

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SALENDINE NOOK HIGH SCHOOL**

Huddersfield

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107757

Headteacher: Mrs C G Spencer

Lead inspector: Ross Maden

Dates of inspection: 21 – 25 February 2005

Inspection number: 268450

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	1353
School address:	New Hey Road Huddersfield West Yorkshire
Postcode:	HD3 4GN
Telephone number:	01484 657541
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J. D. Clarke
Date of previous inspection:	22 February 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Salendine Nook High is a bigger than average comprehensive school with 1353 pupils in the school. There are more girls than boys in Years 7 to 9. The ethnic composition of pupils in the school reflects the local community. Most pupils are white but there are significant numbers of pupils whose ethnic origin is Pakistani, Caribbean or from Asian countries. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is higher than in most schools although there are only five pupils at the early stages of learning the English language. There are four pupils who are refugees or asylum seekers and three pupils who are in public care. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below the national average. However, the number of pupils with statements of special educational needs is in line with the national average. Most pupils when they leave the school go into full-time education but nearly a fifth enter employment. The school caters for the full ability range but on average the attainment on entry is above the national average. Few pupils join the school other than at the usual time of admission. The area the school serves, based on the number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, is a slightly more advantaged area when compared with national data. The school is oversubscribed.

The school is a specialist technology college and gained a Schools Achievement Award in 2001, 2002 and 2003. The school gained the Sportsmark Award in 2004 and became a Beacon School in 2000 until 2004 when the scheme finished. In 2003 the school became a Partnership Promotion School. The school has a strong partnership with the University of Huddersfield and Huddersfield New College in the training of future teachers. The school is active in promoting the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and is involved in an Enterprise Curriculum initiative called 'Setpoint'.

The smooth running of the school and the inspection were disrupted by the unavoidable snow closure of the school on the Thursday of the inspection week. During the inspection week Year 10 were out of school on work experience.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2793	Ross Maden	Lead inspector	
13706	Gillian Marsland	Lay inspector	
32330	Ann Behan	Team inspector	Mathematics
13217	Malcolm Butterworth	Team inspector	Physical education Special educational needs
22849	Ron Catlow	Team inspector	Geography Citizenship
33171	Tom Clark	Team inspector	English
18447	Ron Cohen	Team inspector	Work related learning History
10209	Vince Gormally	Team inspector	Art and design
28106	Michele Majid	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
8360	Fred Peacock	Team inspector	Music
19015	Gordon Peacock	Team inspector	Science
24894	Clive Petts	Team inspector	Design and technology
3793	John Ratcliffe	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Salendine Nook is a good school.** Standards are above national averages. Pupils make satisfactory progress across most subjects in relation to their prior attainment. Teaching and learning are good. The leadership and management of the school are good. The effectiveness of the school's partnership with parents is good. Most parents are supportive of the school. Pupils' attendance is very good and most have positive attitudes towards their learning. Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The provision for design and technology is very good which results in pupils reaching high standards.
- The school works hard to provide a curriculum that matches pupils' needs and is committed to developing an inclusive school.
- A high proportion of lessons is good or better which enables pupils to learn effectively.
- The school makes very efficient use of its limited finances.
- The school has developed very good links with local schools and colleges.
- The provision for work related learning is a particular strength of the school.
- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance learning is limited.
- The accommodation for physical education, science and communal areas is inadequate.
- There is inconsistent use of assessment data to identify tasks that fully challenge pupils of all abilities.

The school has made good progress since its last inspection. There have been significant improvements in the proportion of pupils reaching Level 5 and above in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9. Standards that are above the national average at GCSE have been maintained. In tackling the key issues there have been significant improvements in the quality of accommodation since the last inspection. Unsatisfactory teaching in geography has been effectively tackled. Annual reports to parents now meet statutory requirements. There have been some improvements in assessment, but work still remains to be done and the school is still failing to provide a daily act of collective worship.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Standards of pupils' work seen in the inspection are above average in all years. **Pupils achieve at a satisfactory level throughout their time in the school**, given their attainment when they enter the school. Most pupils make satisfactory progress because they have positive attitudes to learning, are well behaved and well taught. Language and literacy skills are good. Their competence in mathematics is good and competence in ICT is good in Years 7 to 9 and for those pupils who follow ICT courses in Years 10 and 11. Pupils with special educational needs achieve at a satisfactory level but often make good progress when they are supported well. The achievement of gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory.

Pupils attained above average standards in mathematics and science in the National Curriculum tests in 2004 at the end of Year 9; in English standards are in line with national averages. In relation to their prior attainment at the end of Year 9, pupils' results at GCSE are in line for those

gaining five GCSE grades A\*-C; well above for those gaining five GCSE grades A\*-G. The results for design and technology and French were significantly stronger than the results pupils gained in other subjects. Results in double award science, history and English language were relatively weaker.

**Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are good.** Attendance is very good. Most pupils are punctual to school and to lessons. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.**

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school for pupils is good. Teaching and learning are good.** Aspects of assessment are good but assessment data is not effectively used to ensure that the tasks set for pupils fully meet their needs. The school provides a good curriculum for pupils. Opportunities to enrich the curriculum through a wide range of out of school activities are good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory. Arrangements to ensure the pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good. Provision for support, advice and guidance is very good. The involvement of the pupils in the work and development of the school is good. Links with parents are good. Links with the local community are good. Links with other schools and colleges are very good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership is good.** The governance of the school is good. The leadership provided by the headteacher and other key staff is good. Management is satisfactory. The headteacher is very effective in identifying additional sources of income to supplement the low level of funding the school receives. Professional development of staff is good. The school makes a good contribution to initial teacher training and supports students well. Governors provide good support and challenge to the school. The school is still failing to provide a daily act of collective worship. Financial controls are good.

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

A school-commissioned survey in November 2004 concluded that over three-quarters of parents were pleased with the overall performance of the school. The inspectors agree, as the survey results show, that the school has reason to be happy with most of its activities.

From the sample of pupils who completed questionnaires prior to the inspection, 100 per cent stated that teachers expect pupils to work hard. A very high proportion of pupils felt it was a good school to be at and that they were well taught. Younger pupils were more positive about the school than older pupils. Over one fifth of pupils felt that worthwhile homework is not set. The inspectors' judgement is that the amount of homework and the tasks set for homework were appropriate for pupils of this age.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve the access to computers to enable all pupils in all subjects to use ICT to support their learning.
- Ensure there is a reliable computer network to support the needs of the school.
- The governing body should work with the LEA to ensure that the accommodation for physical education, science and communal areas is adequate to meet the needs of the number of pupils in the school.
- Ensure that assessment data is used effectively by all teachers to identify tasks that fully challenge pupils of all abilities.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Increase the efforts to ensure that all pupils receive their entitlement to a daily act of collective worship.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in subjects and courses**

The standards of work pupils reach by the end of Year 9 and by the end of Year 11 are above national averages. Pupils are achieving at a satisfactory level during their time in school. Pupils' competence in English and mathematics is good. Their competence in ICT is good in Years 7 to 9 and it is good for those pupils following ICT courses in Years 10 and 11. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress and pupils with English as an additional language make good progress. Gifted and talented pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their levels of prior attainment.

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

- Standards are above average in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9.
- Standards are above average in the GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11.
- Standards are well above average in Years 10 and 11 in design and technology and work related learning.
- Since the last inspection the proportion of pupils reaching Level 5 and above in English, mathematics and science in the National Curriculum tests has increased significantly.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	32.8 (34.1)	33.3 (33.4)
Mathematics	37.7 (37.4)	35.5 (35.4)
Science	34.1 (34.2)	33.1 (33.6)

*There were 277 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

#### **Commentary**

1. Pupils enter the school with standards that are above the national average. However, attainment on entry does vary quite significantly from one year group to another. Over the last ten years there has been a trend, which indicates that the average attainment on entry has declined. Pupils' overall standards of attainment in the 2003 National Curriculum tests in Year 9 were above the national average for English and mathematics and in line for science. In comparison with similar schools based on pupils' prior attainment, results for English and mathematics were below average and well below for science. The trend in the school's average National Curriculum points for all three core subjects was below the national trend. Results for 2004 show that results in English are in line with national averages and those for mathematics and science are above. In comparison with similar schools based on pupils' prior attainment, results for mathematics are in line, science below and English is in the lowest five per cent.
2. Standards seen in many lessons were above average in Years 7 to 9. As pupils enter the school with standards that are above the national average and by the end of Year 9 standards are above average, this indicates that pupils are achieving at a satisfactory level. The major factors for this are the positive attitudes pupils have in lessons and because they are well taught. For individual subjects, by the end of Year 9 standards are above average for most



subjects. The exceptions are that standards are satisfactory in geography, history, citizenship, modern foreign languages and music.

- In 2004 the school met its targets for the proportion of pupils reaching Level 5 and above in mathematics and ICT but the targets were not met for English and science. The school is on course to meet the challenging targets set for 2005.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	58 (64)	52 (52)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	96 (94)	89 (88)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	99 (98)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	300.8	282.8

*There were 285 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

- The proportion of pupils gaining five or more GCSE grades A\*-C and one or more A\*-G were above national averages in 2004. The proportion gaining five or more GCSE grades A\*-G was well above the national average. When comparing the performance of pupils in 2004 with their prior attainment at the end of Year 9, the proportion of pupils gaining five GCSE grades A\*-C was in line with the average. The proportion gaining five GCSE grades A\*-G was well above average and one A\*-G were above average when compared to similar schools. The overall results in 2004 were below those of 2003. However, in relation to their prior attainment, pupils achieved better results in 2004 than those in 2003. The value added measure in 2003 based on pupils' performance at GCSE, in comparison with their results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9, was below average. However, in 2004 it has improved to being in line with the national average.
- Analysis of the 2004 examination results shows that all candidates entered for biology, chemistry and physics gained GCSE grades A\*-C. The proportion of pupils gaining GCSE grades A\*-C in design and technology, English literature and physical education were significantly above national averages. Results for double award science and history were significantly below national figures. The analysis of individual subjects in the 2004 GCSE examinations shows that pupils gained results in design and technology and French that were above their performance in other subjects. Similarly, results in English language, double award science and history were below the results pupils achieved in other subjects.
- In 2004 the school did not meet its published targets for the proportion of pupils gaining five GCSE grades A\*-C; nor for average points score. The improvement trend in the school's average points score from 2000-2004 was below the national trend.
- Standards in lessons seen in Year 11 reflect the standards of recent examination results. Standards were well above average in design and technology and work related learning. For all other subjects standards are above average except for music, art and design, and citizenship where standards are average. For those pupils not following a GCSE course in ICT standards are satisfactory. In relation to their prior attainment most pupils are achieving well in design and technology, modern foreign languages, music, religious education, work related learning and physical education. They are achieving at a satisfactory level in all other subjects.

