed well by staff. The removal system is used when a 'cooling off' period is thought to be appropriate. Those to whom it has been applied think that the use of the isolation unit to separate difficult pupils from classrooms is a positive deterrent to unacceptable classroom behaviour. There was also strong support by other pupils, for their own benefit to learning without disruption, in those classrooms. The school does not tolerate the use of foul or racially abusive language and this is challenged whenever staff are aware.
58. The school's procedures to monitor and attempt to improve attendance are satisfactory. The work of the attendance administrator is effective. The current school practice of initiating morning contact with parents to confirm pupils' absence is handled well. There is good rapport with parents who are contacted by telephone and, if required, staff or the education welfare officer arrange home visits. When a pupil's whereabouts is not known, strong efforts are made to locate the individual and collaborate with parents and guardians to ensure safety. The strong level of positive support from the education support worker is beneficial. The daily awareness of pupils' location within the school is not always as effective and, as a consequence, a small number of pupils are not always where they should be.
59. The school shows a good level of care and concern for the needs of pupils with special educational needs. The procedures for placing pupils on the special educational needs register are applied consistently. The register is constantly updated and circulated to

staff. Individual education plans are developed for all pupils who are at stage two and above on the register, but many teachers do not make effective use of them in planning their lessons and addressing individual pupils' needs. The learning support unit cares effectively for pupils with a wide range of learning difficulties.

60. The assessment of standards and progress is satisfactory. There are some weaknesses, however. For example, in geography, only effort is assessed, with no reference to pupils' progress through the National Curriculum levels and, in Years 10 and 11, pupils are not given their estimated grades until after the trial GCSE examinations. Many other subject areas make little or no reference to pupils during Years 7, 8 and 9 about their National Curriculum levels. These subjects include mathematics, design and technology, modern foreign language, physical education and religious education. This has a negative effect on standards as pupils have no clear idea of how they are progressing through the National Curriculum in the various subjects. This was apparent from conversations with pupils. The situation improves in Years 10 and 11.
61. Few instances of pupils actively involved in their own assessment were observed. The school should consider ways to improve pupils' involvement in and understanding of their own learning. There is a whole-school marking policy and set of marking guidelines, but these are not uniformly applied across all subjects. Marking, although generally regular and thorough, does not often explicitly advise pupils what they need to do to improve and move on.
62. The previous report suggested that the school consider ways to establish appropriate progress indicators for pupils in Years 7 to 9. The school has made little progress on a whole-school basis in meeting this. There is a wide variation between subject departments. At the end of Year 9, National Curriculum test results, together with other commercial tests taken at the start of Year 10, are used to set targets for pupils. The school meets statutory requirements of outside agencies such as the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the national examinations.
63. The systematic and effective use of reliable assessment data to inform planning is unsatisfactory on the whole. Subject departments vary in their use of assessment data to guide planning. Several subjects need to analyse data in more depth to diagnose strengths and weaknesses of different groups of pupils and to guide areas for development. It is satisfactory in English, history, ICT and physical education but poor in design and technology and unsatisfactory in all other subjects. This unsatisfactory situation has a negative effect on pupils' achievement because their knowledge and skills are not built upon systematically. In science, however, information technology is used to good effect to analyse assessment information. The system employed also enables the early identification of pupils whose progress may be slowing down.
64. The school does not fully evaluate the attainment and progress of pupils of different genders, abilities or ethnic origins. There is some analysis, including the relative progress of pupils for whom English is an additional language, but the dissemination of this information about the various subject areas is 'ad hoc' at best and many subject departments are unaware of its existence.
65. In Years 10 and 11, pupils complete, with the aid of their subject teachers, academic mentoring sheets. These contain, on a subject by subject basis, details of effort, homework completions, progress with coursework and any other relevant comments. There then follows a one-to-one structured interview with the form tutor, in which progress and other issues are discussed. There are several of these interviews each

year. A roughly similar system operates in Years 7, 8 and 9. These systems tend to focus more on effort and attitude than National Curriculum levels or examination grades and pupils' progress towards their targets in these.

66. A total of twenty-five Year 10 and 11 pupils who are considered to be at risk of underachievement are involved in a project with Sheffield Hallam University. This involves weekly mentoring sessions with trainee teachers and includes exercises in study skills and revision techniques. The scheme, which has been running for several years, has been carefully evaluated and found to be of positive value. A similar scheme concentrating on study skills has just been started for Year 8 gifted and talented pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

67. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents and guardians is satisfactory. The school works hard and attempts to involve and improve parents' involvement in all aspects of their children's education. Parents appear to be satisfied with levels of general information they receive about the school via the school brochure, newsletters and the governors' report to parents.
68. Parents have essentially positive views of the school, although only a very small number chose to return the questionnaires, about five per cent, for analysis and also a relatively small number attended the meeting with inspectors. They felt that their children like school, they make good progress, teaching is good and the school is easy to approach about any matter or concern they might have. They showed less satisfaction with current behaviour levels, with the volume of work children are expected to do at home, the school's working association with parents and how well the school is led and managed. There were several individual positive comments about the strength of the pastoral care within the school. The ranges of school events, such as information and consultation evenings, are suitably supported by parents, as are social events when organised. The Parent Teacher Association has organised events to raise funds and support the school. This secure group of helpers to the school has been active also in generating social occasions. This work is well supported and appreciated by both school and parents. The Parents' Support Group, which was set up to fight the closure of the school by the authority, is now considering ways in which it may beneficially assist the school in its future.
69. The impact and involvement of parents in the work of the school by parents is unsatisfactory. The school is active in trying to establish greater participation of parents in the learning of their children in school. However, there has been no real change since the last inspection in the further involvement of ethnic groups within the school. Parents are active in supporting the school in social and fund-raising events but there is very little actual parental assistance offered in school in supportive roles to staff and pupils.
70. The quality of information provided to parents is satisfactory. Parents receive regular newsletters, which keep them adequately informed of activities and successes of the school and its pupils. Consultation meetings provide good opportunities for parents to meet teachers in order to discuss their child's progress and future options arrangements when they need to be made. As well as the usual parents' consultation evenings, there are parents' consultations for pupils whose standards or progress are causing concern. Any concerns within subject areas are referred to form tutors who then investigate the situation further. In Years 7, 8 and 9 an annual report is sent to parents. In Years 10 and 11 there is an additional interim annual report. The written reports to parents spell out clearly what pupils are achieving academically and where

appropriate, levels of achievement and how they need to improve. They also identify pupil's personal development in respect to the extent to which they are integrated into the society of both the school and wider community.

71. The school contacts parents when necessary in respect of their child's absence or truancy. The attendance administrator and other staff work well with the vast majority of parents.
72. There is close liaison with parents of pupils who have special educational needs and they are properly involved in the reviews of statements with most of them attending annual review meetings. Parents appear to be generally satisfied with the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

73. The quality of leadership and management of key staff in the school is unsatisfactory. Since the last inspection insufficient progress has been made on the key issues that were identified at that time. Standards of attainment in GCSE examinations have declined to a position where they are well below average and are below the performance of similar schools. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 are underachieving; pupils' progress is not being consistently monitored because of ineffective assessment procedures in departments. Many pupils do not have a clear understanding of the levels at which they are working. The introduction of an initiative to stream by ability has not been consistently evaluated. The senior leadership team has not consistently carried out the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and curriculum developments such as the introduction of a literacy policy. The school has not been as effective as it should have been in monitoring its own performance.
74. The headteacher is a hardworking and dedicated professional who has made a strong personal commitment to secure the interests of pupils and staff at the school. This is clearly shown in the energies he has directed to dealing with the issues relating to the closure of the school in 2004. The impact on staffing, morale and community response has become a central focus. In the respect of having to deal with the associated problems related to the closure, the headteacher has been effective and empathetic. However this element of 'fire-fighting' and crisis management has detracted from a comparable focus on strategic planning and monitoring. The work of the senior management team has not been systematically reviewed and some members are carrying a disproportionate amount of responsibility. For example, the deputy head has overall curriculum responsibility, co-ordinates the work for special needs and deals with day-to-day administration. Significant areas of the school's systems such as the support and guidance for new staff have not received sufficient attention. The morale of these staff has suffered accordingly.
75. The overall quality of leadership at middle management level is satisfactory. It is good in history, information and communication technology (ICT), special educational needs and in pastoral work. It is unsatisfactory in art and music. Most middle managers have established appropriate priorities for their subjects. The monitoring of the work of departments however is not consistent; it is unsatisfactory in English, science, design and technology geography, art, music and modern foreign languages. The quality of documentation in departments is variable; a coherent format for the presentation of information and the response of departments to policy issues has not been established. It is particularly weak in art. ICT is variably used within departments, which is partly attributable to a lack of planning but is also related to the constraints upon resources. ICT requires a more consistent approach in science, design and technology, history, religious education, art and music. The implementation of literacy and numeracy strategies needs a sharper focus within departments. The co-ordination and monitoring of the work of the pastoral teams are effective and a strength of the school. The pastoral programme is satisfactory and provides appropriate support for pupils' development.
76. The work of the governing body is satisfactory but has weaknesses. It has been supportive of the school but has not been sufficiently active in its monitoring role. A committee structure has given governors a notional awareness of strengths and weaknesses but they have not been sufficiently rigorous in questioning the validity or relevance of information presented to them. As a group the governors have limited points of contact with the staff and there are no established links with departments. Governors are, however, involved in a range of school activities such as presentation

evenings and concerts. They have appropriately initiated some training activities to satisfy their needs but this is not represented in any formal development plan for improving their own performance. Governors have made appropriate provision for working groups to take responsibility for special educational needs and performance management. The governing body effectively fulfils its statutory responsibilities for the curriculum except in religious education in Years 10 and 11. The school does not fully comply with the requirements for a daily act of collective worship nor for the provision of ICT in subjects across the curriculum.

77. Financial management and the planning of the use of resources are not effectively connected to the school's priorities. The school development plan does not contain sufficient detail about costs. The school has a deficit budget; appropriate strategies are in place to reduce the shortfall. Given the constraints of tight expenditure limits, the proportion of the budget allocated to learning resources for departments has been managed well. In financial administration, there are correct divisions of responsibility and appropriate procedures for ordering, receiving and paying for goods and services purchased by the school. The last financial audit indicated some areas for improvement in financial efficiency. These have been corrected. Specific funding for the support of pupils with special educational needs is used to good effect. Competitive tendering is used for the ordering of goods or services, and the school tries hard to achieve the best value in its financial decisions. The administrative staff greatly assist the smooth running of the school. All support staff are approachable and present a good 'first point' of contact for the school.
78. Special educational needs is well managed by the deputy headteacher working with a wide range of relevant staff. This ensures good administrative arrangements and effective liaison with the team of learning support assistants. A clear development plan, together with targets for future action, has been established. These include further development of the format of the individual education plans. Effective working links exist with curriculum and pastoral managers. There has been good progress in the leadership and management of special educational needs since the last inspection.

