

INSPECTION REPORT

LAVINGTON SCHOOL

Lavington, Devizes

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126497

Headteacher: Mr M Watson

Lead inspector: Deborah Zachary

Dates of inspection: 17 – 19 November 2003

Inspection number: 258688

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:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	11-16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	685
School address:	The Spring Market Lavington Devizes
Postcode:	SN10 4EB
Telephone number:	01380-812352
Fax number:	01380-818492
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs N Holman
Date of previous inspection:	February 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Lavington School is set in a village south of Devizes in Wiltshire. It serves a largely rural community and is below average in size. The pupils come from a range of backgrounds, with most parents working; however, the area is not as affluent as the low number of pupils claiming free school meals would suggest and the socio-economic circumstances of the pupils are above average rather than higher. Almost all pupils are of white British backgrounds and none speak English as an additional language. About ten per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below average nationally. Those who need the most help with learning have a range of disabilities, with no one group predominating. About one and a half per cent of pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. National test scores taken in Year 6 and the school's own tests taken early in Year 7 show that the pupils' attainment on entry to the school is average overall. Very few pupils start the school after Year 7 or leave before Year 11. The school does not have specialist status; it is constrained in its quest for this by the lack of large commercial organisations in its catchment area, because commercial sponsorship is a key requirement for specialist status. However, it has gained school achievement awards in recognition of its results in 2001, 2002 and 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2940	Deborah Zachary	Lead inspector	
19639	Gillian Anderson	Lay inspector	
31135	Rachel Hobson	Team inspector	English
10244	Roger Freeman	Team inspector	Mathematics
8361	Malcolm Burley	Team inspector	Science
32230	Bill Alexander	Team inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT)
12337	Anthony Slade	Team inspector	Religious education
30518	Michael Johnson	Team inspector	Art and design
10385	Keith Hopkins	Team inspector	Design and technology
29212	Melanie Smith	Team inspector	French
22590	Robert Castle	Team inspector	Geography, Physical education
33162	John Ward	Team inspector	History
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13122	Stephanie Matthews	Team inspector	Citizenship
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is very effective. By the time pupils leave the school they have done much better than others in similar schools. This is partly because of the quality of teaching, which is very good for the oldest pupils and good for the younger ones, but is also because of the way the school works hard to establish very good attitudes to learning in all year groups. This means that pupils and teachers are working together to make standards as high as possible. The school's costs are low for its size and location, so it provides excellent value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher provides very good leadership; this has been the major factor in the great improvement since the last inspection.
- There is excellent provision for science and very good provision for design and technology, mathematics and history; there is good provision for most subjects.
- Pupils who have difficulties, whether to do with learning or behaviour, are very well provided for and cared for throughout the school.
- Pupils mature particularly well in their moral and social development, and the school provides very well for this.
- Teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour to which pupils respond; the pupils enjoy school and have a very mature approach to learning.
- All teaching seen was at least satisfactory and much was good, very good or excellent, but some lessons have limited variety in the activities pupils are given.
- Pupils' progress is tracked carefully within most subject departments and they are set targets for improvement in some; however, there is not a systematic and efficient way of ensuring pastoral staff and tutors have a full overview of all pupils' performance in all subjects.

The school's improvement since the last inspection has been very good. Standards have risen a great deal in nearly all subjects and teaching has improved. Management has improved greatly, and the key issues have been tackled very well. Strong leadership continues to take the school forward.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Performance in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
	A	A	A	A

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

Pupils' achievement is very good overall. It is good in Years 7 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11. In Years 7 to 9, pupils reach above average standards after entering with average standards. They achieve very well in mathematics and science, where standards are well above average, and last year's Year 9 test results were well above average when compared to similar schools. In Years 10 and 11, standards are well above average overall and achievement is very good. Though 2003 GCSE results were a little lower than in 2002, figures for the best eight grades for each pupil are still well above average nationally and are in the top five per cent of similar schools. The 2003 results are not shown in the table as at this stage they are unconfirmed. Almost all pupils, 99 per cent, gained five GCSEs, which places the school in the top five per cent of schools in the country for this measure. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and achieve very well. The most able pupils achieve well.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. Behaviour is good. Attendance is above average and pupils are very punctual.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching is good. It is very good in Years 10 and 11 and good in Years 7 to 9. Teachers constantly challenge pupils to reach high standards and as a result the pupils expect this of themselves. The best lessons are particularly lively and stimulating, with pupils responding with total concentration. Where lessons consist of just one activity, or mainly one activity, the activity can go on too long so the pace of learning drops. These lessons also do not always provide sufficiently for the full ability range, so some pupils make better progress than others. The curriculum is good throughout the school, and there are good links with the community and other schools. Pupils are well cared for and guided, though systems for sharing information within the school about pupils' progress are not always efficient. The most able, gifted and talented have their needs met and gain the highest grades, but there is limited extra provision to really extend this highest attaining group.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership. The leadership of other key staff is good and management is very effective. The work of the governors is good. Two statutory requirements are not met, but neither of these omissions is having a detrimental effect on pupils' achievement. The most significant omission, that daily collective worship is not currently provided, is a temporary situation caused by the growth in the school's roll.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school. They particularly value the way pupils are helped to settle and the teaching and management in the school. They are very clear that their children are expected to work hard and are encouraged to become mature and responsible. Very few disagreed with any of these things and there was very little dissatisfaction with what the school does. Most pupils are pleased with the school. They feel it is a good school to be at and that they are expected to work hard. Though questionnaire returns indicated that there was misbehaviour in the school and some bullying, these were not areas of concern in discussions with pupils during the inspection, and apparent concern may well have been due to the phrasing of the questions on the questionnaire.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The school does not have any major weaknesses. This inspection report therefore highlights some minor things that are not as good as other aspects of provision, and as such are the next things to tackle at this stage in the school's development. The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Improve teaching by making sure that more lessons have a variety of well-targeted activities, chosen so that they are the most stimulating ways of getting the necessary learning points across.
- Ensure that all departments develop their tracking of progress and use of target setting to match the best practice in the school, and that this data is shared efficiently with pupils, and with heads of years and tutors to inform the guidance they give pupils.
- Provide better for the most able pupils in the school.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils.

- Monitor the implementation of the race equality policy.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is very good overall; good in Years 7 to 9 and very good in Years 10 to 11. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and achieve very well throughout the school. The most able pupils gain top GCSE grades and achieve well. Standards are above average in Year 9 and well above average in Years 10 and 11.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is very good in GCSE courses in English, French, mathematics, ICT, art, music and in design and technology, and is particularly noteworthy in resistant materials and science.
- Results in Year 9 tests show very good achievement in Years 7 to 9 in science and mathematics.
- Almost all pupils, 99 per cent, gained five GCSEs in 2003, which places the school in the top five per cent of schools in the country.
- The most able pupils achieve well, but not quite as well as the majority of pupils.

Commentary

As the current Year 11 pupils were carrying out mock examinations during the week of the inspection, little was seen of their lessons or work. A small group of Year 11 pupils was interviewed in each subject with their work, but this was not enough to make a secure judgement on current standards. The results of Year 11 pupils in 2003 GCSE examinations was therefore used by inspectors as a measure of the current standards for the oldest pupils in the school.