8. Overall, most pupils are achieving at a satisfactory level in relation to their prior attainment. Relative to the national performance of boys and girls there is no significant difference. Girls do outperform boys but the gap is in line with the national difference. The additional provision for gifted and talented pupils has been targeted at younger pupils and has yet to make an impact on GCSE results. The number of pupils gaining A or A\* in GCSE examinations is in line with national figures but the number gaining A\* is below the national figure. Within lessons some opportunities are missed to provide extension activities to fully stretch higher attaining pupils.
9. Pupils with special educational needs progress satisfactorily in English and mathematics. They achieve well in a number of other subjects including science, history, physical education, design and technology, art and religious education. They make satisfactory gains in reading and spelling ages but easier and more regular access to literacy programmes is needed to raise these gains. By the end of Year 9 pupils can confidently use ICT in lessons. Those pupils with special educational needs who take GCSE examinations achieve well and a high proportion attains five GCSE passes at A\*-G, with a few gaining five good passes at the higher grades of A\*-C. Pupils with statements of special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards targets set at their annual reviews.
10. There are five pupils at an early stage of learning English, and three others in the remaining recognised stages of language acquisition. Two of the former, from arrival in the UK with little or no English, have made very good progress over 15 months to the point where they can, for example, access the science curriculum at the normal level for their age. Others are making similar progress at an earlier stage. Achievement overall is good.
11. Some 150 other pupils of Chinese, Pakistani or other Asian heritage have adequate English to access the curriculum fully, and the school has evidence that they perform as well as others in GCSE examinations.
12. Standards of literacy are above average. Oral skills are well developed. Pupils explain themselves in a confident and coherent manner. They listen to each other patiently, showing respect for the contributions of others. Higher attaining pupils in Years 7 to 9 use mature and sophisticated vocabulary. They construct sentences accurately. Lower attaining pupils make more spelling mistakes and their writing is less sophisticated, relying more on the use of colloquialism. Standards of reading are not as high as in writing and speaking and listening skills in Years 7 and 8. Many readers do not read aloud fluently and stumble over their words. Standards of written work in Year 11 are above average, in terms of clarity and accuracy. Pupils are able to change their writing style to suit different purposes. Standards of speaking and listening and reading are also above average. Reading has improved because the pupils have more opportunity to read, either aloud in class, or in quiet reflection.
13. Pupils enter the school with attainment in mathematics that is above the national average. By the end of Years 9 and 11 pupils are attaining above the national average.
14. In science, pupils can measure accurately, draw appropriate graphs, complete practical exercises effectively, and formulate conclusions by the end of Year 9. In Year 11, pupils can design practical exercises to test hypotheses, complete complex calculations, and use chemical formulae accurately. Pupils with special educational needs make the same rate of progress as other pupils, and pupils with English as an additional language make good progress. Pupils identified as gifted and talented achieve well in science, gaining a high proportion of high grades in the three separate science subjects.
15. Since the last inspection the proportion of pupils reaching Level 5 and above in English, mathematics and science in the National Curriculum tests has increased significantly. The pattern of improvement at GCSE is less obvious, with 58 per cent of pupils gaining five GCSE grades A\*-C in 2004, compared with 61 per cent in 1999. However, raw figures do not tell the full story as the average prior attainment of the Year 11 group in 1999 was significantly higher than the Year 11 group in 2004.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Attendance is very good. Punctuality is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most pupils have good attitudes to their work, which supports their learning.
- Behaviour is good but occasionally the behaviour of a minority of pupils can be challenging.
- Very good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance continue to raise attendance levels throughout the school.

### **Commentary**

16. Most pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well in and around the school. They respond well to their teachers and settle down swiftly to lessons. They listen carefully and readily contribute to classroom discussion.
17. The pupils behave well. The behaviour policy is reviewed annually and the rewards scheme has recently been revised. The scheme now recognises and rewards aspects such as attendance, good behaviour and smart uniform as well as academic achievement. Badges, certificates, citizenship awards and merits are given alongside prizes such as school pens. However, the behaviour of a minority of pupils can sometimes be challenging but appropriate sanctions are in place. The behaviour support unit provides care and guidance and assists the pupils to modify their behaviour. All serious incidents of challenging behaviour, including bullying and racism, are recorded which identifies any persistent problems. Incidents are dealt with swiftly and parents are very supportive.
18. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Many areas of the curriculum allow pupils to explore and reflect upon the values and beliefs of others. This is a particular strength in the religious education department. An assembly takes place only once a week. Some of these are linked to special occasions such as Christmas, Easter, Ramadan, Eid, and Sikh and Hindu festivals. These offer a very good experience for all pupils. Thought for the week has been introduced into Years 7 and 8 but it is not regularly observed in all other year groups and thus the school does not provide a daily act of broadly Christian worship.
19. The schools sets high standards of behaviour and there is a clear code of conduct so that pupils know what is expected of them. Many subjects in the curriculum provide the opportunity for pupils to consider ethical and moral dilemmas. Social interaction is good in most subjects where pupils work co-operatively and listen to their teachers and each other with respect. Opportunities are provided for pupils to show responsibility, for example in serving on the school council. Pupils support many charities such as Children in Need, The Alpine Fund, the Poppy appeal and Healthy Hearts initiative. Most recently they have participated in a sponsored spell to raise funds for the Tsunami appeal. Pupils are able to explore their own cultures and those of others in a range of subjects, especially in religious education where the beliefs of the six main religions are studied and in art where extensive study is made of the art of other cultures, including African and Eastern art.

### **Attendance**

The school has very good procedures in place to monitor and promote good attendance, which have resulted in a further rise in attendance levels. Attendance is very good and well above the national average for secondary schools. Registers are marked electronically at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. Regular analysis of attendance data is undertaken by the heads of each year group and the deputy and headteacher to identify any ongoing problems. Truancy checks are also carried out. Additional support is provided by the educational social worker who carries out home visits as required. Certificates, displays and newsletters encourage the pupils to come to school. Parents support the school by ensuring their children attend and complete any work they miss when absent.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.6	School data	0.3
National data	6.9	National data	1.1

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

### Exclusions

Exclusions are only used when all other strategies have failed. Fixed-term exclusions have risen in the last year as staff apply the revised behaviour policy with more rigour and deal with problems that are rooted in the local community. The school has only permanently excluded one pupil in the last eight years.

### Ethnic background of pupils

### Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	1056	43	1
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	11	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	46	6	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	16	1	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	14	1	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	24	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	117	3	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	19	7	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	14	0	0
Any other ethnic group	7	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	23	1	0

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

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school for pupils is good. Teaching and learning are good. The school provides a good curriculum for pupils. Arrangements to ensure the pupils' care, welfare,

health and safety are good. Provision for support, advice and guidance are very good. Links with parents are good. Links with other schools and colleges is very good.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is satisfactory.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- In more than seven out of every ten lessons teaching is good or better.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good as a result of teachers providing encouragement.
- There is very good management of pupils' behaviour.
- Most teachers are making good use of ICT to support their teaching but its use to support learning is less effective.
- Assessment data is not well used to ensure that tasks set in some lessons fully match the needs of pupils.
- There is a lack of consistency across subjects in the marking of pupils' work so that pupils know how to improve their work.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 116 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4 (3.4 %)	21 (18.1 %)	59 (50.9 %)	31 (26.7%)	1 (0.9%)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)

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

## Commentary

20. Overall, teaching and learning are good. Teaching and learning are slightly stronger in Years 7 to 9 than they are in Year 11. In Years 7 to 9, teaching is very good in design and technology. In all other subjects teaching is good, except for citizenship where it is satisfactory. In Year 11, teaching is very good in design and technology. In all other subjects teaching is good except for English and citizenship where it is satisfactory.
21. As a result of good teaching pupils are learning well; in part, because of the high quality of relationships between most pupils and their teachers. Most teachers provide encouragement and give students confidence to tackle their work effectively. This they do from a firm command of the knowledge and skills of the subjects they teach. The high quality of relationships results in pupils having very positive attitudes towards their learning and contributes to effective learning taking place in lessons. There is also a very good pace to learning when teachers have high expectations for pupils. This is particularly evident in many design and technology and physical education lessons.
22. One of the major strengths is the very good management of pupils' behaviour and it is rare to see teaching or learning time lost because of time spent in managing challenging behaviour. However, some pupils do not always treat supply teachers with the respect they give to other teachers.
23. The variety of teaching tasks set for pupils is satisfactory. In most lessons teachers set tasks which meet the needs of pupils, but in several lessons the work set did not fully match the wide-ranging needs of pupils. In religious education it is a strength. It is a weakness in some English and design and technology lessons. There is a weakness in the use made by several departments of assessment data to ensure that the tasks set fully challenge all pupils. When pupils are given the opportunity to work in pairs, or small groups, they stay on task and can give clear feedback to the class. As a result of being well taught many pupils have well-developed skills in working independently.
24. Most teachers are making good use of ICT to support their teaching, but less well developed is their use of ICT to support learning. Many teachers experience a difficulty in accessing computers and the lack of a reliable network causes difficulties to pupils and teachers alike. The level and quality of available ICT resources do not meet the demand. As a result opportunities are missed in the use of ICT to support learning in English, modern foreign languages, mathematics, science, design and technology and art and design.

25. Some pupils raised concerns about the quantity and quality of tasks set for homework. The inspectors' judgements are that homework is satisfactory, with most teachers setting appropriate tasks to extend and reinforce what has been learnt in lessons.
26. In many curricular areas, notably in mathematics, English, science, physical education and religious education, the teaching encourages the development of speaking and listening skills. Key words are displayed in most classrooms, and in the school library. Literacy is promoted within the school by the co-ordinator for Years 7 to 9. A working party has been set up and has produced booklets, such as, 'Speaking and Vocabulary', and 'Reading Strategies to aid Literacy', which are effectively used by departments.
27. A numeracy policy is in place, and opportunities for pupils to practise mathematical skills are identified in department schemes of work. The head of mathematics has produced a booklet to aid all staff in the promotion of numeracy in lessons. However, the application of the policy is not monitored formally.
28. For pupils with English as an additional language the direct teaching of beginners' English is good, though its effectiveness is limited by the lack of a teaching base away from other lessons. Computerised language learning software would be available to enhance individual learning, but there is no access to computers.
29. In addition to standard tests, all Year 7 pupils are tested for literacy and numeracy on entry to the school and those subsequently diagnosed with special needs are withdrawn for one half lesson per week to receive specialist support during tutorials. In addition these students will be withdrawn from other lessons as appropriate for additional support. There are six support assistants plus a dyslexia support assistant and a behaviour support assistant. Another seven support assistants are designated to mathematics, English, science, humanities, modern languages, design and technology and ICT. Classroom support, where it occurs, is of good quality and clearly helps pupils to improve their standards.
30. Teachers know pupils' special educational needs well and many departments provide carefully graded work to suit all ability levels, particularly in mathematics, English, science, modern languages and design technology. Some departments, for example religious education, mark written work very carefully to maintain pupils' motivation. In physical education specially adapted equipment is provided when it is suitable. Occasionally there is not enough work designed specifically for pupils with special educational needs. There are limited strategies to support pupils' literacy development by subject teachers.
31. Assessment is satisfactory overall and there is an agreed whole-school policy devoted to the use of data for target setting and tracking of pupils' progress. To raise staff awareness further training days on assessment for learning have taken place. There is very good use of assessment data to identify targets for individual pupils and their parents. Less well developed is the use of this information to ensure that teachers set tasks that fully meet the needs of pupils. Whilst the assessment of pupils' work is effective in most subjects, it is only satisfactory in mathematics, geography and physical education. Although pupils are aware of their levels and grades in most subjects, the way to improve further is not fully embedded into the marking practice. Whilst pupils' self-assessment is being developed well in mathematics in Years 7 and 10, modern languages and music it is not widely used yet in other subjects. However, the curriculum focus visits to departments by the senior management team help to increase awareness of assessment and to monitor its development. Due to problems with overload on the school's ICT system, assessment data is not readily available to staff in electronic form.
32. Since the last inspection there has been an improvement in the quality of teaching. There has been a reduction in the number of unsatisfactory lessons seen. Weaknesses in the teaching of geography have been effectively tackled. The lack of consistency in the marking of pupils' work for improvement still remains an issue.