Learning resources

79. The provision of learning resources is satisfactory in most subject areas. They are good in some subjects: science, ICT and physical education. Resources are lacking in other subjects, for example: in art the limited resources limit the curriculum available to pupils; religious education lacks textbooks for Years 9 and 10 and has no artefacts; food technology has outdated cookers and textbooks and the resources in the English department have not improved since the last inspection.
80. The school library is centrally located and has computers available for pupils to use for improving the presentation of their work. Internet access has been removed from these and from computers in curriculum areas until access protection software is fitted. CD ROMs are available for use on the library computers. Videos are available for loan to teachers for their lessons. The librarian can arrange to loan books to classes to support subject topics. There is, however, a lack of CDs to support music teaching, and a lack of suitable books for GCSE physical education. The school does not have access to the school library service for the loan of additional books and other resources.

Staffing

81. The staffing of the school is unsatisfactory. Significant numbers of teachers have committed themselves to the continuing education of the pupils but the impending closure of the school is having a noticeable impact on staff morale. Some teachers are looking for positions in other schools. Retention of existing teachers and recruitment of new teachers are problematic. Long-term staff illness adds to the school's difficulties. There was no specialist music teaching during the inspection. Non-specialist teachers or supply teachers, some of whom are non-specialists, are teaching increasing numbers of lessons. Well-qualified teachers, who receive in-service training, staff the history department but there are insufficient teachers in English and geography, where some classes are taught by a succession of supply teachers. Two supply teachers work regularly in the mathematics department.
82. Systems for the induction of newly qualified teachers, teachers who are newly appointed to the school or supply teachers are poor. There is a lack of rigour in the systems for monitoring their teaching and the learning of their pupils. The programme for training newly qualified teachers is ineffective. While individual departments give these teachers opportunities to voice their concerns, the school has not provided them with the basic training in classroom management, or behaviour management, so necessary for their professional development. They have insufficient knowledge of the school's procedures for child protection, health and safety issues or first aid. An appropriate performance management policy is in place and this is having an impact on improving the monitoring of teaching.
83. There is good training for learning support assistants who follow National Vocational Qualification courses and participate in in-service training. Technician support in design and technology is inadequate to meet the demands of the curriculum.

Accommodation

84. Most accommodation is in a poor condition. Much of the fabric of the main school building is ageing and has serious structural faults. There are buttresses in some areas to contain movements in the walls. Roofs leak, causing substantial degeneration of walls and ceilings. Window frames are dilapidated and some, particularly in the science suite, are unstable and potentially dangerous. The very poor accommodation for physical education, mentioned in the previous inspection, still has major shortcomings. A shortage of indoor teaching space still restricts the curriculum. Changing rooms, both for boys and girls, are seriously in need of renovation. The toilets in the boys' changing rooms and some windows in the main building represent health and safety hazards.
85. The block which houses ICT is in good condition and provides effective teaching spaces although one of the main ICT rooms is rather small. Rooms in the new block are well appointed but, again, classrooms are small and there are persistent leakage problems in the roof.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

86. In order to improve the basic skills of pupils and maintain the quality of teaching in changing times the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- (a) Raise standards in the core subjects by:
- improving performance in National Curriculum tests and GCSE examinations;
 - fully implementing the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy;
 - focussing on developing pupils' basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.
- (Paragraphs 2–7, 25, 34, 39, 46, 75, 87-103, 114-131, 132-133, 175-176)
- (b) Address the underachievement of pupils in Years 7 to 9 through more effective target setting and review.
(Paragraphs 2, 16, 26, 60, 62, 73)
- (c) Improve the leadership and management of the school by:
- providing clearer educational direction;
 - delegating and inviting contribution from staff with management responsibilities;
 - focussing the role of the governing body;
 - monitoring and evaluating the work of departments;
 - improving the induction of new teachers;
 - providing effective financial planning.
- (Paragraphs 73-77, 82)
- (d) Use the assessment data and attendance figures available to analyse problems in different groups of pupils, disseminate information and guide areas for development.
(Paragraphs 18, 58, 63-64)
- (e) Implement more consistently whole-school strategies for dealing with the unsatisfactory behaviour of a minority of pupils (specifically for known groups of pupils - mainly in Year 9).
(Paragraphs 23, 55)

Other issues for consideration

- Ensure that the statutory curriculum is fully in place in information and communication technology and religious education. [paragraphs 34, 76, 176, 208-209]
- Provide the statutory daily act of collective worship for all pupils. [paragraphs 47, 76]

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	131
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	46

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	21	52	46	5	4	0
Percentage	2	16	40	36	4	3	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils on the school's roll	676
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	219

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	13
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	139

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	130

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	37
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	38

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	9.8
National comparative data	8.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.9
National comparative data	1.1

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage (Year 9)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	72	64	136

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	13	30	22
	Girls	27	28	24
	Total	40	58	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	30 (47)	43 (44)	34 (32)
	National	64 (63)	66 (65)	66 (59)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	4 (13)	18 (26)	8 (8)
	National	31 (28)	43 (42)	34 (30)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	20	34	33
	Girls	31	30	37
	Total	51	64	70
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	38 (52)	47 (53)	51 (44)
	National	65 (64)	68 (66)	64 (62)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	6 (16)	19 (26)	18 (10)
	National	31 (31)	42 (39)	33 (29)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 (Year 11)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	63	54

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	13	60	63
	Girls	9	42	50
	Total	22	102	113
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	19 (32)	87 (83)	97 (94)
	National	48 (47)	91 (91)	96 (96)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	26.4
	National	39.0

Figures in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	6
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	121
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	535
Any other minority ethnic group	13

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	6	1
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	44	3
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	44.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.2

Education support staff: Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	11.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	245

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y11

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	.79
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 3	24
Key Stage 4	24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income	1980067
Total expenditure	2007298
Expenditure per pupil	2965
Balance brought forward from previous year	-68022
Balance carried forward to next year	-95253

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	13.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8.6

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	3.4
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2.4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	670
Number of questionnaires returned	34

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	32	59	6	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	35	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	24	29	15	21	12
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	47	21	6	0
The teaching is good.	38	53	3	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	44	15	0	9
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47	50	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	29	6	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	29	50	9	6	6
The school is well led and managed.	26	56	3	9	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	50	6	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	68	9	0	6

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

Overall, the quality of provision in English is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- Some teaching is excellent.
- The head of department is making a positive impact and providing colleagues with a sense of direction.
- Schemes of work, to create a tool kit for permanent and supply staff, are being written.

Areas for improvement

- Pupils' performance in English at the age of fourteen.
- Pupils' performance in English and English literature at the age of sixteen.
- The recruitment and retention of well-qualified, specialist teachers of English.
- The provision of adequate resources.

87. On entry to the school, pupils' attainment in English is well below the standard expected nationally. Many of the year group enter the school with standards in literacy that are weak and require additional support. One in five pupils speaks English as an additional language.
88. In the Year 9 National Curriculum tests in 2001, the average points score achieved showed that pupils' attainment in English was well below the national average. Results were below the national average for similar schools. Over the period 1998 to 2001, pupils' attainment in the Year 9 National Curriculum tests has been erratic. The inability of the school to recruit and retain well-qualified, specialist teachers of English has contributed to the decline in pupils' performance at the age of fourteen.
89. In 2001 the average points score achieved in GCSE English showed that the attainment of pupils was well below the national average, and below average when compared with similar schools. The achievement of pupils in English literature was significantly lower than the national average. The results of boys, at grades A* and A, were significantly higher than those of girls. Over the last three years, the achievement of pupils has been well below average in comparison with all schools nationally. The current teacher shortage and the imminent closure of the school have contributed to the understaffing of the English department during the last academic year. This has played a part in the declining performance of pupils at the age of sixteen.
90. Since the previous inspection there has not been any improvement. The standards attained by pupils have declined. The shortage of well-qualified teachers, an issue at the previous inspection, is still affecting pupils' performance. Classrooms are dilapidated. Overhead projectors cannot be used effectively because teaching rooms do not have suitable curtains. Adequate resources have not been provided. For example, the department needs dictionaries and thesauruses for each classroom. The planned closure of the school should not have affected its capacity to address this issue.
91. In the work seen during the inspection, standards were well below those of pupils of a similar age nationally by the end of Year 9 and Year 11. The standards achieved by girls are generally higher than those achieved by boys. During the previous inspection it

was reported that attainment in speaking and listening was generally low. This is still the case. By the end of Year 9, pupils are not capable speakers and listeners. Their use of Standard English is inadequate.

92. Whilst the handwriting of more able pupils is usually fluent, joined and legible, that of other pupils is frequently poorly formed. More able pupils spell monosyllabic and common polysyllabic words accurately. In lessons, there is an emphasis on the need to improve punctuation and spelling. All pupils, including those with special needs, make unsatisfactory progress in Years 7-9.
93. In Years 10 and 11 pupils achieve standards well below the national average. Standards in speaking and listening are unsatisfactory. By the end of Year 11 more able pupils listen attentively. They are keen to answer questions. Where pupils are well prepared for discussions, they can make interesting contributions and present a cohesive argument. In a well-planned lesson in Year 10, for example, pupils were able to explain how a short story worked before writing their own stories.
94. The standard of pupils' reading is unsatisfactory. A majority of pupils do not read aloud with confidence, fluency and expression. When pupils are able to engage with a text through shared reading and discussion they make satisfactory progress. A shared reading of John Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men* by a Year 11 class showed that pupils could understand significant ideas and events and make moral judgements based on their understanding of the text. For example, a girl explained, "Curley's wife is a tart. She has a husband. She doesn't have a loving relationship with him. That's why she chases other men."
95. The standard of pupils' written work is unsatisfactory. Some pupils are beginning to improve the fluency and accuracy of their writing with re-drafting. The department's use of information and communication technology (ICT) is contributing to this improvement. Good oral work often helps pupils to extend their writing. For example, in Year 10 lesson pupils used spider plans to generate ideas for a discussion about the central character of a story before writing a profile. Handwriting continues to be generally poor.
96. The continued shortage of well-qualified teachers of English has had a negative impact on the progress of pupils over time which is unsatisfactory for all groups of pupils in all years, including gifted and talented pupils, those with English as an additional language, special educational needs and low prior attainment. The attitudes to learning of the majority of boys and girls are satisfactory in each key stage. Good behaviour management encourages pupils to co-operate. The behaviour of most pupils is satisfactory. In the majority of lessons where planning incorporates well-targeted work and expectations of learning and behaviour are high, pupils make satisfactory progress. In a minority of lessons where learning objectives are unclear and expectations are low, inappropriate behaviour contributes to unsatisfactory progress.
97. The quality of teaching and learning seen during the inspection was usually satisfactory and sometimes excellent. All of the teachers have a comprehensive knowledge of both language and literature. The overall effectiveness of teachers' planning is satisfactory. When teaching is excellent: lessons are very well managed; teachers have high expectations of their pupils; they recognise that pupils need to be motivated, encouraged and provided with opportunities to succeed. The English department appropriately plans to raise standards by: further challenging more able pupils; combining subject matter with the development of language skills; and further developing pupils' confidence and skills to speak effectively in a wide range of

situations. Pupils are encouraged to use information and communication technology effectively for drafting their written work. For example, in the coursework folders of Year 10 and 11 pupils, there were some very good examples of word-processed essays and stories.