1. Pupils are offered an appropriately wide choice of GCSE subjects, but a comparatively small school has limited flexibility in timetabling and pupils do not normally enter for 10 or 11 GCSEs. This means that the school's overall GCSE points score tends to be a little lower against the national figures than the 'capped' points score, which is based on the best 8 subjects. Nevertheless, both measures have indicated praiseworthy achievement in recent years. In particular, in 2002 and in the unconfirmed figures for 2003 the school's capped points score was well above average compared to all schools nationally, and in the top five per cent of schools whose pupils had performed similarly two years before, in Year 9. The unconfirmed 2003 results indicate slightly lower results overall than 2002, and very challenging targets were just missed. For example, the above 'capped' score is about 41.3 rather than 42.6, and the percentage of pupils scoring 5 or more grades at C and above falls to 70 from 71, but pupils with special educational needs did better in 2003. This year almost all gained five GCSE passes, and the tiny minority who did not were very recent arrivals in the school. This pass rate indicates excellent achievement last year for the lowest attaining pupils. The trend in GCSE results has been strongly upwards since the last inspection, with standards being maintained at a high level in 2003.

In the table below the last line is about point scores. A pupil's point score is calculated by giving each grade at GCSE a set number of points, and calculating the total scored by each pupil.

Standards in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11 in 2002

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	71.4 (70.6)	49.9 (48.4)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	98 (96)	90.9 (90.9)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	99 (97)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	42.6 (n/a)	34.6 (n/a)

There were 120 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Some other examples of excellent achievement in 2003 include that in GCSE science and GCSE resistant materials. In science, 78 per cent of pupils gained passes at C or above, which again is in the top five per cent of similar schools, and 22 per cent of pupils gained A or A* grades, where nationally the figure is 11 per cent. In the resistant materials GCSE, though the number taking the course was much smaller, 37 per cent gained A or A* grades, and 92 per cent gained a C or better. The school's own preliminary calculations comparing individual performances in different subjects show resistant materials as one of the strongest GCSEs, along with music. Geography was the only GCSE course in which results were significantly below the national average and an area in which pupils did not do as well as other subjects; however, bearing in mind that many other subjects had very good achievement, achievement in geography was still broadly satisfactory.
- The 2003 Year 9 test results were well above average for schools whose pupils had performed similarly on entry, at the end of Year 6. They were also well above average for all schools, and were an improvement on 2002. English results improved significantly, particularly in the number of pupils reaching levels much better than expected for their age. Both the overall improvement and that specifically in English followed a period in which results overall, whilst above average, had not improved at the national rate. The 2003 results in mathematics and science were well above average compared to those of schools with pupils of similar ability on intake, showing that pupils' achievement was very good in these subjects. The inspection evidence from Year 9 is that the improved results are likely to be maintained. However, the instability in staffing in the English department makes results there harder to predict at this stage of the year.

The tables below gives average points scores for pupils. Each level in the national curriculum is given a number of points. Pupils are expected to move on one point every term, so if a school's scores are one point above the national, their pupils are, typically, a term ahead.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 9 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	36.0 (33.9)	33.3 (33.3)
mathematics	39.5 (37.1)	35.3 (34.7)
science	36.8 (35.6)	33.7 (33.3)

There were 137 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- The reason that pupils with special educational needs do so well throughout the school is that they benefit from the quality of teaching, as other pupils do, but are supported further by very effective teaching assistants. In some lessons, the teaching assistants will lead the lesson with the support of the teacher, and at other times the teaching assistant will work with a small group or one-to-one with a pupil. Generally in the school pupils' progress, which is good in Years 7 to 9, accelerates in Years 10 and 11. This is partly because by that stage the school's

approach to learning is working powerfully in lessons, with pupils showing a very mature responsibility for their own gains in understanding. It is also because the teaching is better in the older age group, and in some subjects such as French, revision classes are particularly effective. The most able pupils in the school, who enter with standards well above those expected, maintain these standards and gain the highest grades, A or A* at GCSE. Their achievement is good in Years 10 and 11 and satisfactory in Years 7 to 9. By Year 9, though many reach very high levels in English, mathematics and science, inspectors saw less evidence of these highest levels in some other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attendance and behaviour are good. Pupils' punctuality and attitudes are very good. Their moral and social development is very good, and their spiritual and cultural development is good, making these aspects of personal development very good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes to school, and their motivation to learn improves steadily as they move into the older year groups.
- Punctuality is very good because pupils want to start school and get to lessons.
- Pupils mature particularly well in their moral and social development, and the school provides very well for this.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.9	School data	0.3
National data	7.8	National data	1.2

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

5. Pupils are very keen to come to school because they think it is a good school to be at. As a result they have good attendance records and arrive very punctually at the start of the school day and for lessons. Their attitudes are very positive because they have pride in their school and want to learn. They feel secure and confident in school and are helpful and considerate because the school fosters the good levels of maturity that pupils bring with them. Break times and lunch times are pleasant and relaxed because of good behaviour and very good relationships, and an appreciation of the catering arrangements that ensure that they are fed well. The number of temporary exclusions is lower than is typical of a school this size and it is significant that no pupils have had to be permanently excluded.

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	680	19	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	3	0	0

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

6. Pupils are enthusiastic and keen to work hard because of the very good learning atmosphere that teachers work hard to ensure. However, this is also supported by the carefully structured spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision within the school. This strong contribution to their personal development creates an enthusiasm for and focus on learning that is a major factor in the pupils' achievement. By Years 10 and 11 the ability of pupils to work alone and with concentration or to co-operate in small groups is a significant reason for the success of many lessons and subjects. The pupils quickly volunteer to take responsibility and even the younger pupils are alert to the valuable impact this has, for example on their development and preparation for life in a diverse society. They are very aware that it helps them to fit into other groups successfully. Extra-curricular activities are enjoyed and valued. Older pupils contribute significantly to the life of the school; for example, peer educators (pupils who act as counsellors) are often mentioned by others as a strength of the school. Pupils treat others with high levels of interest because they listen well through mutual respect. Pupils show a very good understanding of, and respect for, themselves and other people because of the impact of moral and social provision, in particular, on their personal development.
7. Assemblies have a lot of meaning for pupils because the underlying messages make a real impact and are reinforced through reflection, both in tutorials and in the pastoral period which covers a linked programme of personal social and health education (PSHE), citizenship and careers. Pupils value the impact this has on their personal development. Although the school does not provide a daily act of collective worship because of accommodation difficulties, it makes very good alternative provision for each year group, ensuring that the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins the very good ethos of the school. This creates a rich climate for learning.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. It is particularly good in Years 10 and 11, where teaching is very good. Most aspects of the quality of education provided are good, but provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Links with parents are satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall; good in Years 7 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11. Assessment of pupils' work is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour to which pupils respond; the pupils develop a very mature approach to learning.
- The best lessons have very well chosen activities for pupils, and most lessons interest pupils well, but some lessons have limited variety or do not provide enough activities that are well targeted on what pupils need to learn next.
- Assessment data is used well by most departments to set targets and monitor progress, and marking is conscientious.
- Pupils are not always aware of their grade levels and targets, nor does marking always identify exactly how they can improve.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 101 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (2%)	27 (27%)	44 (43%)	28 (28%)	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.

Year 11 pupils were doing mock examinations during the inspection, so fewer than the usual number of lessons were seen. However, when lessons seen in Year 10 and the few seen in Year 11 are analysed separately, the proportion of good teaching remains similar to the above table, but the number of satisfactory lessons drops and the number of very good lessons rises significantly.