## The curriculum

The curriculum is good. Opportunities to enrich the curriculum through a wide range of out of school activities are good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of extra-curricular activities and vocational courses enriches the curriculum.
- The school has good curricular links with its local primary schools and the local colleges of further and higher education.
- The work-related curriculum is very good and includes work-place learning for some pupils in Years 10 and 11.
- The curricular provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good.
- The ICT curriculum in Years 10 to 11 is unsatisfactory for those pupils not following an ICT course.
- The school does not provide a daily act of collective worship.

### Commentary

33. The curriculum offered by the school in Years 7 to 9 is broad and balanced. The full range of subjects is offered but some classes in Years 7 to 9 are very large, for example in art and design where some classes have 30 pupils. The school has embedded many aspects of the national literacy and numeracy strategies across the curriculum. The promotion of literacy is seen as the concern of every department. Examples of good practice are shared among staff. Mathematics is taught in ability groups in Years 7 to 9. All other subjects are taught in mixed ability groups. In English this has the effect of restricting progress for the most able pupils. In Year 9, science is delivered as three separate lessons of biology, chemistry and physics.
34. In Year 10, all pupils take the core GCSE subjects of English, mathematics, science, design and technology, a modern foreign language, physical education and religious education, as well as citizenship and personal, social and health education which are non-examination subjects. The school offers a good range of vocational subjects including GNVQs in ICT or engineering and building and construction at Huddersfield Technical College. Non-examination courses are available for pupils who are less able to cope with the demands of full GCSE courses as well as some work-place learning in areas such as childcare and motor mechanics. At present there is insufficient access to ICT for pupils in Years 10 and 11. Less than half the pupils in both Years 10 and 11 are following specific ICT courses and other subjects are not providing sufficient experience of ICT.
35. The school has established very good working relations with local primary schools to support the development of mathematics, science, technology and ICT. Pupils from local schools attend special sessions at the high school and staff offer 'master classes'. Over 20 pupils go into local primary schools as part of their work on the Junior Schools Leadership Award (JSLA).
36. The extra-curricular provision for gifted and talented pupils is generally good. There are opportunities to attend extra sessions in art and design, modern foreign languages, ICT, including multi media work and micro-electronics. Classes are offered in bridge, chess, codes, steel drums, robotics and world food. Some pupils have the opportunity to attend the Warwick University academy for gifted and talented pupils. Less well developed are the identification of extension activities in some lessons to challenge fully gifted and talented pupils.
37. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. It is well co-ordinated but is a diverse programme that relies upon the expertise and enthusiasm of form tutors so that teaching and learning are variable. Some training and support are offered to form tutors in the form of 'breakfast clubs.' Many outside agencies come into school to lead sessions and bring

an extra dimension of expertise. These include the police, a local drugs education group, nurses, social workers, theatre groups, a puppet theatre and bullying workshops run by NCH workers. The school works hard to emphasize the importance of healthy eating. School policies for sex and drugs education meet requirements.

38. Provision for careers education and guidance and preparation for the next stage of education are very good. Careers education is taught to all year groups with a particular emphasis in Years 9, 10 and 11. The school uses very effectively the Connexions service for targeted help to individual students. There is good access to the careers library. A particular strength is the range of opportunities for pupils to research thoroughly their options for sixth form education. This includes A-level and college course taster sessions at three local colleges as well as some apprenticeship opportunities. The work-related curriculum for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is very good.
39. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular sporting, artistic and academic activities. There are numerous revision, booster, homework and catch-up classes across many subjects. Learning is extended beyond the classroom in a variety of fieldwork trips, notably run by the history, geography and science departments. Choirs and instrumental groups meet both at lunchtime and after school as well as art clubs. Numerous sporting activities are offered though the choice is much wider for boys than for girls.
40. The school operates an inclusive policy that incorporates special educational needs provision under the overall management of the Pupil Support Unit. These two strands of provision combine to meet both the needs of pupils with behavioural problems and those with other special needs. A good allocation of ICT is provided. Essential information about special needs is disseminated to all departments in the school in order to explain policies and special arrangements. All departments have copies of the special educational needs register and most, although not all, respond well to these communications.
41. Year 10 and 11 pupils with special educational needs, who prefer and request vocational courses, have an alternative curriculum which places them on extended work experience for two days every week. Those who wish to follow specific vocational courses can also choose from courses at a college of further education that teaches leisure and tourism, building construction and catering. In their remaining time, pupils who take this option receive support in school for English, mathematics and science. Currently 11 pupils are following this provision.
42. The curriculum for pupils with English as an additional language is well led and managed. Strategies developed by the co-ordinator go into subject handbooks. Pupils' progress is tracked in co-operation with the English department. The LEA monitors action plans and assessment procedures twice a year.
43. The staffing requirements of the school are well met. Teachers are fully qualified to match the needs of the curriculum. Recruitment and retention are tackled well. There are sufficient support staff to allow the school to function effectively, but the shortage of technician hours limits the quality of support in science. The school is fortunate to have a pool of experienced teachers who are available at short notice to cover unforeseen absences. The governors have already started to address the requirements concerning the workload of teachers by engaging part-time staff to invigilate the examinations.
44. Although there have been significant improvements in some areas of the accommodation the disruption to teaching and learning during the major refurbishment had a negative impact on pupils' progress. Some departments, such as English and religious education have spacious teaching rooms, offices and good storage space. The physical education department has a good swimming pool, but there are serious inadequacies for both indoor and outdoor facilities. There is a lack of specialist facilities for the teaching of drama. Ventilation, heating, acoustics and glare are problems in a number of areas and because there are no fume cupboards this further restricts the scientific experiments that can be attempted. Although the

accommodation was designed for about 1000 pupils, the popularity of the school has meant that it is now overcrowded. This has put pressure on corridors and stairways and there are few indoor areas where pupils can socialise at breaks and lunchtimes. Even though the school hall is used as a dining area it is too small and crowded for the purpose. As this is the only space big enough for school examinations this places additional pressures on space at certain times of the year. The library, likewise, cannot adequately cope with the number of pupils wishing to use it at lunchtime. In spite of some very trying and difficult problems the staff have worked well together to minimise the effect that these deficiencies have had on the working of the school. It is only because of this that the accommodation can be said to be satisfactory for the purpose of educating pupils.

45. This is a poorly resourced school resulting in the headteacher and staff becoming involved with local and national initiatives that provide extra funding to meet the implementation of school development plan priorities. By good management the school is able to sustain a satisfactory level of resources to support the curriculum. Because of this there are sufficient textbooks and day-to-day learning resources to match the curriculum. Although the provision of interactive whiteboards is improving, access to sufficient computers to support pupils' learning is difficult particularly for science and art and design.
46. The school has maintained the good curriculum provision noted at the time of the last inspection and made some improvements. However, the school still fails to provide a daily act of broadly Christian worship.

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

Arrangements to ensure the pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good. Provision for support, advice and guidance are very good. The involvement of the pupils in the work and development of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are good procedures in place for child protection.
- The strength of the pastoral team ensures that the pupils receive good advice and are well cared for.
- The school listens to the school council and considers its views.
- Very good induction arrangements are in place so that Year 7 pupils swiftly settle into secondary education.
- Advice on further study and career opportunities enables pupils to make informed decisions about their future.

### **Commentary**

47. Effective procedures are in place to ensure health and safety. The school nurse holds a 'drop in' session each week and the welfare officer is available during school hours to provide first aid, care and support. Child protection procedures are good and regular training sessions for teaching and supervisory staff take place.
48. The pastoral team work well together to provide very good care and advice for all pupils. The tutors, heads of year, behaviour support staff, learning mentor, educational social worker and the school welfare officer provide academic and pastoral support. The achievement, attendance and behaviour of pupils are carefully monitored so that problems can be identified and resolved swiftly. Regular meetings are held to discuss the care and progress of the most vulnerable pupils and plan for their additional support. Pupils are set academic and personal targets and told how they can improve their work.

49. The school council discusses the views of the pupils. Elected members from each year group meet regularly to discuss ideas and suggestions regarding aspects within the school. Where appropriate these are acted upon and the council has been awarded its own budget.
50. The very good induction procedures in Year 7 enable a smooth transition from primary to secondary education. Staff visit the primary schools and teach sample lessons. A 'taster day' is also arranged so that Year 6 pupils can experience a day at secondary school and attend some lessons. Curriculum links are in place through joint ICT, mathematics and science projects.
51. The Connexions agency based at the school provides good advice and support on further education and careers. Personal and social education lessons also contain careers information and guidance. Careful preparation is carried out prior to the Year 9 options and discussions are held regarding the suitability of the pupil's choices. Year 10 work experience placements are also organised so that pupils can experience working life.

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

Links with parents are good. Links with the local community are good. Links with other schools and colleges are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are happy with the school and receive good information about their children's work and progress.
- Links with the local community enhance learning.
- Links with the local schools and colleges prepare pupils well for further education.

### **Commentary**

52. Parents receive good quality information from the school. Regular newsletters contain details of the pupils' achievements, forthcoming events and relevant curriculum information. The pupils' homework diaries are also used well as a means of communication between home and school. A translation service is available for homes where English is not the first language. Pupils' progress reports are good and contain information on pastoral as well as academic achievement alongside areas the pupils need to develop. However, the reporting of ICT for pupils at the end of Year 11 has not been completed for all pupils. Two parents' meetings are held each year, which are very well attended. A recent survey of parents' views confirmed that the majority of parents are very satisfied with the school.
53. Learning is enhanced through the good links the school maintains with the local community. The pupils undertake charity work and entertain the elderly with concerts and tea parties. Drama and musical productions are also open to the public. The gym is used in the evenings and a family information communication technology summer school is held during the holidays. Visits to local businesses, childcare centres and nurseries are arranged. Many local companies, including a national chemical company, have established links with the school. They offer pupils work experience placements and provide some sponsorship for the school's awards scheme. Pathfinder Enterprise activities have also been arranged to teach the pupils about manufacturing and developing the sales of items such as pens and pizzas.
54. Links with local schools and colleges are very good. Primary school pupils have use of the school's facilities for subjects such as design and technology, physical education and science. The school takes part in activities with secondary Beacon schools and became a Partnership Promotion school in 2003. Links are in place with academic and vocation colleges and the school provides teacher training placements for the local college and university. A high number of pupils from the school go on to further education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership is good. The governance of the school is good. The leadership provided by the headteacher and other key staff is good. Management is satisfactory. The school is failing to provide a daily act of collective worship.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher is very effective in identifying additional sources of income to supplement the low level of funding the school receives.
- Professional development of staff is good.
- The school makes a good contribution to initial teacher training and supports student teachers well.
- Governors provide good support and challenge to the school.
- Financial controls are good.
- Arrangements for the monitoring of the work of the school are in place, but less well developed is the evaluation of this information to identify future improvements.