98. Planning for individual lessons and sequences of lessons is usually satisfactory and sometimes very good. In good lessons, teachers consistently identify the learning objectives for lessons and make them clear to the pupils. In a Year 10 lesson designed to explore the relationship between coloured and white workers in *Of Mice and Men*, the teacher made sure that learning objectives were clear. She checked that pupils knew that they had to find evidence from the text to support their views. There is very good use of constructive spoken comments in lessons to help pupils to improve. The use of homework is satisfactory at all key stages. New schemes of work are being developed for both key stages. They will provide a stimulating range of experiences for pupils. The quality and use of assessment is satisfactory throughout the school.
99. The English department is satisfactorily led and managed. The head of department provides a clear sense of direction for colleagues by her example. The departmental policy documents are clear and focused on raising pupils' attainment in English and performance in public examinations. New schemes of work, to create a tool kit for permanent and supply staff, are being written. These schemes are well balanced and cover the National Curriculum and examination syllabuses. Resources for teaching, books in particular, are inadequate. Chalkboards are dilapidated. Accommodation is unsatisfactory.

Literacy

100. The school does not have an effective strategy for teaching the basic skills of literacy. The Literacy Policy Group has agreed a set of literacy skills to be developed across the curriculum. For example, all teachers will teach note-taking, essay-writing techniques and grammar. A whole school literacy policy has been developed. This policy addresses specific issues such as the achievement gap between boys and girls, and the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language. This policy is not monitored. The school does not know the extent to which its literacy policy is working.
101. In order to determine which pupils have 'adequate' literacy skills, all Year 7 pupils are given the NFER Group Reading Test in the Autumn Term. Pupils with low levels of literacy have literacy lessons. These pupils effectively work in groups and individually follow a structured programme of reading for meaning, phonics, spelling, reading for enjoyment and computer assisted reading for fluency. A teacher and two learning support assistants staff this literacy lesson.

102. Following completion of an 'Areas for Development' questionnaire, departments have proposed how they may contribute to the development of literacy skills in their curriculum area. For example, in design and technology, pupils are taught subject specific vocabulary. There are examples of good practice in some departments. For example, key words and phrases are displayed in history classes. Teachers emphasise the technical application of these words. In mathematics pupils are encouraged to use subject specific vocabulary. Key words are displayed in mathematics classrooms.
103. In English, pupils are encouraged to discuss, analyse and develop ideas. They are also encouraged to read from a range of texts, use reference books and read aloud. Overall, the level of competence is unsatisfactory at the age of 14 and at the age of 16.

English as an additional language

104. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) is good and reflects the school's strong inclusive approach to education. For example, it offers a flexible range of support including in-class assistance through first language and English, withdrawal for new arrivals, individual assistance with specific tasks, mentoring and lunch-time and homework clubs.
105. Support for pupils is good and enables them to acquire language skills. Raising the profile of ethnic minority and EAL pupils has increased staff's awareness and expectations, and has led to more effective targeting of pupils for support.
106. Leadership and management of the English as an additional language department, are good. Staff work closely with the special educational needs department to ensure accurate identification of individual pupil needs. Liaison with English and mathematics departments has reinforced the introduction of the Key Stage 3 literacy strategy.
107. A significant strength of the department is its committed, qualified staff who know and communicate well with ethnic minority pupils and their families. They also have regular contact with feeder schools to make transfer easier.
108. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language could be improved through the allocation of a designated base; the resources to allow staff to develop materials; and time to meet with mainstream teachers.

DRAMA

Overall, the quality of provision in drama is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- The quality of teaching is good and sometimes excellent.
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge.
- Opportunities for the personal development of pupils are good.

Areas for improvement

- The drama studios need to be refurbished.
- The resources provided for drama are inadequate.

109. Standards in drama are satisfactory. Pupils work well together. Drama provides opportunities for their personal development. They are encouraged to explore a range of issues and ideas. They shape ideas and select forms to structure work and

evaluate others. They are effectively developing performance, devising and improvisational skills. They are developing and realising ideas and communicating well. Individual, pair and small group presentations are constructed carefully.

110. The quality of teaching in drama is good and sometimes excellent. The teachers have very good subject knowledge. Their enthusiasm inspires the pupils. For example, in a Year 7 lesson exploring the effects of bullying, pupils responded energetically to the teacher's interrogation of the 'hot-seated' bully.
111. The drama department needs to develop an assessment procedure closely linked to individual targets. Continuous self-assessment and formative teacher assessment should augment this. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into all activities. Lessons are well structured and flow at a good pace.
112. The management of drama is satisfactory. Many drama topics contribute immensely to pupils' personal development. Accommodation and resources are poor. For example, the studios are dilapidated and contain a significant number of damaged chairs. Few texts are available to staff or pupils.

MATHEMATICS

Overall, the quality of provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- The relationships between pupils and teachers.
- The teaching of pupils in Years 10 and 11.
- A good level of subject knowledge and the effective management of pupils, both of which support pupils' quality of learning.

Areas for improvement

- The use of assessment indicating how individual pupils might improve, and the monitoring of performance.
- The involvement of pupils in their own assessment, in order to increase their motivation for improvement.
- The contribution to pupils' literacy development.
- The evaluation of development plans to assess the impact on pupils' learning.
- The proportion of pupils, especially girls, taking the GCSE examination.

113. Standards in mathematics on entry to the school are well below the national average.
114. Results in the national tests for 14-year-olds in 2001 were well below the national average. A total of 42 per cent of pupils reached level 5 or above, compared with the national figure of 66 per cent. The standard of performance of these pupils was in line with that of similar schools. There was no significant difference in the levels reached between boys and girls or between other different groups. Over the previous three years, results have fluctuated with an overall trend which is below the national picture. In 2001 the average level achieved was above that of both English and science.
115. The proportion, at age 16, achieving A* - C grades in the 2001 examination was just less than half the national figure. This is well below expected standards but in line with those for similar schools. There was a significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. The proportion of girls gaining an A* - C grade was 17 per cent, compared with a figure of 29 per cent for boys. The corresponding proportions gaining

an A*-G grade are 70 per cent and 94 per cent – with the boys exceeding the overall national figure of 90 per cent. These differences, in boys' and girls' results, are against the national trend. There were no significant differences in the results between other different groups. The percentage of boys and girls entered for GCSE mathematics was 95 per cent and 72 per cent respectively set against a national figure for boys and girls of 93 per cent.

116. Compared with the two previous years, standards at GCSE in 2001 have fallen. In 2001 the average grade was above that in English and below that in science. The low standards achieved at GCSE in mathematics can be explained by the pupils' well below average standards on entry to the school, coupled with low basic number skills of that specific group of pupils.
117. The standard of work seen during the inspection, although below expected standards, was not well below expected standards as indicated by test and examination results. The difference can be explained by improvements in teaching, the effects of increasing levels of attainment on entry and the fact that absences have more of a negative effect on test and examination results than on the quality of workbooks scrutinised or standards observed in lessons.
118. An analysis of test results and workbooks shows satisfactory progress at age 14 for all groups of pupils. When progress is less than this it is usually a result of lapses in concentration, drop off in work rate, or, in some cases, poor arithmetical skills. At age 14, the lowest-attainers use pencil and paper methods to add 2-digit numbers, but a significant proportion have difficulty when asked to subtract such numbers. These pupils confidently continue simple number patterns based on a square grid of numbers. Middle-attaining pupils recognise and find factors of numbers. Although they find fraction work challenging, they can, after some perseverance, simplify fractions. The highest-attainers investigate sequences, explaining the rules for their generation. They are able, with the odd slip, to construct and interpret pie charts.
119. Progress at age 16 is satisfactory for all groups of pupils. They make better progress in geometric and statistical topics than algebraic work. At age 16, the lower-attainers draw and answer questions based on a temperature graph, although not always using a ruler to draw their graphs. They can successfully complete an investigation involving the areas of rectangles, working systematically in the process. Middle-attainers find solving simultaneous equations difficult, but use trigonometry to calculate sides and angles in right-angled triangles. The highest-attainers use their knowledge of algebra to draw neat graphs of complicated functions. They calculate the areas and volumes of complicated solids, but are inclined to be careless in their use of units.
120. Analysis of work, together with classroom observation, show that those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress by age 14 and also by age 16. This is because teachers (and learning support assistants when available) are aware of their particular educational needs and provide extra support when necessary.
121. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used to improve learning: for example graphing software is used by gifted and talented pupils in an extra lunch-time lesson to investigate the shape of various graphs. Lower-attainers also profit from simple number games played against the computer. The ensuing teacher-led discussion on strategy is also a useful learning experience, challenging pupils to think. Greater use of ICT is desirable and is planned by the department.

122. Speaking and listening skills are developed in an unplanned manner as are writing skills. The department subscribes to the whole-school literacy policy, and various word lists are in evidence in class rooms, attention is paid to new vocabulary and pupils are encouraged to explain their answers, however, a more systematic approach would allow pupils to make greater progress in their literacy skills.
123. The standard of numeracy is satisfactory, although it is slightly better in Years 7, 8 and 9 than it is in Years 10 and 11. This is a result of the National Numeracy Project adopted recently in primary schools whose pupils are now attending secondary school. Members of the department have attended National Numeracy Strategy courses. Two members are involved in a local primary/secondary joint teaching group to enhance the continuity in pupils' mathematics learning when they first attend secondary school.
124. Gifted and talented pupils have the opportunity for lunch-time and after school lessons. A group of Year 10 gifted and talented pupils are taking an extra GCSE, in statistics, a year early. This has been planned so as to support progress in their mathematics GCSE work.
125. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Teaching has improved and there is a better match between pupils' ability and the work they are given.
126. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teaching was better in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7, 8 and 9. Lessons were better planned and teachers had higher expectations – both perhaps results of the closeness of GCSE examinations. Teaching was good or better in over half the lessons seen. Nevertheless, in about a fifth of lessons, good or satisfactory teaching did not produce the same quality of learning. The reason for this may be found in the poor attitude of a minority of pupils. This is shown in poor levels of concentration and arriving ill prepared or late for lessons. As an example of the latter: in a Year 9 lesson on a new topic, the progress of the whole group was marred by the disruption the late arrival of several pupils caused. Although the learning improved in the second half of the lesson, a potentially good lesson became just satisfactory in terms of pupils' progress. Some of the poor attitudes observed may also be attributed to an air of uncertainty as a result of the planned school closure in two or so years' time.
127. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are able to foresee potential difficulties pupils may have. There is always a good match between the work set and pupils' level of attainment – an improvement on the last inspection. Relations are good with pupils and many lessons have a good working atmosphere. Pupils are given good opportunities to work individually or in small groups.
128. The use of examination and other assessment data is unsatisfactory. Although predicted GCSE grades (obtained from a commercial testing agency) are used to set targets for pupils, there is no methodical process of setting target levels for national testing at age 14. In fact, estimated or target National Curriculum levels and GCSE grades are underused as a means of motivating pupils. In addition, the monitoring of the progress of particular groups is unsatisfactory and needs to be put on a more systematic footing.
129. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The departmental development plan, whilst a useful document, lacks any reference to improvements in learning which it might bring about. The department works well as a team and is committed to raising achievement despite the inevitable uncertainties produced by the school's future planned closure. There is sharing of good practice.