8. Teachers usually make it clear to pupils what they are to learn, and these learning objectives are usually pitched at a challenging level. All teaching and support staff reinforce the school's focus on high expectations of pupils' behaviour and concentration so that the underlying atmosphere is right. For example, in an excellent mathematics lesson with Year 8, a really thought-provoking starter activity completely engrossed pupils and set the scene for the rest of the session. Since most lessons demonstrate these high expectations, the success of the lesson then often depends on how well the activities the teacher has chosen match to the things the pupils need to learn, and to the needs of the pupils in the class. This is the part of teaching that is much more variable in the school. In many subjects, for example in French, art, history or science, teachers are very careful to plan what pupils are to do, not only to get learning points across in the right sequence but also to ensure that their interest is maintained. This may mean a change of type of activity part way through a lesson, or a different way of summarising what pupils have learnt. In science, for example, what could have been a turgid revision session for Year 10 was enlivened by presentations pupils had prepared for each other, and was further enhanced by a high level of witty but respectful repartee between teacher and pupils, and indeed between pupils themselves, all focused on the content of the lesson. This enjoyment and good humour, combined with trust in pupils, is a feature of many lessons in the school. Both parents and pupils feel that teaching is good – only one per cent of parents and five per cent of pupils disagree.
9. Where activities are less well chosen, the sound skills of teachers ensure that all make progress, but at a much lower pace. Sometimes lesson activities do not involve pupils enough, or the same activity continues too long. The pupils work hard at the start but, though behaviour usually remains good, the pace drops as they lose some of the initial interest. This is sometimes the case in English, geography and physical education, for example. Sometimes activities are not sequenced correctly, with harder activities coming before easier ones, and sometimes an important learning stage can be missed out, for example in physical education if a skill is learnt and then applied too quickly to a full game before being practised sufficiently under more controlled conditions. Some lessons do not give different enough activities to pupils of different abilities, for example some in religious education. In others, however, the teachers are very conscious of the need to differentiate, for example in a Year 10 food technology lesson where the most able were challenged well to make two products whilst others had tasks less demanding in terms of organisation. In a very good Year 7 history lesson for a class with a very wide range of ability, the teacher had set the same task for the different groups of pupils but had varied the level of difficulty of the source material they were using. This really challenged the highest attainers and enabled most of the pupils with special needs to reach levels expected for their age. In a significant number of lessons the work of the teaching assistants has a strong and positive impact on the progress of the lower attaining pupils. This reflects the priority placed on the provision of strong support staff by the school leadership team.
10. The school has a wealth of data on pupils' attainment. Primary school teacher assessments and Cognitive Ability Test (CAT) scores form the baseline for a profile of each pupil on entry to the school. Each year a national curriculum level in each subject extends the profile. Data is recorded using the *School Information System Assessment Manager* and is thoroughly analysed to establish targets for each pupil. This thoroughness is a strength of the school's assessment procedures. The quality of marking and assessment in subjects is good overall but varies within departments. Most teachers mark work regularly but some fail to indicate clearly enough what pupils have got wrong and what they need to do to improve.

11. Assessment information is generally used well to monitor achievement. Good practice is seen in particular in mathematics, science and design technology. In mathematics, assessment is an integral component of the department's schemes of work. Up-to-date grade levels are attractively displayed in the classrooms, informing pupils of their progress and providing motivation. In a similar way, in design technology grades for each GCSE objective are displayed and pupils are encouraged to repeat work, where appropriate, to improve them. In a significant number of subjects, however, not all pupils in Years 7 to 9 know their current national curriculum level and the targets they have been set. This information is well understood centrally, and usually identified at department level in terms of targets for teaching groups, but is not being transmitted in a productive way to the pupils. There is also an inefficiency in that the information is not being securely relayed to pastoral staff. Pupils with special needs, however, benefit from a very good, rigorous, assessment system, which tracks their progress as they move through the school. Good quality individual education plans provide clear targets.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good and there is a good range of opportunities for enrichment. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum provides very well for pupils with special educational needs, with teaching assistants making a significant contribution.
- A varied programme of activities outside the school day supports learning well.
- The most able, gifted and talented have their needs met and gain the highest grades, but there is limited extra provision to really extend them.
- The hall is too small for the whole school to meet in a daily act of collective worship, and this lack of space also restricts the physical education curriculum.

Commentary

12. The school is comparatively small, which means that it can have little flexibility in the way it uses its teachers, time and accommodation. Nevertheless, the curriculum is broad and balanced. It allows all pupils to achieve well, and it is reviewed regularly. The grouping arrangements allow teaching to be targeted at the right level, so that pupils of all abilities make good progress, and, by the end of Year 11, gain a good number of GCSEs, or, for some pupils in some subjects, entry level qualifications. A small number of pupils are appropriately following a curriculum that is work-related.
13. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The progress made by pupils against their individual education plans is greatly helped by the carefully planned work of the teaching assistants, who make a particular contribution towards raising the achievement of less able pupils. There are good numbers of support staff, and they are well matched to curriculum areas or individual pupils. Where one-to-one support is given, very good progress is shown over a period of time. *Learning Progress Groups* in mathematics and English are also raising achievement in Year 7. The work of support staff with pupils who have specific learning difficulties enables those pupils to achieve very well. The strength of the provision for special educational needs is demonstrated in the exceptionally high numbers of pupils who gained at least five GCSE passes last year.
14. A wide range of extra-curricular activities provides enrichment and supports learning. The rural nature of the catchment area means that some pupils are restricted by transport from staying after school, but some activities also take place over the lunch hour. Lunchtime drama activities develop the skills of pupils in Years 7, 8, and 9, and link directly to GCSE for pupils in Years 10 and 11. There is a high level of instrumental tuition, and instrumental groups and choirs meet regularly at lunchtimes. In physical education, although the lack of a sports hall constrains activities, approximately a quarter of all pupils participate in lunchtime activities, and the school

runs teams for pupils in all years. Departments use educational visits to reinforce learning, most notably art, modern foreign languages, and history, where the provision is very good.

15. The school is taking some steps to provide enhanced or enriched activities for the most able, gifted or talented. In science, the most able pupils in Years 10 and 11 are following a triple science course to extend their learning. There is a possibility that the short religious education GCSE may be similarly extended. The instrumental teaching in music provides opportunities to excel. In general, however, although the curriculum allows teaching to be targeted at groups of more able pupils, it does not identify within those groups pupils who are gifted and talented, or make particular provision for them. There is no early entry for some examinations, for example, to free up time in successive years. The most able pupils are not disadvantaged, however; they are reaching the highest grades in tests and examinations, but their achievement does not match that of the least able.
16. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, as are resources and staffing. The areas for modern foreign languages and science are very good. The accommodation for indoor games in physical education is unsatisfactory, but this should be resolved with the building of a new sports hall in 2004. This will also provide a space for whole-school collective worship to take place. The requirement for daily collective worship was met at the time of the last inspection but since then the number of pupils on roll has grown. The library is a modern, comfortable and pleasant area that is well used by pupils beyond the school day. The school has disability access to most of the site. Science has particularly good resources, and they support the excellent provision in the subject. However, there are insufficient computers and peripheral equipment located within some subject areas, for example in art and design and in design and technology. The result is that ICT skills are not practised consistently in some subjects.

Care, guidance and support

The school ensures pupils' care, welfare health and safety well. It provides them with good support, advice and guidance and involves them well in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Health and safety procedures are rigorous and staff are vigilant in their care of pupils.
- The pastoral support, advice and guidance, particularly for pupils who have special needs or personal difficulties, is very good.
- The monitoring and evaluation procedures for tracking pupils' achievements in their academic work and guiding them on that basis are not as well established.
- The toilet area in the old block is not in an acceptable state of decoration and repair.