### **Commentary**

55. The headteacher has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has a clear vision of what is needed to raise standards. She provides good leadership for the school and is decisive in determining changes for improvement. In this she is supported effectively by members of her leadership team. The headteacher has a particular expertise in strategic planning and in identifying the changes which are necessary to raise standards even higher. She is also very effective in identifying additional sources of income to supplement the low level of funding provided by the LEA.
56. The size of the leadership team is appropriate for a school of this size. The headteacher and leadership team are committed to running an inclusive school, which, in part, is why there has only been one permanent exclusion during the last five years. There is also a determination to ensure that the curriculum provided by the school is matched to pupils' needs.
57. Overall subject and pastoral leadership are good. Leadership of design and technology, work related learning and religious education are very good. In all other areas leadership is good. There are no areas of the curriculum where leadership is judged less than satisfactory. The school has a commitment to self-evaluation, which is used effectively to produce school improvement plans. Less well developed is the identification of strategies by middle managers to ensure that school priorities are effectively tackled. There is a weakness at all levels of management in applying a consistently rigorous system for the monitoring and recording of classroom performance. In some cases this is because subject co-ordinators have insufficient time to undertake these tasks.
58. Management is satisfactory. The school's policies effectively identify a clear vision for improving the school. Less effective is the consistent implementation of these policies. There is a recognition in the school's development plan to improve the leadership roles of middle managers and this is an appropriate priority. The school has made good progress to becoming a self-evaluating school. The introduction of curricular reviews is making a good contribution to self-evaluation. However, whilst arrangements for the monitoring of the work of the school are in place, less well developed is the evaluation of this information to identify improvements. For example, the school is rich in data on pupils' performances. Monitoring data provided by the school, the LEA and Ofsted provides a lot of information and this is effectively used to identify targets for individual pupils and their parents. However, less well developed is the consistency across all subjects of using this data to identify specific strategies for pupils to reach these targets. Similarly, it is known from the testing of pupils on entry that there is a wide range of abilities and that the average test score varies between one year group and another. However, there is no evidence to indicate that this information has

been used to influence the planning of schemes of work or used to ensure that the level of challenge in lessons fully meets pupils' needs. The day-to-day administration of the school enables the school to run smoothly.

59. The priorities for improvement identified in the school improvement plan for the current year are appropriate. For each issue there are clear strategies with identified criteria for success. Appropriate timescales for their completion have been identified. Procedures are clear and are generally followed.
60. Performance management is well established for teachers and a similar system for support staff is being piloted with volunteers. There is a satisfactory policy for the induction of new staff. This covers first day arrangements, an outline of responsibilities including a series of relevant school documents. Teacher mentors and the head of department play a large part in the settling in process and the induction tutor is available for further advice and guidance.
61. The professional development of staff is well planned and it is led by the needs of the departmental and whole-school priorities. Inset for performance management targets and changing roles in school is effective in developing staff expertise.
62. The school makes a good contribution to initial teacher training by supporting placements in various subject departments throughout the school. There is a strong partnership with the local universities and a clear school policy which outlines support, guidance and training. There is a comprehensive calendar of professional development topics that are delivered by experienced staff. Because these placements are successful, a number of past students have returned to the school as teachers.
63. Governors have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They work closely and well with the headteacher and senior staff. Governors play a very supportive role in planning for the school's improvement. Governors offer good support and challenge to the school. In the last inspection report it was identified that the school was failing to provide a daily act of collective worship. In response the governing body requested that all form tutors develop the use of 'Thought for the Day'. This has been responded to in Years 7 and 8 but is not yet being offered in other year groups. The school is still failing to meet the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship.
64. The school has maintained the high standards reported in the last inspection report.

### **Financial information**

65. Financial control is good. The school was audited in May 2003 and the auditor found that the majority of the systems and procedures now in place were operating to a good standard. The governing body agreed with the findings of the report and has implemented the recommendations it contained.
66. The school is poorly resourced when compared with schools nationally. This results in larger than average class sizes and low levels of funding for departments. Some of the priorities identified in the school development plan, such as the need to expand the provision for drama, have not been able to be implemented because of the lack of resources.
67. The finance committee meets regularly and its members are well informed and monitor expenditure rigorously. The principles of best value are well applied, for example when the school invested in interactive whiteboards. This has resulted in significant improvements in the use of ICT to support teaching.
68. In response to the low level of funding the school has been active in trying to attract additional funds to improve the quality of education for pupils in the school. The additional grants the school receives, such as the grant for special educational needs, are effectively used for the purposes they were intended for.

69. The school achieves high standards despite the low level of funding and therefore the school is providing very good value for money.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	3,682,182	Balance from previous year	69,687
Total expenditure	3,690,781	Balance carried forward to the next	61,088
Expenditure per pupil	2,678		

**WORK RELATED LEARNING**

Provision in work-related learning (WRL) is **very good**.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- WRL is led very effectively, giving a clear direction for its further development.
- Vocational provision is well established.
- Innovative curriculum development has resulted in the provision of a wide range of courses.
- The work experience programme offers a wide range of opportunities for all pupils, which enhance and enrich school provision.
- An audit of existing provision in curriculum areas is complete.
- Standards are above those seen in similar schools.

**Commentary**

70. The school's commitment to the ethos and practice of vocational and work related learning is very good. This is underlined by the creation of, and the filling of the post of co-ordinator of Work Related Learning which brings together all aspects of vocational studies, in its broadest sense. These include major facets of school provision such as careers, work experience and targeted areas of the PHSE programme, where, for example, in Year 11, pupils study such matters as contractual obligations and responsibilities in the workplace of both employers and employees.
71. The school's programme for WRL is well structured although some elements are more developed than others. The place of careers education in the curriculum is currently and continually strengthening. New careers projects, introduced in Year 9, have had much success, and the work of several pupils in this aspect of their education is impressive. The projects form a major strand of the seamless thread, which the school is creating, since they provide the basis for pupil choice for work placement in Year 10. Work experience is particularly oriented towards supporting the work related learning programme, and effective emphasis is placed on securing placements in enriching and enhancing locations. Opportunities for post-16 progression to further courses are clearly identified in planning and provision.
72. The school uses the expertise, which underpins its specialist technology status very well in promoting work related learning. Working very closely with the 'SETPOINT' initiative, the school has established a series of specialist vocation oriented pilot courses in technology. These courses range across Years 8, 9 and 10. In the latter two years, the targeted pilot group of pupils include gifted and talented girls. The courses are delivered by a team of staff who have appropriate specialist knowledge of the vocational areas and whose expertise is

accepted as being sufficient for the school to be a lead school for the SETPOINT project in the authority. These strategies are ensuring the pupils' achievement in work related learning is good.

73. The leadership of WRL is good. The school's commitment to the programme is shown by the appointment of a senior member of the management team to head the development in this area. He has already had much success. Under his leadership, the school has forged a close co-operation with the local business community. The school ensures that its curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities in vocational areas that match the changing patterns of work in the local area. It is constantly striving to enhance its provision with, for example, the development of enterprise learning. It is intended that the design and technology department experience be replicated across the school.
74. A thorough audit of WRL provision has been completed but provision for WRL is uneven across the curriculum. Some subjects make a significant contribution to the programme, and these include subjects which are not immediately associated with vocational education, such as science. However, there are still some subjects where the policy and strategy are not yet interpreted into action. Monitoring and evaluating whole-school provision and student progress are current areas for development.
75. The school's long-term commitment to including a wide range of vocational courses in its curriculum has meant that it promotes work related learning very well.



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

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

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

In addition to the three modern foreign languages one lesson of Latin was sampled in Year 11. Teaching and learning are very good, and all pupils gain insights into Roman religion and the impact of the first Roman invasion on British life, as well as enhancing their linguistic competence. All achieve very well at GCSE, beginning the course in Year 10. Results range from A\* to E. Similar standards have been reached over a number of years.

#### **English**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Speaking and listening skills are very good.
- Pupils show a good understanding of what they need to do to improve.
- The relationship between the teachers and the pupils is very good.
- The newly appointed head of department is already having a positive impact.
- Reading skills are not as strong as pupils' writing or listening and speaking skills.
- Higher attaining pupils would benefit from additional extension work.

#### **Commentary**

76. Results of the National Curriculum tests in 2003 for Year 9 were above the national average for English and mathematics and in line for science. In comparison with similar schools, based on pupils' prior attainment, the results for English were below average. Results for 2004 show that the school is in the lowest five per cent of similar schools. As pupils enter the school with above average attainment, and inspection evidence shows that the standards in Year 9 are currently above average, achievement for these pupils is satisfactory.
77. Standards in Years 7 to 9 are above average and this represents satisfactory achievement. The standard of speaking and listening activities and written work confirm above average standards. Pupils are confident, fluent speakers and they listen respectfully to one another. These skills are well taught, as was seen in a Year 9 lesson, which looked at Act 3 Scene 1, where Macbeth briefs Banquo's murderers. Pupils were able to discuss Macbeth's motives fluently and refer back to the text. They listen attentively to the views of classmates. A very good piece of Year 9 written work, entitled 'Revenge', was seen. Higher attaining pupils use mature and sophisticated vocabulary and construct sentences accurately. Lower attaining pupils make more spelling mistakes and their writing is less sophisticated, relying more on the use of colloquialism.
78. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are well supported in the classroom and as a result make as good progress as other pupils. Standards of reading are not as high as in writing and speaking and listening skills in Years 7 and 8. Many readers do not read aloud fluently and stumble over their words. More time needs to be devoted to improving reading skills, so that they rise to the above average levels evident in speaking and listening and writing.
79. Results in the GCSE examinations are above the national average. In 2004, nearly two-thirds of pupils obtained a grade C or better in English language, and just over two-thirds in English literature. These results represent satisfactory achievement from pupils' prior attainment in Year 9 and are better than schools nationally. Boys did not do as well as the girls in 2004. Although the gap between boys and girls did widen, it had been closing in previous years.

The percentage of pupils gaining A\*-C grades was significantly above national averages for English literature. The results for English language were below the results that pupils achieved in other subjects, except science.