Numeracy

130. The numeracy skills acquired in mathematics support pupils' progress in other subjects. There is no evidence that levels of numeracy skills impede progress in any subjects of the curriculum. Pupils in all year groups have the opportunity to apply some numeracy skills. In geography, pupils in Years 10 and 11 can confidently handle data in graphical form and are able to construct and interpret graphs. They use these skills to display data and support hypotheses in their GCSE coursework. In science, pupils of all levels of attainment interpret a wide variety of tables charts and diagrams. The presentation of graphs is not, however, always as high as it might be. Pupils show a reasonable command of number facts and, depending on attainment, can manipulate whole numbers, decimals, percentages and fractions as required in their work in science. Pupils are able to estimate and express results accurately. Pupils in ICT have sufficient grasp of basic algebra to enable them to construct spreadsheets, and to choose the appropriate charts to display information from a menu of possible charts.
131. The planned provision for numeracy and the teaching of numeracy skills across subjects is unsatisfactory. No subjects have, in their schemes of work, reference to key objectives for the consolidation, application or development of numeracy. This lack of planning means that pupils' experiences are 'ad hoc' and left to chance. This state of affairs is recognised by the school, and numeracy training for the teaching body is soon to take place. A whole school numeracy audit will soon be embarked upon. This should result in making all teachers aware of basic numeracy issues, including the mathematical vocabulary pupils are accustomed to use, graphical conventions, some indication as to what mathematics might reasonably be expected from pupils and how numeracy can effectively be supported within subjects.

SCIENCE

Overall, the quality of provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Effectiveness of teachers' planning.
- Teachers' knowledge, expectations, methods and management of pupils in Year 10 and Year 11.
- Pupils' skills in practical work.

Areas for improvement

- Raising standards reached by pupils, especially in Years 7 to 9.
- Monitoring and evaluating the performance of girls and boys, pupils' work and teachers' marking.
- Making greater use of information and communication technology to improve learning in science.

132. The attainment in science of 11-year-old pupils on entry to the school in recent years has been well below expectations. The results of national tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 9 this year were also well below the national average and well below those obtained by pupils in similar schools. There has been no improvement in the standards reached by 14-year-old pupils at the end of Year 9 in national tests since the last inspection in 1996 and these have remained stubbornly below or well below the yearly national averages. In 2001, the standard reached by the most able pupils in national tests in Year 9 was well below the average of similar aged pupils in other schools. In recent years there has been no significant difference between the performances of girls and boys. Teachers' assessments of the standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 9 are significantly higher than expected. These assessments include the evaluation of aspects of pupils' learning not undertaken in the national tests but the difference between test and teacher assessments is wide and is a matter for closer investigation and possible moderation. The performance of Year 9 pupils in science in 2001 was similar to the performance of the same pupils in English, but not as good as in mathematics.
133. GCSE examination results in 2001 were well below the national average for the subject. When compared with similar schools they were close to the average. The number of pupils obtaining the highest grades (A* - A) is well below the national average. Recently boys have performed significantly better than girls in reaching grades A* - C. In 2001, all pupils entered for the GCSE examination were successful in obtaining a grade within the range A* - G. Since the last inspection, the number of pupils reaching A* - C grades has fluctuated and has shown no consistent trend. In 2000, the number of pupils reaching A* - C grades was close to the national average. This was followed by a significant decline the next year. Pupils' performance in science in the GCSE examination in 2001 was similar to their performance in mathematics and better than in English.
134. Pupils' progress from entry to the end of Year 9 is unsatisfactory. Overall, pupils' attainment is below expectations. This is because most pupils in the middle and lower sets in science have difficulties in learning, mainly arising from a lack of concentration, poor retention and low skills in the uses of literacy. Their weak understanding of scientific ideas and associated technical language, despite the close attention of teachers, further diminishes the progress that they make. Effective learning is weakened further by the poor attitude of many pupils to the recording, presentation and pride in their written work. Line and observational drawings show pupils' limited skills in using a pencil to record appropriate work. Pupils with statements of special educational needs and those whose first language is not English make satisfactory progress because of the close attention provided by learning support assistants. Most of the more able pupils in the top sets, including those identified as gifted and talented, make at least satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress because stronger literacy skills are successfully used to improve their learning in science. The emphasis the department places on practical investigations aided by effective technical support assists pupils' progress in this aspect of learning. Generally pupils' practical skills are better than their knowledge and understanding of scientific facts and ideas. By the age of 14, most pupils identify key factors involved in carrying out a scientific investigation

and they understand the need to control variables in order to study their effects. They understand the simple functions of the human body and can explain the work associated with the major organs. They have a satisfactory understanding of physical processes and are beginning to understand the ideas associated with changes occurring when substances react chemically. Pupils' adeptness in using apparatus and materials were very well shown by more able pupils in a Year 9 lesson when investigating the influence of temperature on the biochemical effects of yeast on a sugar solution. Assisted by very good teaching, they took measurements quickly and accurately, recorded the results, plotted a graph and deduced the optimum temperature for effective fermentation within a single practical lesson.

135. By the end of Year 11, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall even though standards are below average. They make satisfactory progress in Year 10 and Year 11. This is because there is an improved maturity by most pupils towards taking a greater responsibility for their own learning and sets are taught by specialist teachers who have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject content. Pupils' retention of knowledge and understanding of work previously encountered is much improved and their interest and pace of working has increased. They respond positively to homework as an extension to their learning.
136. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some good features, especially in Years 10 and 11. Teachers plan their lessons well by following appropriate schemes of work, which meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, weaknesses in planning emerge from the lack of school policies for numeracy and information technology. Aspects of the school's policy for teaching literacy have been put in place but pupils' written work, especially that from the least able pupils, shows weaknesses in writing skills, in particular the correct use of grammar, punctuation and presentation. In Year 10 and 11, teachers' expectations, methods and management of pupils are good and these help pupils to learn in environments which are conducive to effective learning and where positive relationships and co-operation are strong features. The teaching throughout the school produces the most effective learning when the teacher is respected, well established and exercises appropriate authority. In a very good lesson with Year 10 pupils, an experienced and respected teacher successfully enabled average-attaining pupils to understand the criteria for investigating scientific variables. Using a barrage of well-directed questions the teacher injected pace and rigour into the learning that was supported by the pupils' enthusiasm and interest. This meant that the pupils reached a well above expected level of achievement. In one unsatisfactory lesson observed, a teacher covering for a staff vacancy was insufficiently prepared to meet the needs of the pupils. The lesson had insufficient content and finished well before the scheduled end of the lesson. Pupils learned very little and they were happy to conform to the low standards expected of them.
137. The science department is led satisfactorily and managed efficiently with the two technicians playing a prominent part in the effective use of the accommodation and resources for learning. The well-conceived subject development plan is acting as a useful template for the immediate development of the subject. However, planning to maintain the quality of teaching and learning as the school approaches closure is proving a challenge because many issues are unknown or unpredictable. With stability in the staffing the department is suitably placed to give the pupils a satisfactory education. However, monitoring teaching, their marking and the quality of pupils' work are priorities if standards are not to decline further, particularly if experienced and established staff leave to be replaced by inexperienced or temporary supply teachers.

138. The department has made a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. There are, however, a number of important issues that have not been addressed fully. Monitoring of pupils' progress has improved, especially in Years 10 and 11 where pupils are now aware of their progress and are set targets for improvement. Monitoring procedures are not extended to evaluating closely the achievements of groups of pupils and taking appropriate action, for example, the attainment and progress of boys and girls. When compared with similar schools standards have declined in Years 7 to 9 but have improved in Year 10 and Year 11. Teaching remains good in Year 10 and Year 11 but is less effective in Years 7 to 9. The oldest pupils now take more responsibility for their own learning but the use of information and communication technology as a tool for learning science remains largely unexploited. Some resources have improved for example textbooks for the older pupils and textbooks, materials and equipment for the average and lower-attaining pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

Overall, the quality of provision in art and design is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- Teaching in Years 7 to 9 is good and occasionally very good.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are particularly good.

Areas for improvement

- Standards of attainment.
- Expectations of both teachers and pupils.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning.
- Strategic planning to improve pupils' learning and progress.
- Use of information and communication technology to generate and manipulate imagery.

139. Teacher assessments for pupils aged 14 show less than half are meeting or exceeding national expectations, which is well below average. The number of pupils who were awarded a GCSE pass between A* and C at the age of 16 in 2001 was well below average. The girls were more successful than the boys, due in many ways to their taking greater care with their coursework. Every pupil was awarded a GCSE grade between A* and G, which is well above the national average. These results are similar to those at the last inspection.
140. Work seen during the inspection indicates that standards are well below average. Pupils fail to use sketchbooks for research or experimentation into methods and materials. Drawing from observation is underdeveloped. Too many pupils rely on pictures taken from books. The pupils' use of colour is based on intuition rather than knowledge. Few can explain why they choose a particular colour. Their work makes much reference to exotic animals such as tigers and dragons but gives little clue that the school is close to Rotherham.
141. It is clear that pupils have looked at famous artists, designers and art movements but they tend to copy from the work rather than use the information to influence their own work. Little of the work is original with the notable exception of a series of almost life-sized sculptures of animals produced by pupils and Philip Cox, an artist in residence.
142. Painting and drawing are the favourite media, although there is some working in ceramics, textiles and sculpture. While pupils use the Internet for research, there is no evidence of computer-generated or manipulated imagery.