Commentary

17. This is a small, caring school where pupils are known well by tutors and heads of year and their needs recognised. The induction arrangements for pupils from primary school are so successful that new pupils are eager to start. Pupils are very positive about the school because they feel well supported and cared for. They are confident that the school helps to build their self-esteem and develop their potential. Bullying is not an issue because incidents are usually minor and dealt with very effectively. The heads of year work closely with tutors and the special needs co-ordinator, and with parents, to ensure that all pupils who are having difficulties with work or behaviour or difficulties of a more personal nature are supported, cared for and helped to improve academically and, if necessary, in terms of behaviour.
18. Teachers know and respect pupils and respond well to their personal and academic needs, but they tend to support best those pupils with noticeable needs. Pupils themselves are aware that knowledge of pupils between the extremes is not as good as it could be, describing it as 'vague'. This is because there is not a secure whole-school system in place to identify those 'in the middle', who may be underachieving but are not misbehaving. Some departments do

successfully identify these pupils, and do then push them on in that subject, but this information is not efficiently shared with the pastoral system. As much of the communication between subject teachers and heads of year or tutors is either by a paper-based individual referral or by an individual discussion, it is time consuming and tends to focus on the pupils who need support most. Tutors do not monitor academic progress as a matter of course. The monitoring and evaluation of pastoral procedures is in the early stages of development.

19. Child protection procedures are properly carried out. Pupils are confident in an adult to turn to for good support and they consider the peer educators a strength of the school. Whilst the formal policies and practices relating to health and safety are rigorous and carried out well, the state of the toilets in the old block is unacceptable and pupils do not feel their needs are sufficiently respected in this area. However, the school has recognised this and is in the early stages of addressing the problem.
20. Pupils are given good opportunities to put forward their views through their representatives and this has led to new initiatives like the drinking water fountain in the foyer. They receive good impartial advice on further study and career opportunities. During the week of the inspection, for example, an extended assembly on the advice and guidance offered by the connexions service was effectively followed up in the next lesson. The careers policy is good and is taken seriously.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with feeder primary schools are very good, and so new pupils are enthusiastic about coming to Lavington School.
- Links with parents of pupils with special educational needs and pupils who are experiencing difficulties are strong.
- Despite the location of the school in a rural and comparatively scattered community, there is a good variety of community links.

Commentary

21. Parents receive the information they require about the school and their child's progress, through, for example, meetings and reports, and these are sound. There are regular opportunities, both formal and informal, to talk to teachers but the use of diaries as a dialogue with home is patchy. This is often because parents do not respond or because pupils do not record a longer piece of topic work clearly, so the diary appears to be blank. They are, however, used well for communication for pupils with special educational needs. Links are strong with the parents of pupils who have special educational needs or who are experiencing difficulties, because of the support the school gives. The special needs co-ordinator, heads of year and the deputy head with responsibility for pastoral work particularly hard to maintain these relationships, in circumstances that may be challenging. In general, parental involvement with matters directly concerning their own child is good, but many parents do not perceive that they need to know more about what their child is doing and there is less support for whole-school matters. Parents' views are sought by the school; for example, on the low turnout for the study skills evening. The school makes reasonable efforts to communicate with those parents who are difficult to reach, through letters and telephone calls.
22. The school has good links with the community and it uses these well in enhancing pupils' experience and overall educational provision. Local people use the school sports facilities and enjoy its music and drama. Pupils raise money for charities and they work in the community as part of their Duke of Edinburgh award. There are close links with the church, the army and with many aspects of rural life. Pupils undertake work experience in the local area and there is a

good range of visits and links in this country and with Europe and the USA. Work experience is well managed.

23. The transfer of information on pupils with partner schools is efficient and timely. Its arrangements with feeder primaries are very effective and supportive of transition. There are good arrangements to help pupils make appropriate choices about the next stage of their education and career pathways. Links with colleges for pupils with special educational needs are good, so that they are well prepared for the transition.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The work of the governors is good. Management is very effective. The headteacher provides very good leadership, and the leadership of other key staff is good. The comparatively small size of the school means that some staff in leadership or management positions have numerous responsibilities, and so the pace of development sometimes has to be slower than the school would like, but nevertheless improvement since the last inspection has been very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very good leadership; he is very aware of the capabilities of and demands on his staff, but nevertheless maintains an unremitting drive towards school improvement.
- Performance management is used very well as part of the school improvement process.
- Self-evaluation is well embedded, both at department level and at whole-school level.
- The governing body are very well organised and well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Two statutory requirements are not met, but neither of these omissions are having a detrimental effect on pupils.
- Teamwork is strong within departments, but individual managers do not all feel equally valued.

Commentary

24. The head was appointed shortly before the last inspection. That inspection followed a period of time with an acting headteacher and vacancies in the leadership team. A significant number of key issues from the inspection concerned leadership and management. This area of comparative weakness in the school has been turned in the intervening six years into a significant strength. That it has been achieved with no changes at the level of the senior leadership team and very few changes at the level of middle management illustrates the effectiveness of the management systems that the headteacher has put into place, and the skilful and sensitive way he has helped managers take on new demands. The headteacher is also influential beyond the school through work on county committees, which he balances carefully with his first priority, the pupils in Lavington. The responses of both parents and pupils to the inspection questionnaires showed strongly that they feel the school is well led. The deputy headteachers and the bursar make up the other members of the leadership team. All three are supportive and are effective in carrying out their allocated tasks. At this level curriculum leadership is knowledgeable and clear thinking. The leadership given to the support staff is also effective, and appropriate improvements have been identified, for example in the identified need for more formal systems of performance management for these staff to be introduced. Pastoral leadership has been fairly effective, but has been at its best in terms of behaviour management and support of pupils with difficulties, rather than in more innovative aspects.
25. Leadership is now a strength in many subject departments. Here curriculum leaders are very clear on both how they want the department to develop and on their own contribution to the development of the school. Almost all departments show very strong teamwork. In a similar

way the senior leadership team feels a strong corporate responsibility for the direction in which the school is moving, though all members are also very clear about their own roles and responsibilities within the team. Heads of year offer good leadership to their teams concerning the management and support of pupils with difficulties, supporting class tutors with their own extensive knowledge of pupils and their families. In some ways, however, the strength of the various teams in the school has a more negative impact on the way the separate teams work together. Though there has been movement, the pastoral teams have less involvement in tracking achievement than is often found, and some individual departments feel that they are less integrated into the school than others. A minority of female heads of department, but still a significant number, feel they are less valued. For example, some staff have the opinion that the pay points that are allocated to match responsibilities are unfairly weighted; inspectors reviewed these, however, and judged that this concern is unfounded. This element of discontent is a minor weakness, not affecting pupils and to do with individual perception rather than policy, in an overall picture of leadership that is very effective and very inclusive. The strength of the leadership is self-evident in the depth of improvements since the last inspection and, especially, in the high GCSE results.