80. Standards of written work in Year 11 are above average, in terms of clarity and accuracy. Pupils are able to change their writing style to suit different purposes. Standards of speaking and listening and reading are also above average. Reading has improved because the pupils have more opportunity to read, either aloud in class, or in quiet reflection. Pupils produce thoughtful and articulate responses to challenging questions. For example, one pupil produced an excellent written response to the question 'How does Dickens interest the reader in the opening chapter of 'A Christmas Carol'? Another compared the opening sequence of two contemporary films, using mature and descriptive vocabulary.
81. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned and the lesson objectives are clearly expressed. As a result, pupils know what they are expected to do. Drama is often used to make the lessons lively and imaginative. Questioning by the teachers is effective and is used to test and extend understanding, ensuring that pupils make good progress. In Year 11, teachers seek to make their lessons interesting and varied and to provide appropriate challenge. Teachers have good subject knowledge and work together as an enthusiastic and committed team. Marking is good. Completed work is carefully annotated by the teachers. A more detailed scrutiny of pupils' workbooks would help to rectify any mistakes made before final drafting takes place. All pupils in Years 7 to 9 expressed a good knowledge of the National Curriculum level at which they were working and could say what they needed to do to improve. In Year 11, pupils are explicitly advised on what they need to do to improve.
82. The head of department has introduced a standardised system of assessment across Years 7 to 9, with particular emphasis on new National Curriculum record sheets. Grade descriptors are attached to each exercise book telling the pupils what they need to do to improve. ICT is used effectively to assist in the teaching, with good use being made of the department's three interactive whiteboards. In a good lesson, pupils produced PowerPoint presentations from a text to present to absent classmates. It would have been better if the pupils had been given one to one access with a computer. Coursework folders contain evidence of the use of ICT to aid learning. Opportunities to use ICT for redrafting creative writing or improving the presentation of coursework are restricted.
83. Pupils are taught in mixed ability classes in Years 7 to 9 and in ability bands in Years 10 and 11. Some higher attaining pupils would benefit from being given more demanding tasks to complete during lessons, as they sometimes have to wait for lower attaining pupils to finish. Some extension work is provided as homework, but this does not happen consistently across the department. The school offers a programme of extra-curricular activities to challenge the more able pupils but this is not focused on the development of skills in English.
84. The relationship between teachers and pupils and between pupils is very good. Teachers create an atmosphere of openness and tolerance in which pupils can express opinions or ask questions. Because of this, pupils work very well in partnership with one another in or small groups where a tolerance of the views of others is evident.
85. The department is being well led by the head of department, who has been in post since January 2005. Priorities for development have been identified, including the use of half-termly planning records by the staff so that curriculum content can be monitored. Resources related to the Year 9 National Curriculum tests are being shared and the head of department has begun to sample pupils' written work from Years 7 to 9, in addition to monitoring teaching. He manages the department well. Department meetings are held regularly and minutes produced. The school has been fortunate to recruit a head of department who has quickly assessed what needs to be carried out to take raise standards even higher.
86. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Results at the end of Years 9 and 11 have consistently remained above the national average.

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

87. Standards of literacy are above average. Oral skills are well developed. Pupils explain themselves in a confident and coherent manner. They listen to each patiently, showing respect for the contributions of others. In many curricular areas, notably in mathematics, English, science, physical education and religious education, the teaching encourages the development of speaking and listening skills. Key words are displayed in most classrooms, and in the school library.
88. The library is a bright and airy space but is not large enough to accommodate the needs of all of the pupils. It does contain a selection of modern fiction and non-fiction texts, but overall the number of books is limited. No periodicals, other than 'The Weekly', are purchased on a regular basis.
89. The school has worked hard to embed the principles of the National Literacy Strategy. Literacy is promoted within the school by the co-ordinator for Years 7 to 9. A working party has been set up and has produced booklets, such as, 'Speaking and Vocabulary', and 'Reading Strategies to aid Literacy', for all departments to use.

## **Modern foreign languages**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good and lead to good attitudes from pupils.
- Good leadership and management ensure commitment to clearly defined policies.
- Assessment is well used, so that pupils know what to do to improve.
- Good accommodation and resources support pupils' learning.
- There is insufficient access to ICT for this to enhance the learning of all pupils.
- In some younger classes tasks are not always best matched to pupils' potential.

## **Commentary**

90. Innovative curriculum development has led at the end of Year 8 to a choice of language from the three available. Some higher attaining pupils miss out Year 9 French, which they resume together with their second language in Year 10. Choice leads to commitment on the part of many pupils, enabling the school to sustain the policy of entering almost all for GCSE.
91. Teacher assessments of pupils taking French at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were that standards were slightly below average, but in 2004 they had improved to being in line. Standards seen on inspection, both in analysis of written work and in lessons were average. This represents satisfactory achievement for pupils entering the school with satisfactory literacy skills, a quarter of them with primary school experience of French. In German and Spanish, in which pupils have done only two years' work by the end of Year 9, standards are not yet at average national levels, but they are achieving well as a result of focusing on the language of their choice. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in their first three years. Those with English as an additional language achieve as well as others.
92. In 2004, GCSE French results were above average, Spanish results were in line with the national average and German results below it. German had been above average in 2003 when Spanish was below. In French, boys achieved better in relation to their other subjects than was the case nationally, and girls achieved better than other girls. French was above average in relation to other subjects in the school. Above average standards in French were seen on inspection, and lower attaining pupils were observed making at least satisfactory progress. Standards seen in both German and Spanish are in line with average national

standards. These standards represent good achievement from teacher assessments in 2003. In Years 10 and 11 there was little evidence concerning pupils with special needs, because most of them have discontinued their foreign language work.

93. Teaching and learning are good, leading to good relationships and positive attitudes to modern languages. Teachers speak their languages well and use them effectively in the classroom. They plan their lessons well, taking account of recent national initiatives. Course materials, including pupil workbooks have been well chosen. Pupils co-operate very well with their teachers and with each other. Teachers have very good skills in the use of interactive whiteboards, four of which are available in the department. Some pupils are well supported in computer-based learning off site, but there is too little opportunity in school for this to enhance the learning of all.
94. Leadership and management are good. The head of department has a clear vision for raising standards. Since May 2000 the head of department has produced a high quality handbook and a well-structured development plan, thereby maintaining the forward movement of the department, which has kept pace with national expectations. She is well supported by the two subject leaders for Spanish and German, and staff work well together as a team. Direct experience of France and Germany continue to be offered annually to pupils. Overall improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. All of the issues identified in previous report have been effectively tackled.

### **Community languages**

95. Although no lessons were seen during the inspection provision is **satisfactory**.
96. **Urdu** is offered in Years 10 and 11 to those pupils who have a background in Urdu or Punjabi, some of whom have not previously learned to write in their home language. Some written work was seen, indicating that they achieve a satisfactory standard of literacy for GCSE.
97. The school has made satisfactory arrangements to cover for the maternity leave of the permanent teacher. No other evidence was available because no lessons took place during the inspection.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The head of department provides good leadership and has identified a clear plan for future improvement.
- Well-planned lessons incorporate a variety of activities which lead to good learning.
- The introduction of GCSE statistics has given pupils additional opportunities to study mathematics.
- Limited access to computers restricts the use of ICT to support learning.

### **Commentary**

98. In the 2003 national tests for 14 year olds, results were above the national average but below average when compared to similar schools. The results in mathematics were better than those in English and science. Results have improved in mathematics since 1999, broadly following the national trend. The results in 2004 are better than those of 2003 and exceeded the school's challenging target. In 2004, comparison with similar schools show that pupils are in line with similar schools.
99. The 2004 GCSE examination results in mathematics were above national average and above average when compared to similar schools. Pupils' results in mathematics were not as good

as their average results across their other subjects. Girls did better than boys. The proportion of pupils gaining grades A\*-C has decreased since 1999.

100. Pupils enter the school with attainment in mathematics that is above the national average. From work seen during the inspection, pupils in Year 9 and Year 11 are attaining above national average. This represents satisfactory achievement. Year 9 higher attaining pupils can solve problems using appropriate formulae for finding the circumference and areas of circles and volumes of regular prisms. They show good skills in drawing and interpreting scatter diagrams and understand the principles of correlation. Lower attaining Year 9 pupils can represent and interpret data in bar and pie charts, find fractions of quantities, and apply their knowledge of the properties of angles of various shapes to solve problems.
101. Higher attaining Year 11 pupils are able to apply a variety of mathematical concepts to solve problems. They use their knowledge of angles and the properties of circles effectively, and apply trigonometry to investigate and solve two and three-dimensional problems. They can construct tree diagrams to represent the probability of compound events. Lower attaining Year 11 pupils can collect and represent data in frequency diagrams and charts. They apply their ability to find percentages of quantities to solve everyday problems.
102. Teaching and learning are good overall. When teaching is good or better, teachers use their knowledge and expertise to plan lessons that incorporate a variety of activities. The pace of these lessons is brisk, pupils are challenged to reach high standards of attainment, and there is emphasis on the promotion of literacy skills. Teachers make good use of interactive electronic whiteboards to capture pupils' interest. In all lessons relationships are very good, pupils collaborate well with one another, and teachers effectively use praise to raise pupils' self-esteem. This was evident in a Year 9 lesson for lower attaining pupils on finding the areas of triangles. The teacher captured the pupils' interest immediately with a game of 'bingo' to identify shapes. She then made good use of an electronic whiteboard to illustrate the development of the formula for the area of a triangle. This was followed by pupils working individually to gain experience in applying the formula. A teaching assistant gave individual pupils very good support. The teacher ended the lesson with a class game that reinforced the work of the lesson. In a minority of lessons the teacher dominates activities and pupils are not given enough opportunity to work independently. In these cases some pupils become restless and lose concentration. In most lessons pupils of all backgrounds and levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress.
103. Leadership of the department is good. Management is satisfactory. The head of department provides a good role model. She has a clear vision of what is needed to improve the standards of teaching and learning in mathematics and is well supported by members of the department. She has revised schemes of work in line with the national strategy, and has produced a variety of policies that aim to improve standards. There has been good in-service training in the use of electronic whiteboards. Monitoring the implementation of policies and schemes of work is less thorough. The head of department's full teaching commitment does not allow her to observe the teaching of all teachers in the department, and although teachers complete planning documents these are not monitored formally. However, there are future plans to introduce a system of peer observation in the department so that good practice can be shared.