143. The achievement of the pupils is unsatisfactory. The outcomes of individual lessons are at least satisfactory, but ineffective use of assessment data to modify the curriculum or to set targets for pupils, results in further erosion of their basic skills. Pupils enter school in Year 7 with well below average attainment but there is insufficient challenging teaching of observation and analysis to raise their attainment. Undemanding work and the narrow range of processes prevent those pupils who have special educational needs or who are deemed to be gifted and talented from making satisfactory progress.
144. Teaching and learning in art were satisfactory overall in the lessons seen. The best teaching and learning occurred in Years 7 to 9 where they were good and occasionally very good. For example, a teacher used her own drawings to demonstrate methods to Year 9 pupils, who made good gains in knowledge of using pattern to show tone in their drawings of seashells. Teaching in Years 10 and 11 was satisfactory but learning was unsatisfactory because pupils are reluctant to experiment and they sometimes give their drawings a precious quality, inhibiting progress. Lessons usually start by teachers using their good knowledge of art by explaining or demonstrating the planned activity. Not all lessons end with teachers discussing the progress made and future activities. Few pupils are sure of the level of their attainment relative to national standards. Year 10 pupils, following the NVQ Skillpower course responded to the teacher's particularly caring manner with their best efforts but their future activities were not clearly defined in the schemes of work.
145. The very good relationships between teachers and pupils exist in the department as pupils recognise their teachers' subject knowledge and genuine enthusiasm for their subject. Teachers need to take further advantage of these relationships and raise their own and their pupils' expectations. Sometimes the homework does not challenge the full ability range of the pupils.
146. The majority of pupils lack a view of how well they are doing or how they might improve their work. Independent learning is limited and pupils depend on their teachers for guidance at almost every turn. Most pupils are uncomfortable using words that are specific to art. Teachers explain new words as they arise but they do not have a policy for teaching literacy.
147. The curriculum in art is unsatisfactory and there is insufficient time to deliver the National Curriculum. The work is based firmly around painting and drawing with some opportunities to work with textiles and sculpture but the length of the lessons makes these processes impracticable. There are no opportunities for pupils to work with computer-generated imagery. Assessment is satisfactory but the failure to use assessment information to modify the curriculum or set targets for pupils is a weakness. Marking does not always give pupils clear guidance on how they might improve their work.
148. While the management of the subject is unsatisfactory, the head of department provides leadership which staff and pupils are pleased to follow. The monitoring of teaching and learning needs formalising. The evaluation of the curriculum and planning to improve learning, to raise standards and to prioritise developments in art is also weak.
149. The decision to close the school has had a dramatic impact on teachers' morale but the match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory. The accommodation in art is unsatisfactory. One of the rooms has leaking water pipes in the ceiling and a number of pupils have lost their work through water damage. The

furniture is old and damaged. Much investment is needed to improve resources for learning, including computers, specialist software and books in the department and the library.

150. The department has made unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Drawing standards have deteriorated, a specialist vocabulary is less well developed, and basic skills are well below average. There has been no improvement in the monitoring of teaching and learning while achievement, which was satisfactory, is now unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs, who made very good progress, now make unsatisfactory progress. Teachers no longer have high expectations. Multi-cultural art has developed although there is surprisingly little reference to Islamic art, in spite of the high proportion of Islamic pupils in school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Good links with the community and local colleges.
- Range of activities outside the lessons.
- Positive attitudes to work of pupils in Years 7 to 9.

Areas for improvement

- Overall standards of attainment.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning.
- Procedures and the use of assessment to guide curricular planning.
- Technical support.
- Accommodation and learning resources including ICT.

151. By the end of Year 9, the attainment of pupils as measured by teacher assessments was below average. There were no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls.

152. In the work seen in the current Year 9 group, standards are broadly average. There has been a steady improvement in designing and making tasks that utilise textile technology and resistant materials. Pupils work from their own design plans which range from simple drawings to detailed freehand design briefs, generally adapting them where needed. Pupils demonstrate an understanding of the conditions in which their designs will function and they have a growing awareness of the limitations of the resources being used. Pupils can, following training, use the 'desktop' software, for example, in their recent initiative to design and make a rule manipulator for children with hand co-ordination disabilities. Subject vocabulary develops appropriately throughout years 7 to 9.

153. The 2001 GCSE results overall for design and technology show that the number of pupils gaining higher grades A*-C has dropped in comparison to the school's 2000 results. In 2001 the percentage of pupils attaining higher grades increased in textile technology whereas there has been a significant drop in the percentage of pupils reaching higher levels in food technology. Low entries in food technology in 2000 and textiles in 2001 make comparisons unreliable. The school links the fluctuations in the standards of pupils' work to the different abilities within each year group based on value-added analyses conducted over the time pupils are at this school. From this information, departmental targets are set. The school's GCSE 2001 design and

technology target of 25 per cent of pupils attaining A*-C grades was not met by four per cent.

154. In the work seen in Year 11, current standards of achievement are below average overall, but they vary within the specialisms. In textile technology they are closer to the national expectation but there is evidence of examples of lower attainment too. Most pupils employ correct methods when developing, planning and communicating ideas. However, there are some pupils who do not present prototype samples in their design folders. Pupils work with appropriate tools, equipment and materials within their chosen specialisms. They generally demonstrate an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the materials and components they are working with. Research is reasonably broad but some pupils concentrate too much in food technology on cutting out and pasting pictures from magazines. Designing and making activities are now being linked appropriately to industrial practices. Lower-attaining pupils including those with special educational needs do not give sufficient attention to presentation and evaluations of their own work are of varying qualities. A number of pupils, when asked, did not know at what levels they were working or aspiring to. Improved provision for electronics, systems and control is seen as a strategic priority for action in the school development plan.
155. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. There are examples of good teaching in both key stages in lessons seen, with a small proportion of the lessons being very good or unsatisfactory. The better lessons focus on achieving quality outcomes, for example in a Year 10 textiles lesson and Year 8 and Year 10 resistant materials sessions. Good attention was given to developing subject vocabulary, basic literacy and numeracy skills development. Completed work in Year 7 showed a clear focus on the development of specialist vocabulary when designing and making a savoury snack. Where the teacher had the full attention of the group and their respect, the lesson objectives were fully met and as a result of the good quality of teaching the rate of progress made towards agreed targets was good, including for those with special educational needs. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum is satisfactory in both key stages. Longer-term planning is appropriately based on the Key Stage 3 schemes of work and the respective GCSE specialisms. The day-to-day lesson plans are brief and little reference is made to the use of assessment. The use of assessment to guide curricular planning is weak, which results in pupils' having limited self-knowledge of their own learning. Some teachers' expectations of pupils are not high enough across the department as a whole. Where on occasions assessment is used well, pupils strive hard to reach higher than expected levels made of them. Most teachers use time appropriately but on occasions too much time is given to pupils to complete lower level tasks such as copying from books or the whiteboard. As no timescales were given to complete the work, some pupils worked at a very slow pace. The management of pupils is generally satisfactory. When pupils are off task or unsettled, teachers promptly remind them about the focus of the lesson and reinforce correctly the need for them to concentrate on the activity. Homework is set in line with the school policy. It comprises appropriate activities such as research including the use of ICT at home and school and reinforces and consolidates what has been learned in school.
156. Pupils' attitudes and relationships are generally satisfactory, with examples of positive attitudes to work in Years 7-9. The completed homework of Year 7 pupils showed that significant effort had been given to researching sandwich fillings. Year 8 pupils interact and show interest in their work, for example, in the designing of a photo-frame. Year 9 pupils enthusiastically discussed together their ideas when studying the functions of various bags and containers. Pupil self-evaluations of finished products such as letter

holders and small wooden toys demonstrated a pride in the completed work. Behaviour is generally satisfactory. Occasionally pupils came off task in Year 11, two or three boys and girls chattered at the same time as the teacher was speaking. Relationships are satisfactory overall. A small number of Year 11 girls started to pack up their work some ten minutes before the lesson was due to end and they did not listen to the teacher's requests.

157. Interested pupils take advantage of the extra-curricular time made available in graphics and textiles; these opportunities make a good contribution to their achievements. Extended curricular links include Computer Aided Design and Manufacturing at the Rotherham College of Arts and Technology (RCAT). The food technology department has benefited from links with a college GCSE course in catering. A group of pupils from Years 10-11 are engaged in a joint initiative with RCAT. They are working on aspects of the construction industry and engineering industry. In 2000 the school initiated a Comenius Project with two other schools, one in Sweden and Hungary. This involved staff and Year 8 pupils in partnership with the design staff from the Nottingham IKEA store. Twenty-three design proposals of a teenager's bedroom and scale models were presented to IKEA for judging. At the same time the project was delivered in the Swedish and Hungarian schools. This is a very good example of exchanging information and developing ideas in a European context and contributing to the personal and social development of the pupils.
158. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. There has been a drop in standards of attainment since the last inspection in 1996. Standards in food studies were reported then as being significantly below the national average and this is still the case. Graphic skills and techniques produced in design portfolios are still of a varied quality in both key stages. In Years 7-9 the challenge of some of the curricular units still restricts opportunities for design, although this is better in Year 9. Issues about the adequacy of tools and equipment still remain outstanding. The departmental action plan recognises the need to refurbish the food technology area. Cooking appliances are reported as over ten years old and work units have been put out of action by the school on health and safety grounds in one of the two food technology rooms.
159. The head of department has only recently been able to focus all of his attention on the department, due to formerly having a teaching commitment in the modern foreign languages department. The design and technology action plan 2001/2 lists what needs to be done clearly in regard to reviewing the Year 7 and 8 scheme of work, ICT provision including increasing the opportunities in Years 10-11 for electronics, systems and control work, and the development of basic key skills in Years 10-11. However, there is insufficient attention given within the plan as to how these actions are intended to raise standards by the end of Year 9 and 11 in all of the specialisms taught. The department has recognised the need to monitor teaching and learning formally and set targets so that all pupils reach their full potential. There is still work to be done at senior management level to formally monitor and improve standards in design and technology and home economics/child development. Risk assessments, although conducted, are not consistently built into schemes of work. Technician support is inadequate to meet the demands of the curriculum that is in place. There are no design and technology reference books in the library.

GEOGRAPHY

Overall, the quality of provision in geography is currently **unsatisfactory**.

This judgement is related to the long-term absence of a key member of the department and the fact that replacement was provided by different supply teachers on each day of the inspection.

Strengths

- The quality of teaching by permanent teachers.
- The attitudes and behaviour of pupils in their classes.
- The coursework and work produced in classes.

Areas for improvement

- Quality of provision for pupils in all classes.
- GCSE grades.
- Assessment of pupils' work.
- Recruitment to GCSE classes in Year 10.
- The use of ICT in all areas of the subject.
- Quality of provision for pupils in classes taught by supply teachers.

160. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 9 show considerable progress has been made by pupils since Year 7. Attainment has improved from being well below national expectations, on entry to the school, to being much closer to national expectations in teacher assessments at the end of Year 9. Work seen in lessons and in the scrutiny confirms this. Year 9 pupils were seen to be working confidently, describing and explaining the dangers of living near a volcano. They used their knowledge and understanding of the human processes of farming and settlement to explain why people should choose to live in such areas of danger. Standards of presentation are high. Pupils of all abilities produce neat, well laid out diagrams and maps. They construct and extract data from graphs well.