26. The governing body operates effectively, setting a good vision for raising standards with an inclusive concern for individuals within the school. Governors are certainly prepared to challenge the school and the senior leadership team; they understand the need to look closely at statistics, and ask for analyses of the progress of different groups of pupils. They monitor performance management very well, but monitor the progress of the school development plan more informally. Two statutory requirements are not met. Daily collective worship is not currently provided, but this is a temporary situation caused by the growth in the school's roll, and pupils' spiritual development is well provided for. The race equality policy is a well thought through document, but there has been slippage in the time at which it should have been monitored, and a formal report on its effectiveness has not been presented to the governing body or committee. Inspectors found that pupils in the school are well prepared for life in Britain's multicultural society. As neither of these omissions is having a detrimental effect on pupils, and the governance of the school has significant strengths in its vision, organisation and strategy, it is judged good overall.
27. Managers at all levels are very committed to the objectives of the school. The line management system is effective, and is particularly so in performance management. This is carefully targeted to improve the performance of individuals, but is also well focused on school priorities. Training needs are identified clearly and provided effectively. The induction of the small number of new staff has been good. Heads of department are closely involved in self-evaluation. Every department head produces a written review of exams which is discussed with line managers and the headteacher, and they mostly take responsibility very effectively for the monitoring and improvement of teaching in their own departments, and for the raising of standards, as can be seen from the significant improvements the school has made. The provision for special educational needs is very well managed, as is the way that the educational support staff are deployed and supported. Systems for ensuring the support of pupils who need it, whether for personal or behavioural reasons, run smoothly and issues are handled sensitively by heads of year and their assistant heads.
28. The principles of best value are very well applied. The budget is carefully projected and monitored, and financial control is very good. Parents and pupils are consulted effectively. There is a culture of questioning and improvement in the school, particularly by the headteacher and some middle managers and the governing body. Results and other data, including financial data, are rigorously analysed and compared to those of other schools in order to monitor and assess the effectiveness of spending decisions. The school augments the funding it receives from the county for pupils who have special needs, and the success of this decision is evident in the progress these pupils make, particularly when given one-to-one support by teaching assistants.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	2021179
Total expenditure	2005137
Expenditure per pupil	2919

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	72510
Balance carried forward to the next	88552

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

As the current Year 11 pupils were carrying out mock examinations during the week of the inspection, little was seen of their lessons or work. A small group of Year 11 pupils was interviewed in each subject with their work, but this was not enough to make a secure judgement on current standards. The results of Year 11 pupils in 2003 GCSE examinations should therefore be taken as Year 11 standards in the GCSE subjects reported below. No judgement could be made on Year 11 standards in the general physical education course but lessons for Year 11 were seen in citizenship.

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English was inspected in full and is reported below. The report combines commentary on English language and English literature as these subjects are usually taught together. French was also inspected in full and is reported below. German was sampled.

29. In 2003, GCSE results in **German** were in line with the national average, which represented a significant improvement on the previous year. Girls performed much better than boys. Three lessons were observed during the inspection. Teaching was good in two of these and very good in the third. All three lessons were well planned to provide a variety of short tasks that kept pupils focused and engaged their interest. Year 7 pupils showed good recall of numbers and were keen to talk about their pets. The best lesson used visual prompts to reduce the use of English. In the other lessons German could have been used more extensively in class, to provide a more consistent model for pupils.

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen over time - GCSE results are now well above average.
- Pupils' skills of literary analysis develop well.
- Pupils work well, both independently and in groups.
- Work is not consistently marked and assessed to identify specifically how pupils could improve.
- Teachers use a limited range of styles and resources.

Commentary

30. At the time of the inspection, the head of department was on extended maternity leave and the acting head of department was also absent. The subject has experienced staffing instability for two terms, and as a consequence improvements have slowed down.
31. The Year 9 national curriculum test results in 2003 were well above average and above those of similar schools, and were an improvement on those of 2002. The GCSE results were also well above average in both English language and English literature. Results have risen since the previous inspection and achievement was very good for last year's Year 11. Current standards are above average in Year 9 and pupils are achieving well. By the end of Year 9, higher-attaining pupils write lengthy, interesting, and detailed pieces. They can write both creatively, using the role of the narrator in imaginative ways, and also discuss different sides of a controversial issue. By the end of Year 11, the highest attaining write very stylishly and accurately. They can also explain why a writer chooses to use a particular technique and show the powerful effect that language can have. All pupils are introduced to a range of appropriately challenging literary texts. Lower attaining pupils write in less detail, but most can structure essays competently and compare literary pieces. Pupils achieve well overall in English language and literature. Pupils'

oral skills develop well from Year 7 to Year 11. Teachers plan a lot of opportunities for discussion. As well as supporting pupils' speaking and listening, this has the added benefit of developing pupils' ability to learn from each other in groups.

32. Teaching and learning are good. All teachers are subject specialists, and they have high expectations of pupils and challenge them effectively, and pupils respond with high expectations of themselves. There is room, however, to develop a wider range of teaching methods and to use more stimulating resources in order to enliven lessons further. Whilst a lot of work is helpfully marked, practice is inconsistent and some pieces are given general comments that do not help pupils to improve. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and want to do well, so they work well on their own. They are supported in this by the way teachers encourage them to assess their own performance.
33. There was insufficient evidence during the inspection to judge the effectiveness of the subject's leadership and management. Teachers do, however, work well together as a team and there is effective support and mentoring for the newly qualified teacher. The department has made good progress since the last inspection, in particular through raising standards and prioritising the monitoring and improvement of teaching. The use of the *National Literacy Strategy*, too, is developing, although some teachers still lack experience in using it as effectively as they could.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

34. Literacy skills are above average across the school. They are developed well in many subjects. In geography lessons, teachers stress technical vocabulary and create opportunities for pupils to read aloud. In history, writing frames are used to help pupils to structure what they write. The school has worked with the local authority literacy consultant to develop teaching and learning methods using the *National Literacy Strategy*. In science, for example, they create opportunities for pupils to discuss and read aloud. There are also literacy catch-up lessons for Year 7 pupils who need them. These are particularly effective in building confidence and in helping pupils to improve. Not all subjects display key words prominently in classrooms, however, and the marking of grammatical and spelling mistakes is inconsistent. In mathematics, more extended writing could be used to explain solutions.

French

Provision in French is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The *Key Stage 3 Modern Languages Strategy* has been integrated well into lessons and a variety of activities in lessons engage pupils' interest.
- Pupils achieve very well as a result of good teaching and well-targeted revision.
- Grammar is taught thoroughly and imaginatively, but spoken French could be improved.
- Pupils need to be made more aware of their level of attainment and to understand exactly what they have to do to improve.
- Some work needs to be more closely matched to pupils' ability, so that pupils receive the necessary challenge or support.

Commentary

35. Teacher assessments show that standards in French at the end of Year 9 are above national expectations. Attainment in French observed in lessons reflects this, with higher attaining pupils able to use past tenses accurately in their written French. Pupils are achieving well in Years 7 to 9. Pupils' listening skills are good. The fluency and confidence of pupils' spoken French, however, are more limited. In 2003, GCSE results in French rose significantly to well above the national average, with girls performing only slightly better than boys. This was very good

achievement, in contrast to the previous year, when twice as many girls as boys achieved grades A*-C and boys may well have underachieved. The number of pupils attaining the highest grades also improved but remains below the national average. In written work seen during the inspection, older higher attaining pupils showed accuracy and fluency in their use of a variety of tenses, although many lacked the confidence to use tenses in their spoken French, unless referring to written prompts.