104. Work in class books is marked consistently, but not in relation to National Curriculum levels or GCSE grades. National Curriculum level descriptors are displayed on classroom walls but not all pupils in Years 7 to 9 are aware of the levels at which they are working. Use of assessment data to inform teacher planning is being developed. The department is trialling assessment sheets in Year 7 and Year 10 that effectively link teacher assessment and pupil self-assessment. These sheets have been well received by pupils and it is planned to extend the system to other years. Data from modular test and teacher assessments are used effectively to organise pupils into appropriate teaching groups and to identify pupils who need additional in-class support.
105. The department provides a variety of popular extra-curricular classes for pupils. There are strong links with local primary schools providing 'master classes' for Year 5 pupils. The accommodation is good; all mathematics rooms have interactive electronic whiteboards that are used effectively. The use of computers for pupil learning, identified in the schemes of work, is through a school booking system. Access to these computers is limited because of the demand from other subjects. In addition, the school computer network is not reliable and often valuable learning time is wasted because the system does not work properly.
106. There has been satisfactory progress since the previous inspection. Test results at the age of 14 have improved. A new GCSE statistics course has been introduced to provide pupils with additional opportunity to study mathematics and to broaden the mathematics curriculum. The use of assessment data to inform teaching and the use of National Curriculum levels are being developed. Accommodation has improved and there is greater use of ICT to support teaching.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

107. A numeracy policy is in place, and opportunities for pupils to practise mathematical skills are identified in department schemes of work. The head of mathematics has produced a booklet to aid all staff in the promotion of numeracy in lessons. However, the application of the policy is not monitored formally. There are opportunities for pupils to measure accurately and to estimate quantities in design and technology. Pupils apply formulae in spreadsheets and produce graphs in ICT. In science pupils perform calculations for various measurements, and use formulae and graphs to solve practical problems. There is good use of statistical analysis and presentation in religious education. In music pupils count beats and note rhythms, and in physical education they measure heartbeats and time activities.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good, revised schemes of work in Years 7 to 9 provide a good foundation for learning
- Good support for pupils with special educational needs from learning assistants promotes good learning for these pupils.
- A strong programme of regular visits and field trips complements learning in class.
- Development of pupils' ICT skills is limited by restricted access to computers.
- There is limited use of data to identify tasks to meet the needs of all ability levels.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory because of limited laboratory space, inadequate preparation areas and storage space.
- Strong links with primary schools help establish a good start in science.

## Commentary

108. In the 2003 and 2004 national tests for 14 year olds, results were above average. In 2004 the results for science were in line with those for mathematics and above those in English. In the 2004 tests, pupils' results, when compared with pupils from similar schools, show that performance is below average.
109. In 2004, Year 9 results in mathematics have increased, English has fallen, and science has remained in line with the average. The challenging targets have not been met in science. Standards in Years 7 to 9 are above average and therefore satisfactory progress has been achieved. Achievement in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory due to the positive attitudes of the pupils and good teaching.
110. At the end of Year 11 results were above the national average, and below average compared to similar schools. The results in chemistry, biology, and physics are very good, whilst in double award science results are below average. Good efforts have been made to improve pupils' grades but there are too many pupils who are achieving low grades. There is no significant difference in boys' and girls' results.
111. From the work seen, the school is on course to meet the appropriate targets set for 2005. In Year 9, pupils can measure accurately, draw appropriate graphs, complete practical exercises effectively, and formulate conclusions. From the work seen, standards in Years 10 and 11 are above average. In Year 11, pupils can design practical exercises to test hypotheses, complete complex calculations, and use chemical formulae accurately. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils, and pupils with English as an additional language make good progress. Pupils identified as gifted and talented achieve well in science, gaining a high proportion of high grades in the three separate science subjects.
112. Teaching and learning are good. In Years 7 to 9 it is slightly stronger than in Year 11. Teachers are very knowledgeable and competent in their subject areas, and work well as a team. Some teachers are expert at using interactive whiteboards to enhance learning, extending the range of material to stimulate effective learning. The good attitudes of pupils and the good relationship between teachers and pupils promote good learning for most pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by learning assistants who ensure their rate of progress is similar to other pupils. These assistants are closely involved in the planning of lessons.
113. In an excellent Year 11 lesson on isolating DNA, pupils worked confidently at very high levels, showing excellent practical skills and a high level of understanding. The pupils were challenged throughout the lesson to explain the processes, and to complete a difficult practical exercise under pressure of time. Moral issues of gene developments were discussed and pupils have the opportunity to express their views. In an excellent Year 8 lesson on bacteria and viruses, the teacher used his interactive whiteboard imaginatively to show video clips of body defences, magnification of microbes, and a range of material to stimulate and inform the class. A good pace in the lesson challenged the pupils to respond quickly and improve their understanding. A good Year 9 lesson on devising cures for diseases started with a group of pupils acting out a role play as pirates. This gained the interest of all pupils who were able to learn about different scientific tests to find cures for diseases. All these pupils knew the levels they were working at, and how they could improve. They appreciated the opportunity to attend revision and booster classes where these were appropriate.
114. Leadership of the department is good, with clear ideas about how the subject will develop through planned change. Policies are in place but are not carefully monitored to ensure they are implemented consistently. There is evidence that numeracy and literacy policies are being adopted, with more emphasis required for citizenship. The strong, experienced, and well-qualified teachers work well together as a team, providing support for each other. Responsibilities are shared across a number of staff and as a result good new schemes of

work have been developed, with some innovative ideas built into these schemes. Management is satisfactory because limited time is available to ensure that effective monitoring of lessons takes place. Where interactive whiteboards are installed, some teachers have become experts, using the equipment imaginatively to enhance learning extremely effectively. Teachers are beginning to use a rich source of data on pupils to inform learning, and this should be applied more rigorously to identify tasks to meet the needs of all ability levels.

115. There is a strong programme of regular visits and field trips that adds to the science experiences in the classroom. Technology college status has supported some of these activities with additional funding. In addition, some pupils produce a stimulating newsletter for Year 6 and Year 7 on science topics of interest. There are good displays in most laboratories using examples of pupils' work. There are some good examples of pupils using ICT skills in project work to develop better understanding in science but this has not been extended to include all pupils. The opportunities to use computers are limited by the restricted access to them in ICT rooms; the use of a ten station laptop lab does not compensate for this sufficiently. This does not meet the growing demand from pupils who need to extend their scientific understanding through the use of ICT applications. Marking policies are not being applied consistently across all year groups to ensure that all pupils receive constructive comments to help learning. Technician hours are inadequate to service the growing needs of ten laboratories where practical work is used extensively. Some of the laboratories are small for the large classes, and preparation and storage spaces are inadequate.
116. The improvement from the last inspection has been satisfactory because standards have been maintained as a result of good teaching. The issues of accommodation and hours for technician support remain to be effectively tackled.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership and management of the department is a strength and the head of department has a very clear view of what needs to be done to continue to raise standards.
- Teaching in ICT lessons is good overall and teachers have very good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils.
- Pupils who study GCSE courses in ICT have a very good understanding of how well they are doing and how to improve their work.
- The behaviour of the pupils is good as a result of effective behaviour management and very good relationships.
- The provision, leadership and management for the cross-curricular use of ICT are unsatisfactory.
- Those pupils in Years 10 and 11 not following an ICT course receive only a minimum provision in ICT and their progress is unsatisfactory.
- The use of ICT to enrich learning in other subjects is a weakness.

### **Commentary**

117. Standards at the end of Year 9 in 2004 were above national expectations and this is confirmed by the teacher assessments and that the trend is for continuous improvement. By Year 9, pupils have made good progress overall. They are able to use data and information to find things out and know how electronic media stores information. They know how to search for information and have reviewed and compared websites for appropriateness of content and effectiveness of design. They have used formulae and calculations in spreadsheets for modelling and have created databases. When using word processing, desktop publishing and presentation software, they are able to adapt their work to the needs of various audiences. Pupils are becoming increasingly competent at evaluating and improving their work.



Standards of work of pupils who study GCSE courses in ICT in Years 10 and 11 are above average. GCSE results were lower in 2004 than the previous year as a result of staff absence, but this year, analysis of work suggests that standards are in line with the projected 52 per cent A\*-C. By Year 11, most pupils studying for GCSE and Applied GCSE have produced effective files, which are annotated very well by teachers to suggest ways of improving their grades. Some pupils have difficulty in completing the coursework but there are procedures in place for support.

118. Achievement is good in Years 7 to 9, as pupils make good progress over time. This is a result of good teaching. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and are eager to achieve their targets. In Years 10 and 11, the achievement of pupils following accredited courses is satisfactory. For those not following ICT courses standards are average but their achievement is unsatisfactory as they have insufficient time to improve their ICT skills. In one good lesson, pupils' learning was very good as they were able to work independently. However, the school needs to ensure that those pupils who are not following ICT courses are provided with more opportunities to develop their ICT skills. Girls achieved better than boys in GCSE; the department has recognised this and has strategies in place to improve the achievement of boys. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving as well as the other pupils. There is a multimedia club for gifted and talented pupils in Year 8.
119. Teaching and learning are good in ICT lessons. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and this inspires enthusiasm in the pupils who concentrate on their work and learn well. Teachers have high expectations that pupils will achieve well and make good progress. There is very good management of behaviour and therefore pupils treat the equipment appropriately, behave well and form very good relationships with their teachers. Pupils' work is assessed well. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 have assessment diaries that are used well to ensure pupils know what they will be learning and their target levels. The marking of work in Years 7 to 9 and for pupils studying GCSE ICT is very good and as a result pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work. This is particularly effective for pupils following GCSE ICT courses in Years 10 and 11 who know how to achieve higher marks.
120. Leadership and management of the ICT department are good. The head of department has a clear vision for improvement and has innovative plans for improving the provision. She has built up an effective team who are committed to improvement. She provides regular training for all staff according to their audited needs. The national strategy has been implemented very efficiently and successfully and, as a result, standards are rising in Years 7 to 9. The head of department is aware of the need to improve the accreditation in Years 10 and 11 and has realistic plans to offer a wider variety of experiences, including multimedia. Leadership and management of the cross-curricular uses of ICT are unsatisfactory. Assessment and reporting for those pupils in Years 10 and 11 not following specific ICT courses are weak. The network is inadequate for the number of pupils and teachers who wish to access ICT. There are insufficient rooms and access to computers to allow all pupils in all subjects to use ICT to support their learning.
121. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection; the ICT department is keeping in line with current initiatives. However, the school needs to improve the quality of the resources, as some computers are past their useful life and problems with the network are affecting the achievement of pupils, which leads to a significant amount of teaching and learning time being lost. Accommodation is unsatisfactory. The number of ICT rooms is inadequate. The rooms that are available have very good displays of pupils' work and relevant key words. However, the layout could be improved to give areas for non-computer work and discussions. In addition, the rooms become very hot towards the end of the day.

## **ICT across the curriculum**

122. There is no whole-school policy that maps opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their ICT capability to support learning in all subjects. The use of ICT is detailed in all subject documentation, but limited access to computers is restricting this use and is a barrier to learning. For example, in science and history, this limits the ability of pupils to do independent research on the Internet. In mathematics, there are problems using the software due to difficulties with the network. There is no computer-generated design in art.
123. However, in religious education, the expert use of ICT is enhancing learning for all pupils and is a strength of the department. The interactive whiteboard is used skilfully and pupils' books show good evidence of regular use of ICT and good competence. Also, the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. For example, in a very good lesson, pupils were able to choose which program suited them best and worked enthusiastically, making very good progress. Pupils use software in careers education to look at potential avenues of employment.
124. The use of ICT to support teaching is good. The interactive whiteboards are used effectively and training is available for teachers to improve their skills.
125. The improving standards in Years 7 to 9 provide pupils with a good level of ICT capability that can be used in other subjects and the school needs to ensure that all teachers know what skills pupils have been taught in order that their ICT skills can be developed further when using ICT to support learning in all areas of the curriculum. Resources need to be deployed so that subjects can access ICT when it is needed.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography**

Provision in geography is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most of the teaching is good and leads to some good achievement.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge.
- The use of resources is good and leads to a variety of teaching activities that enhance learning.
- Fieldwork enhances what is learnt in the classroom.
- Work set in lessons does not always match the different levels of ability within the groups.