161. Standards of attainment at GCSE have fallen considerably to being well below national expectations in 2001. A fall in standards had been predicted, based on the past performance of pupils who were in this cohort, but the fall was much more dramatic than predicted, especially by pupils in classes affected by the long-term absence of their teacher. Girls' attainment was lower than boys. Only 65 per cent of girls obtained a GCSE grade. Standards at the end of Year 11 are satisfactory. In work seen in lessons, Year 11 pupils were producing extended pieces of writing in answer to questions and they showed good understanding of the links between global warming and the processes of coastal erosion. Year 10 pupils were seen to use geographical skills of map reading and applied these well to locating and describing places. The coursework produced by more able pupils is well structured, well presented and carefully explained. Maps and diagrams are well chosen, as is the evidence to support hypotheses. This is presented using a variety of graphical styles that are interpreted and evaluated well. The work is supported by material from secondary sources including textbooks and the Internet. ICT is well used to help present the work.

162. Teaching by permanent members of staff is good, some is very good. These teachers create a positive working environment for their pupils and are a good role model for their pupils. They use correct geographical vocabulary and encourage their pupils to do so also. They are polite and insist on good manners. In classes taught by supply teachers the teaching in individual lessons is satisfactory. Teachers were seen to have satisfactory subject knowledge and set a satisfactory pace to ensure work was completed. However, there was a different supply teacher each day. There was little continuity to pupils' experience in these classes. Books were lost, work done on paper was lost and work was not marked. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour at the start of

lessons indicated their dissatisfaction with this situation. This situation was worst with Year 9 pupils, who do not have the concentration or independent learning skills to maintain pace or quality of work without supervision. Pupils in Year 11 were however seen to have these skills and the maturity to work well under these conditions.

163. Where teaching was good, the teachers have good subject knowledge and use this in their explanations of geographical processes. For example, this was seen in a Year 11 class where pupils were learning about global warming. The explanations given by the teacher were clear and concise and pupils' gains in understanding were evident in subsequent questioning. Where teaching is good and very good, teachers have good knowledge of their pupils, their abilities and likely errors. Good use of overhead projectors and chalkboards is made in lessons with pupils of lower abilities to illustrate the tasks presented on worksheets and ensure pupils know what to do to achieve success. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Work is marked regularly, but is only marked with a grade for pupils' effort. Pupils are not given any indication of their success in terms of National Curriculum level or GCSE grade when work is marked except for work presented for GCSE coursework.
164. The leadership and management of the department are satisfactory. Despite the absence of the head of department, policies and practices of the department are being followed. The use of ICT has been included in the delivery of new units of work in Year 7. New and more appropriate text books are being introduced to match this. There has been improvement in the quality of teaching, with particular reference to strategies to help develop pupils' oral skills and powers of concentration. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
165. There are deficiencies that need to be addressed. There has been no monitoring of teaching. Recruitment of pupils to the GCSE course in Years 10 and 11 is low. No reference to level or grade descriptors is made when setting targets for pupils' achievement, or when assessing pupils' work.

HISTORY

Overall, the quality of provision in history is **good**.

Strengths

- Good teaching characterised by a variety of approaches.
- Teachers manage pupils well and make good use of resources.
- The head of history manages a stable team of history specialists well.

Areas for improvement

- Assessment procedures in the department.
- The use made of assessment in planning the curriculum.
- The use of information and communications technology in the subject.

166. At the end of Year 9, results in National Curriculum tests were well below average in 2001. Teachers' assessments of pupils indicated that the majority was attaining well below the national expectations for their age, with no apparent differences between the performance of boys and girls. In 1999 and 2000, results were well below average. Results in 2001 were lower than those in 2000. At the end of Year 9, standards in the work observed during the inspection were below average. Pupils of all attainment levels have a relatively underdeveloped knowledge and understanding of topics such as the outbreak of the First World War and conditions of life in the trenches. Most can select and use information from a variety of sources in order to describe historical events but find it harder to give reasons for them. Lower-attaining Year 9 pupils used a range of contemporary documents, such as photographs and newsreel footage, to describe how soldiers lived in the trenches and were prompted into asking relevant questions, but found it more difficult to explain the reaction of soldiers to the conditions.
167. At the end of Year 11, results in GCSE examinations in 2001 were well below average. The proportion of pupils obtaining grades A* to C was well below the national average and the proportion obtaining grades A* to G was in line with the national average. There were no apparent differences between the attainment of boys and girls. In 1999 and 2000, the proportion of pupils obtaining grades A* to C was well below and below the national average respectively, whilst the proportion obtaining grades A* to G was in line with the national average. Results in 2001 were lower than those in 2000. At the end of Year 11, standards in the work observed during the inspection were below average. Pupils of all attainment levels show knowledge and understanding of issues such as the rise of Hitler and can use them to describe historical changes and events. They can research a range of contemporary information in order to reach conclusions. Year 11 pupils of all attainment levels were able to identify factors such as the problems of the Weimar Republic and economic conditions as reasons why Hitler came to power. They found it harder to explain and evaluate in detail how inflation created a climate in which the Nazis could gain control of Germany.
168. The standards in work seen during the inspection are better than those in recent test and examination results. This is because the good teaching in the department, especially the high expectations of teachers, has a positive impact on pupils' standards of work in lessons and homework.
169. Achievement across Years 7 to 9 for pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is satisfactory. They are developing a greater knowledge and understanding of the periods of history being studied, such as Year 7 lower-attaining pupils using role playing to discover the importance of baths in Roman life. Boys and girls of all attainment levels make satisfactory progress in

researching source materials in order to explain historical events. Higher-attaining Year 8 pupils were observed using support materials in groups in order to make presentations on aspects of Tudor life. Higher-attaining pupils are developing extended writing skills, but such skills are relatively underdeveloped amongst lower-attaining pupils.

170. Achievement across Years 10 to 11 for pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is satisfactory. Boys and girls of all attainment levels make satisfactory progress in developing appropriate historical skills. Year 10 pupils of all attainment levels were seen developing their analytical skills when evaluating why Hippocrates was an influential figure in the history of medicine. Most pupils are developing their ability to use relevant information to explain events. For example, Year 11 pupils of all attainment levels studying the rise of Hitler use support materials in order to discuss reasons for the growth of Nazi ideology.
171. The quality of teaching is good. In all lessons observed, teachers use their good subject knowledge to successfully capture pupils' interest and lessons are well planned with clear objectives. A wide variety of appropriate teaching approaches are used, including group work and role playing, which are well supported by the good use of resource materials. Teachers manage pupils well and make good use of praise and encouragement. This ensures good relationships in history lessons. The learning of boys and girls, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory and not as good as the quality of teaching. Whilst pupils acquire historical knowledge, understanding and skills and show good interest in the subject, their relatively low levels of attention and concentration hinder the pace of learning. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour, that are satisfactory overall, also determine the quality of learning. Good relationships are generally a feature of history lessons but there were instances of inappropriate behaviour that had a negative impact on learning.
172. The leadership and management of the department are good. The head of history leads a stable team of specialists that is characterised by supportive relationships. There is a helpful departmental handbook together with good schemes of work and a clear development plan that has identified clear priorities for the future. The history curriculum is enhanced by a good range of fieldwork and visits. The monitoring and evaluation of the work of the department is satisfactory. All lessons are taught in specialist classrooms that bring the subject to life. Areas for improvement include developing the department's assessment procedures, extending its use of assessment information in planning the curriculum together with developing the application of information and communication technology in the subject.
173. The department has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. It has developed its use of information and communication technology, the quality of teaching has improved and it has made some progress in the teaching of pupils' literacy skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

In ICT as a discrete subject the provision is good. In ICT in subjects across the curriculum the provision is unsatisfactory as there is no provision to use and develop ICT capability in a number of subjects including art and design, English, modern foreign languages, science and religious education.

Strengths

- Quality of teaching in discrete ICT.
- Pupils' attitude and behaviour in these lessons.
- Standards of attainment at GCSE.
- ICT equipment available to support teaching and learning.

Areas for improvement

- The use and development of ICT capability across the curriculum.
- The tracking and monitoring of teaching of ICT in subjects across the curriculum.
- Provision of hardware and software for science and design technology.
- Use of National Curriculum level descriptors as learning targets for pupils as well as for assessment criteria.

174. Standards of attainment at GCSE are above national averages. This represents good progress from years 7 to 11 as pupils enter the school with attainment well below national averages. Pupils were seen using spreadsheets to determine break-even points for businesses using a range of data. Pupils were able to enter data, apply formulae, create graphs and vary the inputs to model a variety of situations. They paid due attention to presentation when producing hard copy of their work. Year 11 pupils were seen working with business reports. They used their ICT capability to explain how ICT could be used to collect and store data and present it as information. As well as the GCSE option group, there is also a compulsory course, which provides ICT experience for all pupils. This course leads to appropriate text and word processing qualifications (94 pupils achieved distinction in RSA initial award examinations) as well as giving pupils access to the range of ICT experiences. Pupils were seen creating web pages as part of a personal on-line magazine. Presentation of this was to a high standard and incorporated a variety of media, text, pictures, sound and video. Pupils have also used the capability developed here to present coursework for GCSE in physical education and geography.

175. Results of teachers' assessments at the end of Year 9 were very low in 2001. They were not so in 2000 or 1999, when they were close to or above national expectations. Pupils' work seen in scrutiny and lessons shows that pupils are working at expected levels and can apply their capability to a variety of tasks. Pupils in Year 7 were seen creating sound files and learning to combine these with text and scanned images to create multimedia presentations. Pupils in Year 9 were producing logos to match given criteria (aimed at different audiences). They evaluated their designs, using classmates and others to market research their designs.

176. In some subjects there was evidence of ICT being used appropriately. For example, Internet research was used in geography and history lessons. Mathematics classes book the ICT rooms on a regular basis for lessons as well as running a 'catch-up' group using number games with a strategy. The low-attaining group benefited from this lesson. Overall, however, ICT skills and applications are not developed adequately across the curriculum. This aspect of provision does not meet National Curriculum requirements.

177. Overall, teaching is good in discrete ICT lessons. Some teaching is very good, some is satisfactory. Permanent staff provide good and very good teaching. A non-specialist supply teacher, covering a long-term absence, provided satisfactory teaching. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject, its requirements for examinations and of the computer network. Lessons are well planned. New skills are illustrated well to pupils who benefit from seeing tasks illustrated on a large screen.