36. The very good achievement of pupils in Years 10 and 11 is due to well-targeted revision classes and an emphasis on the teaching of grammar in Years 10 and 11. For example, higher attaining pupils in Year 10 showed an impressive knowledge of the past tense when asked to identify errors in a piece of written French. Grammatical terminology is explained in useful booklets, and grammar is taught imaginatively - for example in a very good Year 10 lesson, pupils solved a series of puzzles such as *Find the odd one out* regarding aspects of the past tense. Pupils with special needs make good progress, as they are usually taught in small sets with pupils of similar ability. However, some who find themselves in groups of more mixed ability do not achieve as well as they might if materials were more closely matched to their needs.
37. Teaching and learning are good overall and often very good. Teachers show good subject knowledge, have high expectations and good relationships with their pupils. As a result, pupils concentrate well and show interest. The *Key Stage 3 Modern Languages Strategy* is having a positive impact, with the use of starter activities to focus attention and plenaries to recap on learning. Use of individual *Show me* boards is proving particularly effective, as in a Year 7 lesson where pupils drew symbols to show their understanding of likes and dislikes phrases. The amount of French used in the classroom varies. In the best lessons, French is used throughout, which not only develops pupils' listening skills but also provides a consistently fluent and accurate model for pupils to emulate. Lessons are well planned to include a variety of activities and language skills, although the planning does not always take into account the needs of different groups of pupils. Pupils need more opportunities to develop their speaking skills by practising in pairs, and to develop their reading skills by reading for pleasure on a regular basis. Nevertheless, teachers maintain a brisk pace, use time well and use games and *information gap* activities to engage pupils' interest. They make effective use of resources to present and practise new language imaginatively. For example, in a Year 10 lesson with lower attaining boys, use of *Show me* boards, cassettes and a soft ball kept them on task and enabled all to achieve well.
38. The department is well led and managed. This good management leads to a cohesive department that works together well as a team. The head of department monitors teaching and schemes of work have been updated. The department has benefited from staff training and the support of senior management. Improvement since the last inspection is very good. Standards have risen and staffing is now stable, with three specialists, including a native speaker. There is no longer any unsatisfactory teaching and pupils' behaviour and attitudes have improved as a result. Assessment procedures now need further development to raise pupils' awareness of their attainment level and to set targets. Greater use of assessment information to match work to pupils' needs would help to raise achievement further.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The high quality of the schemes of work provides clear guidelines for both specialist and non-specialist teachers, ensuring a consistent drive to raise standards, which are well above average, even higher.
- Assessment procedures, which are an integral component of schemes of work, are motivating pupils and identifying pupil underachievement at an early stage.
- Good teacher/pupil relationships enable pupils to work in a relaxed and productive atmosphere, and pupils attend lessons with a desire to learn.
- There is not enough use of English to explain thought processes within longer solutions.

Commentary

39. Standards of work seen during the inspection were high in Years 9 and 10, reflecting the well above average results at the end of Year 9 in 2003. The achievement of pupils in Years 7 to 9 is very good. The GCSE results, whilst remaining well above average overall, fell in 2003 due to the performance of one class following staffing problems. Nevertheless, the pupils did much better than others in similar schools, and achievement was still very good. The partnership of teachers and teaching assistants provides valuable support for pupils with special educational needs, enabling their achievement to match that of their peers. The Year 10 top set pupils are working at levels seen in classes preparing to take GCSE within the current year. They demonstrated high levels of algebraic competence when using a trial and improvement method to find a solution for $x^4 + 2x = 200$. Pupils in a middle Year 10 set showed good visualisation and mental arithmetic skills when doing oral work related to calculating the volume of prisms. However, their written solutions often lack the correct mathematical structure and the necessary use of English to explain their thought processes. This is a common failing amongst many pupils of all ages who, in their enthusiasm to arrive at the correct solution, forget the advice given to them by their teachers.
40. The comprehensive all-embracing scheme of work introduced by the head of department, following his appointment just over two years ago, provides specialist and non-specialist teachers with very detailed guidelines for the teaching of each unit. Assessment procedures are an integral component of each unit and pupils are highly motivated by classroom displays of test results. These are colour coded according to national curriculum levels and examination grades achieved. The analysis of the extensive test data enables pupils to be tracked and pupil underachievement identified early. Pupils are aware of the level, to a decimal point, at which they are working and this enables them to see progress and to ask: 'How do I improve?' These very effective systems, combined with teaching that is good overall and sometimes very good or excellent, are the main factors leading to pupils' very good achievement.
41. Teachers' planning is assisted considerably by the scheme of work and results in focused lessons where objectives are usually shared verbally with pupils so they know what is expected of them. Most lessons begin with starters, which are used effectively to sharpen pupils recall ability or to concentrate their minds. An example of this was in a Year 8 set 2 lesson where pupils were highly successful in identifying a wide range of geometrical transformations in a short period of time. All teachers use a question and answer technique effectively, listening carefully to pupil responses and ensuring that their answers are valued and built upon. Similarly, homework is marked promptly and any shortcomings are quickly identified, enabling pupils to correct any misunderstandings. Subsequently pupils respond very well and have an obvious desire to learn, producing classrooms that have a relaxed and productive atmosphere within which pupils have the confidence to ask questions to gain further understanding. These improvements, since the previous inspection, result from the head of department's clear vision for the development and enjoyment of mathematics together with his very good leadership and management.

Mathematics across the curriculum

42. The implementation of the *National Numeracy Strategy* within mathematics lessons is providing pupils with the necessary competencies to meet the numerical demands of their other subjects very well. Discussions are continuing, following a training session in numeracy for all subject teachers, between the mathematics department and particularly science and geography with regard to methodology and timing of topics. Other areas have identified, within their schemes of work, specific areas where numeracy should be targeted. For example, a Year 8 history lower set used a scale drawing of Speke Hall, and had to fit in four internal walls having been given the actual dimensions, which they then had to scale down. This was a challenging task but the pupils thought it was fun especially as when they had completed the drawing successfully they discovered two *priests' hides*.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment over the past few years, both at GCSE and in the Year 9 tests, has been well above the national average. In 2003, GCSE attainment was very high when compared to similar schools.
- Lessons are well prepared and are taught with good pace and with a high level of expectation. The quality of teaching is very good overall with some excellent features.
- Achievement is very good because of the enthusiasm of pupils and the quality of teaching.
- Under the excellent leadership of the head of department, teaching and support staff work extremely well together in the interest of raising standards.

Commentary

43. Standards in the current Year 9 are well above average. Year 9 test results over the past four years have been well above the national average. Pupils enter the school with average levels of attainment and achievement is very good. In the 2003 tests the number of pupils reaching Level 7 was commendably high. Pupils in Year 7 soon adapt to the high expectations of the department and are already working to a high standard. By Year 9 some pupils' standards are exceptionally high, for example higher attaining pupils showed that they had a very good knowledge of the structure and function of the kidney and were able to discuss related topics such as dialysis and the hormones that control water loss.
44. Standards at Year 11 are also high. In the 2003 GCSE examination (double award) the proportion of pupils awarded grades A* to C, as well as the proportion awarded A* and A, was well above the national average. Results were in the top five per cent of schools when compared with schools having a similar level of prior attainment, and the achievement of last year's Year 11 was excellent. In the current Year 10 lower attaining pupils, including those with special needs, are making very good progress. Higher attaining pupils in Year 10 are taking three separate sciences in the time in which others take two subjects. This is providing a good challenge and meeting their needs well.
45. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall with some excellent features. Teachers prepare lessons very thoroughly. Objectives are clear, though they are not always shared with pupils at the beginning of the lesson. Teachers' expectations are very high and constant challenge maintains pupils' interest throughout the lesson. This, when accompanied by the enthusiasm shown by the majority of pupils, results in very good progress in lessons. Teachers choose activities very well to make sure they suit the purpose of the lesson, varying the activities to keep interest high. In a very well planned lesson, lower attaining Year 10 pupils responded enthusiastically to practical and oral activities in their revision of heat transfer. High expectations and the use of appropriate language resulted in very good achievement. Teachers

are also very skilled in encouraging pupils to learn for themselves. They set tasks that demand a high level of independence and question in ways that are thought provoking.

Example of outstanding practice

In a Year 10 lesson the teacher's questions were phrased in such a way that the pupils had to really think as scientists during a challenging practical about how acids can be neutralised.