### **Commentary**

126. In 2004, the results at A\*-C at GCSE are just above the national average. However they have dipped at similar grades when compared with 2003. Results at the higher grades are above the national averages. The results of girls are higher than those of the boys and the results of the latter are lower than the national averages.
127. In the work seen during the inspection, standards at the end of Year 9 are in line with national averages. Pupils' achievement relative to their prior attainment is satisfactory. Their positive attitudes and the teaching they receive help pupils achieve. Most pupils can demonstrate well their understanding of geographical processes and the impact they have on the environment. Pupils are engaged most when there is a practical activity, such as fieldwork or work that challenges them in their writing and use of diagrams, and maps, which they can do well. The higher attaining pupils would benefit from text, and work which further challenges their abilities. The use of key words is increasing their geographical vocabulary.

128. In the work seen, pupils are working just above the national averages at the end of Year 11. Pupils' achievement relative to standards at the end of Year 9 is satisfactory. Pupils make good progress in their geographical knowledge, understanding and use of geographical skills. Pupils were able to see the links between their knowledge and experience of Huddersfield and land use models they were given. They could accurately mark important features on a map and reflect on the models. Pupils spoke well in answer to questioning and listened similarly to the teacher and each other in discussions.
129. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their targets, often with little additional support. Pupils with English as an additional language are making good progress. The achievement of girls against boys was higher for the former. The gifted and talented make good progress.
130. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' knowledge is good. The lessons are satisfactorily planned with clear learning objectives often shared with pupils. The lessons draw on a range of available resources to provide a good range of learning activities to support learning. The use of questioning is often skilful and helps pupils understand and reinforce their learning. The use of the video helps pupils to understand issues on a global scale and the use of ICT for learning and research and the interactive whiteboards by teachers is developing. Pupils worked well independently in their pairs but the subject needs to provide work to address all ability levels within groups. The use of assessment for learning is starting to have an impact but marking needs to provide more helpful comments from which pupils could improve their work. Homework is set, but previous work could be used in lessons to support its value.
131. Subject leadership and management are good. The head of department has by his vision and direction, brought about the improvements that were necessary. The schemes of work have been reviewed and reflect the needs of pupils. Where fieldwork is used it enhances what is learnt in the classroom. The accommodation is satisfactory but space is well used to celebrate pupils' good work. Monitoring is in place and having some effect. Progress since the last inspection is good. All the major issues identified in the last inspection report have been effectively tackled.

## History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' standards in lessons are above average.
- Teaching is good overall.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress between Years 7 and 9. Progress is good in lessons in Years 10 and 11.
- Pupils' learning and progress are restricted by their lack of access to ICT.
- Leadership of the subject is good.

### Commentary

132. Results in the 2004 GCSE examinations were well below average. Girls underperformed when compared to girls nationally. However, standards seen during the inspection in both classes and in pupils' work in Years 10 and 11 were above average. Pupils successfully analyse historical links and select, organise and use information effectively to produce well-structured work. This represents good achievement in class work. Overall achievement is, however, only satisfactory. Pupils' progress is hindered by their general unwillingness to read widely about and around the subject.

133. Attainment assessments for Year 9 in 2004 were in line with national averages. In classwork, pupils attain levels that are average. This represents satisfactory achievement as they enter the school with skills and knowledge in history that are average. Lower attaining pupils use the correct terminology and make an effort to learn facts. Higher attaining pupils identify links and similarities between events. However, they cannot sufficiently evaluate or analyse information. Across all years, pupils' progress is hindered by lack of access to in-class ICT, which prevents pupils doing appropriate research to enhance their independent learning skills.
134. The quality of teaching and learning is good. A similar profile of teaching exists throughout all years with some teaching which was excellent and some teaching which was only satisfactory. All teachers are enthusiastic about the subject and this enthusiasm is transmitted to the pupils. In the excellent lessons, teachers use their very good subject knowledge to plan a variety of stimulating activities, which strongly engage the attention of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs, as well as those who are gifted and talented, achieve well because they are challenged by appropriate material. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. The well-planned enquiry work, a strength of the teaching, has clear learning objectives, challenging tasks and good resources. All these strong teaching elements enable very good learning to take place in well-taught lessons. They strongly develop skills of research, empathy and literacy, including extended writing. The discussion of moral issues is helping pupils' moral and social development. Marking and assessment are done well. Pupils consequently know their attainment level and how to improve.
135. In the relatively weaker lessons, teachers do not always use time and pace appropriately, and this leads to teachers leaving insufficient time within lessons to assess in-class learning. It also leads to pupils losing focus, and their learning and progress are lessened accordingly.
136. Leadership is good. Management is satisfactory. The very recently appointed head of department has a very clear vision for the future development of the subject and has produced documents which signal this clarity of vision. The documents are informed and they underpin all aspects of the department's provision. However, he has not been in post long enough to see the translation of his vision into sufficient practice to impact favourably on pupils' progress. Most important among these is the assessment of pupils' work, and its use to track and improve pupils' learning and progress. The head of department is aware of the need for a more rigorous approach in this area and has strategies for this. He is a good role model of commitment to the maintenance of the highest standards. In this, he is well supported by his colleagues in the department. The department has made satisfactory progress since the time of the previous report, but the initial success of the new head of department, combined with his vision bodes well for future enhanced progress for the subject.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All pupils have the opportunity to gain a GCSE certificate in religious education. Results are above average and on an upward trend.
- Enthusiastic and creative teaching is leading to good learning and achievement.
- Expert use of ICT is enhancing learning for all pupils.
- The subject makes a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Assessment in Years 7 to 9 is not yet as rigorous as it is in Years 10 to 11.

## Commentary

137. Pupils join the school with knowledge, skills and understanding that are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. At the end of Year 9 the pupils' work is above the national average.
138. The school has entered nearly all pupils in Year 11 for the short course GCSE for the last six years. Results have risen steadily with the best set of results being in 2003 when two-thirds of pupils achieved grades in the A\*-C range. This is well above the national average and exceeded what had been predicted. In 2004, results fell slightly to just over half of pupils gaining A\*-C grades which is still above the national average. For the last three years all pupils who took the examination have achieved at least a grade G. Despite the fall in 2004, standards are on a rising trend and show good achievement by pupils. Girls are performing better than boys, in line with the pattern nationally.
139. The pupils take pride in their work and achieve well at all levels. The work of higher and average attaining pupils shows impressive maturity. They develop equally well knowledge about different faiths and are able to compare and contrast them, as well as understanding about the effect religion has on people's lives. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs succeed because they are well taught and well supported by work that is adapted to their needs. All pupils are encouraged to use the Internet for research and ICT for the presentation of some of their work. They succeed in an impressive range of topics such as the nature of heaven, the concept of the soul, understanding the different roles of priests and imams and key beliefs of six world faiths. Lower attaining pupils cope well with the more academic aspects of the subject.
140. Teaching and learning are good overall and in some cases very good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. The teachers have high expectations of themselves and their pupils. They plan lessons that include a good variety of activities giving a balance between discussion, writing, visual images and reading, with plenty of humour. The interactive whiteboard is used with great expertise and the department has invested in interesting interactive resources to good effect. For example, during the inspection Year 11 pupils took part in a 'values auction'. The teachers concentrate on developing pupils' literacy skills. Homework is set regularly and marked consistently so that pupils develop good study habits. The attitude of the pupils is good and all the teachers have good class control. In Years 10 and 11 teachers train the pupils in the necessary skills for the GCSE examination from the beginning of the course.
141. Leadership and management of this strong department are very good. The constant improvement of learning is at the core of everything done. The teachers are a very effective team. Assessment is used very well in Years 10 and 11 to improve standards and to monitor the success of the pupils and to set targets. This is not yet firmly embedded in Years 7 to 9 but is a priority for development. The department designs and produces very good teaching resources. Self-evaluation is rigorous and prompt action taken to address any weaknesses. The materials studied and the opportunities for reflection make a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

## TECHNOLOGY

### Design and technology

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership and management provide a relentless focus on raising achievement.
- Standards in GCSE food, textiles, graphic products and electronics are well above average as a result of high expectation and challenge.

- The very good teaching in Years 7 to 11 is resulting in better than expected achievement across all ability groups.
- There is insufficient development of ICT as a learning tool in design research and product testing.
- There is inadequate technical support to effectively support teaching and learning.
- All staff provide excellent role models for pupils, underpinning pupils' good achievement.

### **Commentary**

142. Standards on entry are average with pupils demonstrating variable technological experience and skill. Although 2004 teacher assessments point to average standards, this was largely the result of a period of very unsettled staffing. However, standards of work seen reveal above average standards by the end of Year 9. This represents good achievement across all ability groups including pupils with special needs and the gifted and talented. Pupils are able to successfully apply design principles to a range of problems and manufacture products with good attention to accuracy and finish. Final products are systematically evaluated. Freehand graphical techniques are underdeveloped and insufficient use is made of ICT in both research and testing. Sound literacy skills effectively support the acquisition of technical knowledge and the advance of understanding.
143. The 2004 GCSE results are well above average with a clear trend of improvement over the last three years in graphic products, textiles, food and electronic products. The number of pupils achieving the highest grades is significantly above the national average. The 2004 vocational GCSE double award engineering results are also well above average. Whilst girls perform better than boys, the gap in performance is narrowing year on year with both boys and girls performing significantly above the national average. From the work seen, pupils' attainment is well above average, and reflects the pattern from previous examination results. All pupils perform better in design and technology than in other school subjects. Taken as a whole, this represents good achievement across all ability groups. All pupils offer competent solutions to an ever increasingly complex range of design briefs. Design solutions are well thought out and analysis displays good reasoning. Although communication skills are competent, graphical skills are insufficiently developed to incorporate a full technical specification. While computer aided design is increasingly used to enhance the quality of final design ideas, ICT is not used well enough by all pupils to improve the quality and content of initial research and produce coherent single documents.
144. The overall quality of teaching and learning in all years is very good. Teachers' good subject command, enhanced by valuable industrial experience, is well used to engage and challenge pupils of all abilities. Lesson planning incorporates clearly thought learning objectives and very successful use of starters and plenary sessions. However, good practice is not embedded sufficiently in teacher challenge and interventions to further extend knowledge and understanding. High expectations are reflected in all aspects of pupil management and result in the successful fostering of a desire to learn of all pupil groups. Staff effectively use a very good range of teaching methods but the quality of both the ICT network and resourcing hinders the promotion of e-learning.
145. Leadership and management provide a determined focus on raising achievement. A reflective, self-critical approach successfully adopted by all staff results in all staff knowing exactly what they are working towards. Day-to-day management of all practical areas is very good. All staff provide excellent role models for pupils. Their enthusiasm for their subjects coupled with the very good relationships underpin the drive to raise achievement. Risk assessments are complete and form part of day-to-day practice. However, risk assessments should take into account space and process hazards to establish a better match of group size to teaching area. This will provide more effective risk control and avoid compromise of safety standards when group sizes are too large. Refurbishment of accommodation helps promote more effective learning although ventilation issues have yet to be correctly resolved in food areas. Overall progress since the last inspection has been very good.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

### **Art and design**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good because lesson objectives are made very clear and the tasks set match pupils' needs.
- Good learning is promoted by the provision of a richly stimulating range of creative experiences.
- Subject leadership is good due to the enthusiasm of the head of department.
- Well-presented and carefully selected displays of work illustrate pupils' achievement and enrich the school environment.
- The use of ICT as an art medium is underdeveloped.