178. Where teaching was satisfactory, instructions were only given verbally in some lessons. This meant that the teacher had to repeat instructions often to individuals when they forgot what to do next. This makes the teacher less effective in helping all pupils.
179. Support for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and for pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) was well used when it was available. When not available the teacher coped very well with a class with 14 pupils on the SEN register and 6 with EAL by giving a very well-structured lesson, explaining each task and giving detailed help with sentence construction and good use of a word wall.
180. Pupils' work is marked to National Curriculum level descriptors and GCSE grade descriptors at the end of a unit. In Years 7 to 9, interim grades are given verbally as the teacher discusses work with individual pupils. This does mean some pupils do not work to completion of targets in lessons. In Years 10 and 11 interim grades are added to work that pupils are asked to print so that a record of interim stages of work can be kept to illustrate development and progression.
181. ICT is well managed. The management of discrete ICT is good. Teaching is monitored; there is a timetabled programme of training (which has been made available to the supply teacher). The department leader is seeking ways to improve provision and has been successful in ensuring that equipment is up-to-date and matches requirements for curriculum delivery and that skills developed can be transferred to the wider community. Accommodation is good: classrooms have computers around the periphery with desks in the middle. There are enough computers and space for classes in all rooms except the City Learning Centre facility attached to the school. Classes using this room overspill into available computer rooms. This is not a satisfactory solution but it is well managed.
182. Management of the use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory. Strategies are in place to track and monitor curriculum use of the facilities, but they are not used properly. The strategy needs to be enforced at senior management level. Staff development through the national training scheme is underway, but not all subject areas make satisfactory use of the facilities.
183. Since the last inspection there has been progress. A new network has been installed to match the facilities in the City Learning Centre. Standards have not fallen. Old computers are still available in the library and in some curriculum areas, but Internet access has been removed until access protection software can be installed. There is no technical support available to do this at present. A new technician has been appointed with effect from January.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Overall, the quality of provision in modern languages is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Teachers have good subject knowledge.
- Teachers use a good variety of teaching methods.
- Teachers manage pupils well.

Areas for improvement

- The standards reached by pupils at the age of 16.
- The progress made by pupils by the time they reach the age of 14.
- More effective use of assessment to help raise standards

184. Standards achieved by pupils at the age of fourteen are well below national expectations. The percentage of pupils gaining level 4 or better in teachers' assessments was close to the national average in 2000 but these results are not reflected in either 1999 or 2001 when they were well below national expectations. No pupils gained level 6 or better in 1999 or 2000 and very few in 2001.
185. Standards achieved by pupils at the age of 16 are also well below expectation. In 2000 results in Spanish were well below national averages for pupils gaining A*-C but in line with expectations for pupils gaining A*-G. The school enters a higher proportion of the year group for GCSE examinations than is the case nationally. Pupils' performance in Spanish is not as good as in other subjects. The trend over time is for results to be well below average for the percentage of pupils gaining A*-C. Boys' performance by comparison with girls is better than is the case nationally.
186. Numbers of pupils taking examinations in Urdu are too small to be statistically significant but recent results have been well below average for pupils at the age of sixteen.
187. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in Years 7 to 9 make unsatisfactory progress. Pupils make a good start in Year 7 when they develop oral confidence and good pronunciation. High-attainers have good listening skills. Low-attainers achieve good standards in written work. Pupils of all abilities have a positive attitude towards work. By the end of Year 9, however, high-attainers have not made the expected progress in writing. They are not given enough opportunity to produce pieces of extended writing and they do not have a firm basis of grammar on which to build. Low-attainers, including pupils with special educational needs, have a reduced time allocation by comparison with other pupils. As a result they do not make the expected progress. They have not improved their oral skills since Year 7 and standards of writing are of variable quality. Pupils in Year 9 are less positive in their attitudes towards their work. The level of progress made by pupils in Years 7 to 9 represents a decline by comparison with the last inspection.
188. In Years 10 and 11 pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils develop their oral skills. Pronunciation is good and pupils display a relatively high degree of oral confidence. High-attainers in Year 11 were able to express opinions and give reasons for their opinions in an oral lesson with the Spanish assistant. Middle ability pupils understand basic questions and can respond adequately. Many pupils have extended the range of their vocabulary to allow them to cope with the demands of GCSE examinations. This is particularly the case in higher ability groups. Pupils at the C/D borderline, however, still do not have a secure enough grasp of basic grammar to allow them to produce good quality pieces of extended writing. Some pupils in the Certificate of Achievement group are working at a level which is below expectations.
189. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of good teaching. There was also some unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers are all fluent in the languages they teach. In the best lessons they use the target language effectively, so that pupils develop good listening skills. In some lessons pupils use the target languages as a means of communication in the classroom and thus develop their oral skills. In many lessons teachers use a good variety of teaching methods to ensure that pupils maintain their interest. The presentation of new material is often done in a lively manner, using a variety of techniques. As a result pupils generally concentrate well in this key part of the lesson. In the best lessons teachers make sure that pupils are actively involved by the use of games and pair work. The management of pupils is good. In most lessons

there is a good relationship between the teacher and the pupils. In the occasional lesson where behaviour is unacceptable problems are dealt with firmly.

190. In some lessons, even though pupils made satisfactory progress, the level of expectation was not high enough. In some of these lessons the slow pace resulted in pupils not achieving as highly as they could; in others pupils were engaged in activities that did not involve creative effort and did not develop their language skills.
191. Teachers are not using assessment effectively to help pupils make progress particularly in Years 7 to 9. They do not have a clear understanding of National Curriculum levels and are, therefore, not yet able to plan for progression in the development of skills in the four attainment targets. Pupils are tested regularly and work is regularly marked but pupils are not given clear targets which show them what they have to do to move from one level to the next nor how they can improve the quality of their work. The objectives of lessons are rarely shared with pupils so they are rarely clear about what they are expected to achieve.
192. Curriculum arrangements in Years 10 and 11 are affecting pupils' performance. The broad and mixed ability groupings created by the options system make it difficult for all pupils to make progress. In one Year 11 class, which contained pupils from the full ability range, for example, the teacher found it impossible to meet the needs of all pupils even though the lesson was well planned and executed.
193. In Years 7 to 9, low-attaining groups have only two lessons a week compared with three for middle and high-attaining groups. This is having a marked effect on the attainment of these groups. The department receives no learning support for pupils with special educational needs
194. Leadership and management of the department are satisfactory. This is a cohesive team of teachers who work together well, support each other and show a strong commitment to move forward in difficult circumstances. Day-to-day management of the department is good. The head of department is under considerable pressure because of the extra demands made on her by circumstances directly related to the impending closure of the school. She has to support two newly qualified teachers and plan the introduction of a second language to bring the school into line with others in the area. For this she is given only one extra free period. Progress since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. Strategic planning is ineffective. In the current development plan, targets are not measurable and courses of action to achieve these targets are not identified. Schemes of work ensure consistency and continuity but not progression. There is little effective monitoring of teaching. Learning resources are adequate only because the department makes up for a shortage of textbooks by producing a lot of in-house support material. The two newly qualified teachers have settled in well. As a result the department has a committed and well-qualified staff. Display is good.

MUSIC

Overall, the quality of provision in music is currently **unsatisfactory**.

The inspection was during a period of absence, through illness, of the only music teacher.

Strengths

- The good attitudes of higher-attaining pupils.
- The school's payment for instrumental teaching, which now incurs charges.

Areas for improvement

- Regular specialist staffing, so as to build interest and raise standards.
- Resources and tuition to enable the use of computers for composition.
- Closer monitoring by senior managers.

195. Standards overall are below average. In 2001, teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment aged 14 showed a minority reaching at or above the expected level; well below the national average. Figures for the previous two years are unreliable, so a trend cannot be discerned. No distinction between boys and girls was available. No information was available about the musical experience or attainment of entrants to the school. GCSE music is offered to some cohorts, with more boys than girls choosing it as an option. Numbers and results fluctuate greatly. In 1999 the two boys entered gained A* and B grades. In 2000 only two of twelve pupils gained grade C or above; though all passed. In 2001, the eight pupils were graded D or E. On average therefore, results are below those nationally.
196. In lessons most pupils aged 11-14 achieve well, particularly those in higher-attaining classes. They listen keenly and appreciatively to demonstrations of Latin-American percussion instruments, and are able to play these in ensemble, mostly maintaining tempo and the repeated patterns divided among groups. Most pupils are able and keen to identify symbols and terms and can read basic rhythmic notation, including rests, for clapping and playing. Most pupils sing willingly, in imitation of the teacher, an African song, but without accuracy of pitch nor with any refinement. Lower-achieving groups achieve less well musically, since time needs to be taken to quell unsatisfactory behaviour from those who find it difficult to concentrate or to understand. Written work seen was presented very well by the majority in each of the first three years. Neat handwriting and clear layout was the norm, with some good quality drawings of instruments and clear notation. However, the work within each year is identical in content, with no free or individual writing; and that for Years 8 and 9 was the same, for reasons which could not be ascertained. Nothing was known of pupils with special educational needs to the supply teachers involved, so that no judgement on the progress of these pupils could be made.
197. More than twenty pupils are due to take GCSE music this year. From observation of their lessons, analysis of their work and conversations with them, few are well prepared for success at good grades at the moment. All are familiar with the demands of the listening paper, through notes provided by the teacher and practice with past papers. Composition is underdeveloped, with little to show so far, no use of computers evident and a widespread lack of confidence. There are a few very competent performers, but many are at early stages on keyboards or drums. The majority do not benefit from instrumental tuition, in school or privately, and none currently have access to computer-aided composition in school or at home. Taught time has been severely curtailed by the repeated absence of the music teacher. Pupils are ill equipped as independent learners, showing a surprising lack of interest in their ongoing work – its quality or whereabouts. The four boys and four girls in Year 10 are so far working in a balanced way at the three aspects of the examination schedule. As a group they work well together, for example in warm-up games which extend co-ordination, and in a seminar in which each pupil's performance was commented on helpfully by others. Individuals show a developing knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses. More of this group are supported with instrumental tuition. Pupils show initiative in various ways, from learning a piano piece by ear from a keyboard 'demo' facility, to the organisation of a very successful public concert for victims of the New York disaster. However, progress again is severely slowed by the absence of regular specialist teaching.

198. Teaching is satisfactory. During the inspection, an experienced though unqualified teacher was engaged to provide learning experiences through practical music making and listening to pupils from all years. Learning was limited by the isolated nature of these lessons. The teacher's enthusiasm and encouragement ensured lively participation from groups in Years 7, 8 and 9. The teacher did not know the pupils or their differing needs, but dealt positively and effectively with the few miscreants in some classes. Through individual attention and advice about the use of the Internet, teaching tried to encourage independent learning among GCSE pupils. Only second-hand evidence was available for regular teaching. There are plenty of teaching materials available. While there was evidence of assessment, its effectiveness could not be judged during the inspection. Extra-curricular work towards a planned Christmas concert, including a choir which involves pupils and staff, was abandoned because of the teacher's absence. However, extra funding through Excellence in Cities and the national lottery [through Youth and Music] provides sessions in African drumming currently. The after-school session observed showed how pupils from across the school developed quickly the techniques and spirit of this music, with excellent concentration and a hard-working but enjoyable atmosphere.
199. Since the previous inspection, music has been assigned different accommodation which is now satisfactory. Numbers of pupils taking GCSE have increased, as have the numbers taking instrumental lessons. However, a number of deficiencies in provision mean that improvement overall is unsatisfactory. Curriculum time for Years 7-9 remains under that recommended. Continuous staffing has become a major problem, which seriously limits standards and frustrates achievement in all years. Resources are inadequate, particularly the use of computers (a statutory requirement) and the number and variety of unpitched percussion. Planning for Years 7-9 relies on a published scheme, and therefore does not take account of these pupils and their particular and differing needs. Management of music, as well as teaching and learning, suffers through the repeated absence of the one music teacher. With staffing restored to its best level, resources developed and closer monitoring by senior management, pupils will be able to benefit, as they should, from learning through music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of provision in physical education is **good**.