The worksheet outlined the task and safety precautions clearly and chemicals were well prepared and labelled. This meant that once the practical had started the teacher could really concentrate on developing pupils' understanding. The pupils were trying to work out exactly what was happening in each reaction and come up with an equation to describe it. The teacher used his excellent subject knowledge not to give direct prompts but always to question, so that pupils had to really think through their own understanding. One pupil commented that her liquid, which she had been heating, was bubbling. The teacher asked if it was 'bubbling boiling' or bubbling as a gas was produced. "Boiling" said the pupil, so the teacher asked her if it was still bubbling now it had cooled slightly. The pupil saw immediately that a gas must be being produced because it was still bubbling. On another occasion the teacher paused next to a group and asked two simple but very closely focused questions about the colour of a compound and about the periodic table. Immediately, the pupils made links to their knowledge of how metals colour compounds and thus excitedly identified the metal that might be present.

46. Teaching and support staff work very well together under the excellent leadership of the head of department. This is a key strength of the department. There has been a very good response to the previous report. Attainment and achievement have continued to rise. Teaching is now very good overall and more use is made of ICT. Assessment information is used very well to set targets and monitor pupil progress. Pupils' work is marked regularly, often with encouraging comments but these do not always give sufficient information on what is wrong and what needs to be done to improve.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good overall in Years 10 and 11, providing good challenge for all pupils.
- Attitudes of the pupils towards the subject are very good and pupils have developed skills to work independently and collaboratively.
- Pupils in Years 10 to 11 are aware of their achievement through informative individual feedback, but monitoring of achievement in Years 7 to 9 needs to be more rigorous – pupils are not told how well they are doing in terms of national curriculum levels.
- ICT skills are developed well in mathematics and English, and in some aspects of other subjects, but are not used so consistently in other subjects.

Commentary

47. Results and current standards in Year 11 are well above average, as reflected by the number of pupils achieving A*-C grades at GCSE in 2003. In Year 9 they are above average. Pupils' achievement is very good in ICT as standards improve significantly at each stage in the school. Pupils' ICT skills on entry to the school are below average, with pupils from different primary schools having had differing experiences, with varying areas of strength and areas in which they need more practice. Pupils soon become confident users of ICT and they are quickly able to use the school network to save and retrieve their work from their own files.
48. In Years 7 to 9, teaching is good with some very good features. The subject is taught in close co-operation with the English and mathematics departments in these year groups, and this integrated approach is paying dividends in terms of enhancing progress. In Year 7 pupils use the Internet to develop their research skills by gathering information on Shakespeare. They also

use multimedia software to develop their presentational skills in tandem with their speaking skills in English. In both Year 7 and Year 8, the teachers are skilled at setting the scene and then supporting pupils to progress in their individual work. They provide individual challenge for pupils of all abilities to make very good progress. In Year 9 ICT is not taught though direct lessons, and is not planned or assessed as coherently, so progress is not as marked. In Years 10 and 11, teaching is very good. The work is challenging and enables all pupils to develop their ICT skills. In working with spreadsheets, pupils are able to link sheets, carry out appropriate analysis and devise models that can be used for alternative functions.

49. Year 11 pupils speak highly of the support, guidance and time offered by their teachers which enables them to reach their full potential. Gifted and talented pupils are provided with extension work in order to develop their skills, and this allows them to gain the higher GCSE grades. The assessment systems for the GCSE course ensure all pupils are able to complete their work and marking is constructive, giving advice to pupils on how to improve their GCSE coursework grades. Pupils also benefit from well-developed web pages that enable them to seek online help and guidance when using software. Pupils speak highly of the opportunities offered to them by the school. They attend ICT sessions at lunchtimes and at the end of the school day in order to complete homework and to improve upon their coursework. They have access to their files from home using the school's network. Pupils appreciate this facility as it enables them to keep up to date with their work.
50. Leadership and management of ICT are good. The curriculum leader has developed effective systems in Years 10 and 11 that provide support and guidance for pupils. Such systems are underdeveloped in Years 7 to 9. Assessment at the end of Year 9 is rigorous but a more coherent whole-school system of assessment is required to enable all subjects to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding of ICT. If the effective systems developed in Years 10 and 11 were replicated, this would help ensure clear progression from Years 7 to 9.
51. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Teaching and learning have improved overall. The range of applications and resources has increased and the school network has been extended so that more subject areas have access to the network, including the library. The appointment of a technician has ensured that teachers receive very good technical support. This was evident in a Year 7 lesson when pupils were provided with clear instructions when saving their work to a shared network drive.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

52. In English, the Year 7 programme develops pupils' presentational skills by using word processing, publishing and presentational software. Such a programme is needed in Years 8 and 9. In French, pupils use clipart and word processing to enhance their written work and email links are developing, but the Internet could be used more effectively to access the foreign culture. Many subjects now include ICT in their schemes of work but some are unable to teach the programme fully due to lack of easy access to specialist rooms and resources. In geography, for example, pupils use ICT to develop their coursework by undertaking research on the Internet, using databases for fieldwork to arrive at judgements, but day-to-day use in classrooms is restricted. This varied practice means that the use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory with some good features. This is the main reason that provision for ICT overall is not judged better than good.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The recently appointed head of department gives good leadership but there has been insufficient time for her work to impact upon standards.
- Teachers demonstrate good specialist knowledge, which is supporting gradual improvement.
- The range of activities, tasks and methods are frequently insufficient to meet the wide range of abilities.
- Assessment procedures need further extending to check the progress that pupils are making.
- Improved consistency of marking is needed so that all pupils know what they have to do to improve their work.

Commentary

53. Pupils join the school with a wide range of geographical experiences. By the end of Year 9, standards in geography are average. However, given their starting base, pupils are achieving satisfactorily. In Year 9, most pupils have a basic understanding of global warming. This was well exemplified as pupils successfully gave reasons for cutting down parts of the Amazon rain forest but it was only the higher attaining pupils who understood the consequent problems for the Amazon basin and the rest of the world. Pupils' books show effective use of diagrams, charts and maps to illustrate their work. They successfully label, shade, use titles, key and scales. Many pupils are beginning to learn the use of correct technical words like *de-forestation*, *ecosystem* and *hot desert*.
54. Results in the 2003 GCSE examinations were below average and pupils did not do as well as they did in their other subjects. In the current Year 10 and in the work seen of a small sample of present Year 11 pupils, standards are below average and but achievement is satisfactory for the group of pupils taking this optional subject. In Year 10, pupils studying river basins understand that there are different parts of a river's profile. Lower attaining pupils are aware that water travels fastest on the outside of a bend in a river meander although less sure of erosion and deposition. Pupils' GCSE fieldwork about coasts and coastal defences in Holderness and Lulworth Cove is well presented. Many pupils' coursework makes effective use of ICT. However, their work needs to show more analysis and conclusions – it lacks a strong evaluative element. In lesson time, limited access to ICT constrains some of their investigative work that needs to be undertaken.
55. Overall, teaching and learning in Years 7 to 11 are satisfactory. Teachers have a good geographical knowledge and apply it well in their teaching. Their good knowledge enables lessons to be well planned with appropriate objectives, which are shared with pupils and usually checked at the end of the lesson. Frequently, though, in lessons, there is an insufficient range of activities and tasks planned in order to meet the needs of the full range of abilities. The scheme of work does not give sufficient help about ways to present work to different groups of pupils. For instance, use of a wider range of resources and interactive tasks could provide different levels of challenge within the class. The variety of interesting activities is wider for pupils who choose GCSE geography. Written work is checked regularly but the marking is not sufficiently consistent and evaluative to help pupils to know what they need to do to improve further.
56. The recently appointed head of department has given the subject good, clear vision for its development with ways to improve standards. However, at present management is satisfactory. Pupil assessment, monitoring of pupils' work and teaching have yet to make an impact on standards. The lack of leadership and direction, prior to the appointment of the present head of department, had resulted in a decline in standards. Consequently, progress since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory. The present head of department is committed to raising standards in geography.