### **Commentary**

146. At the end of Year 9 standards are above average. In Years 7 to 9, pupils develop the ability to extend their ideas through a series of stages moving from direct observation to collage, printmaking and three-dimensional work. Their work is highly imaginative and expressive. The proportion of pupils reaching National Curriculum Levels 5 and above exceeds the national average.
147. At the end of Year 11, standards are average. Results in GCSE examinations, at the end of the most recent year, were average overall. Boys attained the majority of the highest A\* grades. Pupils are able to develop their work, confidently in an independent way, based on the high standards they reach by the end of Year 9. In work seen during the inspection, standards were above average generally and, occasionally, well above average.
148. The standards reached by pupils in Years 7 to 9 represent good achievement from below average attainment on entry. At this stage there is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. The nature of the subject provides for success at the widest range of levels and promotes good progress by pupils with special educational needs, those with special talent and for pupils who are acquiring English as an additional language.
149. In Years 10 and 11, pupils achieve satisfactorily from their prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs and those with special talent for the subject are aided by the nature of creative work in art, which also aids pupils with English as an additional language. At this stage, boys achieve better than girls in examinations but less so in coursework where girls show particularly good levels of concentration and application. In all years the use of ICT is limited. Pupils are able to access computers for research and to store work, but do not use ICT as a means of producing art by the manipulation of images or patterns. At both stages, however, progress is aided by good behaviour during lessons with warm relationships between teachers and pupils.
150. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are well planned and prepared with appropriate provision of resources. Learning objectives are shared with pupils which contributes to them making good progress in lessons. During the inspection, particularly good use was made of introducing a richly stimulating range of creative experiences, which generated high quality discussions. The sensitive quality of individual tuition is an important strength of the teaching, aiding good progress by pupils across the whole range of ability. Assessment is thorough and is used to aid planning.
151. Subject leadership is good, the head of department playing a leading and enthusiastic role in setting high standards for members of the department. A prominent feature is the high level of interest and commitment by teachers towards their subject. The quality of management is

equally good. Very good relationships exist among staff and between staff and pupils. Difficulties stemming from large groups, particularly in Years 7 to 9, are resolutely met. The organisation of displays of work is a very good feature of subject management. These are a good resource for learning and provide a rich enhancement of the school environment.

152. Progress since the last inspection has been good. The provision of appropriate resources for learning are now sufficient. Large class sizes, however, persist and inhibit progress from Years 7 to 9.

## **Music**

Provision in music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- As a result of good teaching pupils behave well and learn effectively.
- GCSE results from pupils with a wide range of abilities are average but rising.
- Analysis of marks in Years 7 to 9 is not being used to identify tasks that meet pupils' needs.
- Limited liaison with primary schools restricts the attainment in music on entry.

### **Commentary**

153. The teacher assessments for the past two years have been broadly average for pupils aged 14. Although the 2003 GCSE results continued a rising trend for pupils aged 16, the results in 2004 were average and had dipped unexpectedly due to some absence from the examination. In the 2004 results boys did better than girls.
154. Standards are broadly average in Year 9 and this represents good achievement since many pupils enter Year 7 with few musical skills. In Year 11, even though the standards are average this represents good achievement. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, get good support to reach their full potential. There is a regular pattern of concerts and the recent instrumental workshop by professional performers was a good learning experience for Year 9 instrumentalists. Such activities contribute well towards pupils' personal development by providing them with the confidence to perform in public.
155. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 learn well because teaching is good. Since the lessons are well planned, pupils work well and their attitudes and behaviour are good. This was seen when Year 7 pupils collaborated well in groups to clap rhythms and chant the names of London stations. Talented pupils quickly combined parts in polyrhythms and introduced dynamics in their performance. Year 9 pupils build up knowledge of structures, listen to music, analyse the main developments, improvise and play keyboards regularly to develop their musicality further. Singing, however, is done infrequently.
156. From the evidence of written and recorded work, pupils in Year 11 learn well because teaching is good. Regular examination practice improves pupils' understanding of aural questions in listening tests. Because of this, good progress is made by pupils of all abilities. Work is assessed and pupils know their predicted grades and what they have to do to improve. They develop their knowledge of musical styles and use music software well for sequencing, editing and composing for piano and other instruments. A number of pupils have reached higher grades in performance on keyboard, piano, electric guitar, trombone, trumpet and singing and this complements their musical development in lessons.
157. There is good leadership of the department. The head of department provides good support for the other music teachers. Management is satisfactory and all documentation is in place. Although assessment is improving and informative workbooks are used in Years 7 to 9, the results of marking have not been analysed to inform future planning. Baseline listening tests have been introduced for pupils entering Year 7. The lack of liaison with the main primary



schools does not ensure that the work in Year 7 is based on pupils' prior attainment. Overall, there has been a good improvement since the previous inspection as a result of the improvement in accommodation.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective leadership and management result in an efficient department.
- Good teaching drives up standards.
- Teachers have high expectations that encourage pupils to achieve well.
- Clearer assessment would further help pupils to know their performance levels.
- Poor accommodation negatively affects standards.

### Commentary

158. By the end of Year 9, standards are above average. Swimming is strong and many Year 7 boys can swim considerable distances, using good technique in the major strokes. Girls have aesthetic awareness in gymnastics and many can produce good floor sequences, working well in groups and pairs, and constructively analysing each other's performances. As a result they show good progress during lessons. Year 9 boys have good basketball skills. Their skills in passing and shooting are good and they have good tactical awareness. In a basketball lesson covering a new defensive system, they learned quickly and applied it well in games. Boys and girls achieve equally well in physical education as do pupils with special educational needs.
159. Standards, by the end of Year 11, are above average. All pupils, especially those on the GCSE course are achieving well. Boys have very good skills in table tennis, being able consistently to impart topspin and slice during extended rallies. In badminton, boys have command of the basic racket strokes and confidently employ them in games. The GCSE course, popular with boys and girls, is very successful. The 2004 examination results were significantly above the national average for good passes with boys and girls performing equally well. Practical standards of work are clearly above average among pupils taking this examination course. In all years, pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated into lessons. They progress and achieve well in terms of their prior attainments. Teachers understand their needs and allow them to use differentiated equipment when it is considered helpful.
160. Consistently good teaching drives up standards and teachers' high expectations encourage pupils. Clearly defined learning objectives are often shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons which then generally proceed with pace and purpose. Relationships in classes are very good and positive attitudes ensure responsible behaviour, with pupils working hard during lessons. Very few pupils do not participate in lessons. Assessment is effectively made of pupils' performances but not sharing the assessments with pupils is a missed opportunity to raise standards.
161. Leadership and management are good. The head of department has vision about how he wishes provision to improve and develop and makes a very efficient use of the limited accommodation. Some displays provide information for pupils and others celebrate their achievements. Accommodation has been neglected for a very considerable period and, apart from the swimming pool, is not conducive to good standards. Some accommodation creates health and safety concerns as well as being of great inconvenience to teachers.
162. The department has made good progress since the last inspection. Since the previous inspection the Junior Sports Leadership Award course has been added to the curriculum for

pupils in Year 11 and helps to develop their communication skills. An extra-curricular programme gives pupils opportunities to take part in competitive sport, although boys seem to have more opportunities than girls. A number of teams and individuals succeed well at district level.

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

163. Personal, social and health education was sampled during the inspection. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. It is well co-ordinated, but is a diverse programme that relies upon the expertise and enthusiasm of form tutors, so that teaching and learning are variable. Some training and support are offered to form tutors in the form of 'breakfast clubs'. Many outside agencies come into school to lead sessions and bring an extra dimension of expertise. These include the police, a local drugs education group, nurses, and social workers. School policies for sex and drugs education meet requirements. The school makes good use of theatre groups, a puppet theatre and anti-bullying workshops run by specialist workers to support this programme. The school works hard to emphasise the importance of healthy eating.

### **Citizenship**

Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

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

- The school provides some good opportunities for pupils to become responsible citizens.
- There is limited involvement by representatives of the local community to developing the citizenship curriculum.
- The school council provides pupils with an opportunity to take part in a democratically elected body.
- Some pupils, but not all, take part in active citizenship activities.
- When subjects are teaching aspects of citizenship they are not making this explicit to pupils.
- Assessment meets statutory requirements but in some year groups there is insufficient evidence to reflect pupils' achievement.

#### **Commentary**

164. At the time of inspection, lessons in citizenship were offered in many subjects, especially PSHE and in some tutorials.
165. Standards are satisfactory by the end of Year 9. Pupils have gained a sound knowledge over the preceding three years about aspects of society found in the citizenship curriculum. In Year 7 they understood different types of disability and their effects. The subjects they were studying gave pupils an opportunity to think about and discuss issues with their teacher and in their pairs and develop these skills appropriately. Pupils' achievements in Years 7 to 9 are satisfactory. While all groups were challenged sufficiently there was a lack of extension activities for higher attaining pupils.
166. By the end of Year 11 the knowledge and understanding and use of skills are satisfactory. Achievement, relative to the standards reached by the end of Year 9 is satisfactory. Pupils had, by their involvement, acquired a satisfactory understanding of the nature of a democratic society by taking part in elections for both the year and school council. Pupils discussed both with their teacher and between themselves potential contracts of employment and a written activity extended their skills well. The topics they had been given to study provided pupils with good opportunities to think, discuss and write about issues that were important to their future.
167. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge. Most lessons had learning objectives, which were usually shared with pupils. Pupils were reasonably positive about the subject and were prepared to become involved in the activities

for the lesson. Opportunities for discussion and writing and thinking about issues were sound. There was limited evidence of the assessment of pupils' work. The school has some innovative ideas for involving some of its pupils in active citizenship. The school council provides pupils with the opportunity to take part in democratic elections to the school council and once elected senior pupils gain the experience of chairing meetings.

168. While leadership is good, management is satisfactory. The teacher in charge has the vision and direction to take the subject forward. However, there are some weaknesses. An audit has been carried out to establish the contribution subjects make to develop citizenship. However, the identification of further contributions subjects can make has yet to be identified. When subjects do make a contribution to citizenship in lessons the link is not made explicit to pupils.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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