Strengths

- Teaching.
- Staff expertise.
- Pupils' very positive attitudes and behaviour.

Areas for improvement

- Indoor accommodation is inadequate and some is in poor condition.
- Assessment needs further development.
- There is a need to use ICT more widely.

200. By the end of Year 9, standards are above average. Boys reach good standards of practical skills in basketball, cricket and gymnastics. Year 8 boys make very good progress in effective use of the lay-up shot in basketball and some achieve a very high success rate. In cricket, Year 7 boys have good command of the forward defensive stroke, consistently playing it correctly with appropriate footwork. In gymnastics, boys make very clear progress in free-standing movements and a large majority can roll with

good technique and also manage to balance body weight on arms. Year 7 and 8 girls have good skills in hockey with many applying them well in games.

201. GCSE results are very good in PE. Fourteen pupils sat the examination in 2001 and 13 gained A* to C passes. This compares very well with national standards and similar levels of achievement have been consistently produced over recent years. Boys and girls attain well. Standards of written work are very good. Some pupils use ICT extensively showing a range of skills to produce a high quality of presentation and some written project work by Year 11 pupils is detailed, imaginative and of very good standard.
202. Attainment in games is well above average. Soccer skills exhibited by the great majority of Year 11 boys enable them to pass the ball so well as to deny opposing players possession for long periods. Results of inter-school competition in soccer, cricket, basketball and hockey are impressive. Year 10 girls pass and shoot well in basketball and those in Year 11 have good racket skills in badminton and stickwork in hockey. They sustain rallies in badminton showing a variety of appropriate strokes. In all years, boys, girls, pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are very well integrated into lessons. They perform very well, concentrating and making good progress.
203. Teaching is nearly always good but often very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and regularly demonstrate skills effectively both in games and gymnastics. Pupils, encouraged regularly by teachers to demonstrate, almost invariably do so unselfconsciously and effectively. Teaching styles are varied sufficiently to ensure that pupils are able to plan and evaluate their work. Occasionally delivery of theory in GCSE lessons is pedestrian and needs better planning to identify clearer objectives. When this happens, pupils' learning is unsatisfactory.

204. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are consistently very good. When the subject is presented enthusiastically, pupils respond similarly. Boys and girls co-operate and collaborate well in practices and small-sided games which means that lessons almost always proceed with good pace and clear purpose. Pupils are willing to accept referees' decisions without question.
205. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Teachers work very well together. They form very good working relationships with classes, inspiring pupils to work hard and achieve well. Some use is made of ICT and pupils are encouraged to use it for homework but there is need for wider usage in administration, preparation and assessment. The assessment scheme neither reflects National Curriculum levels nor enables pupils to set attainment targets against them. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
206. Extra-curricular provision is very good, particularly in games. Teams from the school are very successful in competitive sport. Many pupils, boys and girls, have played for district and county teams and a few have represented North of England squads in soccer and hockey. Some have become involved in professional sport. There are trips to Europe for soccer and tours of England for cricket. Wide use is made of local club facilities and many pupils successfully take up sport after they leave school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of provision in religious education is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- The subject reflects many of the school's aims well.
- The head of department is studying for a diploma in religious education.
- Teaching by the specialist teacher is good.
- The departmental action plan shows awareness of what still needs to be done.

Areas for improvement

- Curriculum time in Years 10-11 to meet statutory requirements.
- Subject knowledge and ICT skills of teachers.
- The implementation of assessment procedures.
- Departmental meetings.
- Resources including ICT.

207. Standards at the end of Year 9 are in line with expectations, but are well below expectation at the end of Year 11. In Year 7 pupils visit the local cemetery, a project introduced in an attempt to encourage better respect of the place by local youth. This has proved successful and the writing of some pupils shows a concern that it has been misused in the past. Pupils in Year 7 also learn a large number of facts about Islam through a 'question time' session, when pupils, from both Year 9 and Year 7 belonging to the Islamic faith, enjoy answering questions. In Year 8, they learn about the different stories of creation and write about something that is special to them, explaining why that is so. They learn about the stories of Abraham and Moses through videos and follow the history of Judaism through the Old Testament. They learn about modern Judaism and the Holocaust. Progress is good when they learn about the inside of a Jewish synagogue, because the work builds on what they have already learned in primary schools and in Year 7. A sense of the sacred is clearly taught by some teachers. In the majority of lessons, all pupils, boys and girls and all groups, achieve equally well because of good support and appropriate questioning of all groups

by the teacher. Higher-attainers in Year 9 answer questions in some depth, giving reasons for their own beliefs or the conclusions they draw. Lower-attainers record straightforward facts. They learn to consider whether a story is fact or fiction, for example through the story of Noah's ark. Debate is used to consider which phase we are in at the present time: creation, preservation or destruction. Pupils are aware that religious education is about what people believe and how they live and they learn about the Hindu belief in many views of God. They have a very clear understanding of the Indian caste system and how it may affect the lives of Asians in this country and the jobs they choose to do or who they marry. Both the positive and negative aspects of belief are discussed, such as in arranged marriages. A small amount of work is completed on Buddhism in Years 7-9.

208. In Years 10-11, religious education is taught as a third of a larger programme and is taught in two, six-week blocks. This means that although the Agreed Syllabus is covered, much of it is covered in little depth. Issues related to the moral attitudes to, for example, euthanasia or abortion, are discussed from different religious perspectives, as are ultimate questions about the environment, moral issues on sexual behaviour and relationships and attitudes to the body when related to drugs and health. Pupils' work also shows that they know about the Christian church's year and the meaning of the name Christ, the Trinity and the symbols of the cross and fish. All that is covered is recorded very briefly, but there is no extended writing on any topic.
209. Whilst the Agreed Syllabus is covered, pupils' achievement, overall, is unsatisfactory in Years 7-9 and is very unsatisfactory in Years 10-11 because the subject is not taught in enough depth in either key stage. In Years 7-9, many of the teachers are non-specialists and whilst covering the content of the Agreed Syllabus they do not have the knowledge necessary to follow up comments and questions that pupils make and ask. In Years 10-11 there are a number of reasons for underachievement. The time allocation for the subject is only a third of what it should be to meet the Agreed Syllabus requirements and the fact that only one teacher has specialist knowledge are the two main reasons. Higher-attaining pupils would be well able and are interested enough to sit an examination, but no short or long course is offered. However, when pupils are taught well they achieve well within the limits of the curriculum offered. For example, pupils in Years 10-11, when interviewed, showed a real appreciation of how they were taught to think and come to their own conclusions about issues. They were also able to consider issues in the light of different people's beliefs and consider what different conclusions people of different faiths might come to, in the light of these different beliefs. Pupils' attitudes to the subject in both key stages are good, overall, and often very good or better. Only occasionally are they unsatisfactory and this is related to the quality of teaching.
210. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, in Years 7-9, ranging from excellent to poor. In the one lesson seen it was good in Years 10-11, but no overall judgement can be given of this key stage. Where teaching is excellent, objectives are shared with pupils at the start of the lesson, the teacher has excellent subject knowledge, work is relevant to pupils' own lives, there are very high expectations and an excellent pace is maintained throughout the lesson leading to a large amount being covered. New text books are used and assessment through excellent questioning shows that pupils have a clear understanding of what has been taught, the teacher having very clearly taken pupils through the process of understanding new concepts of other people's beliefs. Where there is very good teaching, the teacher has very good subject knowledge and learning objectives are more than the mere learning of facts: such as in a lesson about Abraham where pupils were asked to note where 'trust' was important throughout the story and by different people. It is also very good when the same lesson is taught to

different ability groups and the lessons is very successfully modified to match the different needs of these groups. All succeed, because lower- attainers are taken step-by-step through the viewing of a video and the note-taking relating to it and higher-attainers are suitably challenged because of the teacher's high expectations of their capabilities. Teachers use homework well to link one lesson with the next: for example, in using what pupils have learned in a 'question time' lesson to answer the questions they prepared in the set homework. In the best lessons good links are made with literacy, for example when a thesaurus is introduced to find alternative meanings to a word and this is also related to the thesaurus on a word processor.

211. Where teaching is poor or there are weaknesses, discipline is unsatisfactory, as basic classroom ground-rules have not been established and there is, as a result, a very slow start to the lesson, limiting teaching and learning time as unrest has to be dealt with first. Occasionally sarcasm is used inappropriately to control. Long introductions in some lessons do not add to the quality of pupils' work, whereas in others, this is a positive feature when teaching is very good. In weaker lessons, lesson objectives are not shared with pupils at the start of the lesson nor assessment used at the end of the lesson to check what pupils have learned. In some lessons key words are not displayed and pupils do not understand basic vocabulary or phrases such as 'festival' and 'frame of mind'. Foreshortened lessons, on days when there are assemblies, prevent the subject being taught in any depth. Teaching is also barely satisfactory when non-specialist teachers cover the bare facts but have little understanding of the wider implications of what they are teaching. Resources are used very well but subject knowledge is limited so pupils' questions are not fully answered. In these lessons only the first attainment target, 'learning about religion' is taught successfully, there is little evidence of the second attainment target, 'learning from religion'. In one lesson the time allocated was shortened to 35 minutes because assembly takes part of the timetabled time for religious education. In some classes, pupils with English as a second language are supported very well with vocabulary corrected in a positive way when spoken English is incorrect. In other lessons, however, these pupils have no extra support and this leads to unacceptable behaviour.
212. At the last inspection, the fact that there were no specialists in the department was a key issue. The head of department is now two-thirds of the way through a religious education diploma course and this directly influences the very good teaching seen. Improvement on this issue has been good. However, as all teachers of religious education belong to other subject departments, to which, other than the head of department, their first priority lies, a department, as such, does not exist. The head of department meets with individuals and gives good support to them but there is no time allocated to departmental meetings when teachers can build up common knowledge and exchange ideas and expertise. The positive side of having teachers from different departments teaching religious education, however, is that religious education becomes something that is not departmentalised and is seen to be part of life as a whole. For example, one teacher is a food technology teacher and uses this well when teaching about the food customs of different faiths. With imagination and careful planning, together with in-service training, the dilemma of too few specialists could be overcome. Resources have improved but are still barely adequate and the loss of a computer has meant that information and communication technology is not used to support learning at present, although a pupil with special educational needs has benefited from its use in the past. The department is improving.