History

Provision in history is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well overall, particularly well in Years 10 and 11.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are very positive.
- Tasks are well structured and matched to pupils' abilities, so pupils are very productive in lessons.
- Pupils do not always understand how much progress they are making.

Commentary

57. The improvement made since the last inspection has been good. By Year 9, standards are above average, and achievement is good. This is the result of good teaching, which focuses on historical skills, using primary source evidence, and a range of tasks that are well structured to develop learning. Tasks and teaching materials are well matched to the needs of pupils, with different work planned for different sets where pupils work with others of similar ability. A Year 9 lower ability group studying religious persecution in the reign of Elizabeth I was able to show gains in understanding by a very imaginative exercise, which required them to deconstruct a scale plan of a manor house, and show evidence of where Jesuit priests were hidden. In Year 7, which is mixed ability, and in some groups in Years 8 and 9, teaching is often aimed at the middle of the ability range. However, extension work is provided for more able pupils. Less able pupils and those with special educational needs are helped by differentiated tasks and the support given by teaching assistants. The pace of teaching is good, and pupils work productively. Pupils' work is marked regularly, and teachers provide constructive comments. Homework is used well and set regularly.
58. By the end of Year 11, GCSE results show standards are above average. The 2003 results were lower than the previous year, when results were well above average, but achievement was very good. Standards vary from year to year according to the attainment of pupils opting for the subject. Very good teaching in Years 10 and 11 enables pupils to access a wide range of resources, which they can examine critically. A Year 10 class studying the Battle of the Somme used photographic images from a visit they had made to the Ypres battlefield in the previous year, military artefacts, and data to help them to understand why General Haigh took the decision he did. The teachers set high standards. Work produced by pupils studying GCSE shows a high level of commitment and understanding, and is always well presented.
59. Pupils' progress is assessed through the data held by the school, and by regular testing in the subject. The results of assessment are well used to match the content and method of teaching to the ability of teaching groups. However, pupils themselves, though they often know their national curriculum level, do not understand what it is about their performance makes them be at that level. As a result most have no clear indication of what they should be aiming for next, or what they need to do to achieve it. This would be a way of further improving the very good work that is taking place.
60. Leadership is good, and the department is very well managed. The three non-specialists teaching history are well supported in their teaching. They, and the other full time specialist teacher, are given comprehensive guidance and a full range of very effective resources, many of them very innovative. The use of ICT in teaching is encouraged. It was seen to good effect in two lessons, and is being used increasingly.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership over the last year has led to detailed planning and the production of high quality material.
- Sensitivity to major current religious issues is promoted well in lessons, and pupils achieve well in Years 7 to 9.
- Full use is not made of the recorded assessment data, and lessons sometimes do not cater enough for pupils of different abilities.

Commentary

61. In Years 7 to 9, standards are above the expectations of the Wiltshire Agreed Syllabus and pupils achieve well. This success stems from the well-planned and enthusiastic teaching. GCSE (short course) results for pupils taking the examination were above the national average and they did well. However, a significant minority of boys took no examination despite taking the course, so overall standards were average and achievement satisfactory. Pupils develop knowledge and understanding of key religious issues. They are well behaved and show great respect for each other's opinions. This reflects the teachers' sympathetic treatment of sensitive issues such as racism, asylum seekers and attitudes towards war (by Christian and non-Christian religions). This is in accord with the higher levels of the agreed syllabus with its targets of *explaining, exploring, comparing and contrasting... religious belief and practice*. The strengths of this approach were particularly well demonstrated in a Year 8 lesson during the inspection, where pupils were very involved because of the way the teacher questioned them and her clear explanations.
62. Teaching is good overall, but there are some areas for improvement. Although the teaching is sensitive and clear, the teaching style is generally a whole-class approach. This is stimulated by the wish to cover all the syllabus in pressurised circumstances - the head of department teaches about 640 pupils for one lesson each week. Teaching is usually adjusted to pupils of lower ability but work to stretch the more able pupils is limited. This is having most impact in the older year groups and was evident in work seen for Year 11 pupils as well as lessons observed during the inspection. Teaching assistants play a limited role in the subject, present in few of the 26 lessons of religious education. As yet they are not used actively in lessons, but tend to support pupils as needed.
63. The head of department has been in post for just one year and the full impact of her work has yet to come to full fruition. She provides good leadership, based on her knowledge, enthusiasm, concern for pupils and an exceptional eye for detail in planning lessons and in recording assessment, but the latter is not yet used for diagnostic purposes. Her link with line management is supportive and in this first year in the post she has been encouraged to take the initiative in line management meetings. She is introducing the GCSE long course, which has been a major challenge. Display work, in and out of the classroom, is very good: it is relevant, informative and thought-provoking.
64. Since the last inspection, and in line with the school development plan, schemes of work have not only been fully revised, but a great deal of high quality teaching material produced. Resources have increased and all work is regularly marked. Elements of the plan are still to be implemented, namely increasing the scope for independent learning and encouraging the discriminating use of technology by pupils. There has been a large increase in the numbers taking GCSE – accompanied by good achievement for those entered. Improvement has been good.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE results in the subject are well above average and particularly high in resistant materials.
- Very good teaching generates high standards, and is a key factor in pupils' very good achievement and very positive attitudes towards learning.
- Assessment in Years 10 and 11 is very effective, but pupils in Year 7 to 9 are not always fully aware of how well they are doing.
- The curriculum could be improved by more opportunities for pupils to work with textiles and to use computers.

Commentary

65. At the end of Year 9, teachers' assessments show pupils to be attaining above the national average and this is confirmed by inspection evidence. Pupils enter school with variable skills, knowledge and understanding in designing and making and make good progress, achieving well by the end of Year 9. This is because good teaching develops pupils' understanding of the principles and processes of designing well. Lessons are well organised, have clear objectives and there is a high expectation of quality outcomes from all pupils. However, in Years 7-9 pupils do not always fully know and understand what national curriculum levels they have achieved or are working towards. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as do others.
66. GCSE results in all technology subjects are well above average and have been so over the past few years. A*/A grades together with A*-C grades are particularly high in resistant materials. By the end of Year 11 standards are well above average and this represents very good achievement overall. Literacy, presentation and graphical communication skills are exceptionally good. Pupils research their work well using the Internet or CD-ROMs and there is a very good balance between computer-generated graphics and freehand drawing. Because of very good teaching, pupils show a very positive attitude towards learning and good independent learning skills. Clear constructive comments inform pupils of what they need to do to improve. A good feature is a chart displayed on the teaching room wall, showing pupils their grades and progress against each key objective in the examination syllabus. Pupils claim that this facility is very effective in motivating them towards higher achievement. Examples of high standards of work are used very effectively to guide and support their work.
67. Leadership and management are very good and have enabled good improvement since the previous inspection. A good opportunity to work in a broad range of materials is provided but pupils' experience of working with textiles as an example of compliant materials is limited. Although the use of computers has improved in general, a lack of resources in the area limits further developments, both in the use of computers generally within the design area and also in programming a computer to manufacture a product.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design and music were inspected and are reported in full below. Drama was sampled.

68. Each pupil in Years 7 to 9 has one lesson of **drama** a week, and it is a GCSE option. In 2003 GCSE results were well above average, and this has been a trend in the last few years. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the subject, and it makes a good contribution to their personal development. In two lessons seen, pupils learnt well because the teacher planned the time well, and her specialist subject knowledge enabled her to explain and challenge them effectively. There are very good activities to enrich the drama curriculum. A Year 7 drama club was well attended and much enjoyed by participants during the week of the inspection. The head of department is providing very good subject leadership, for example devising her own descriptions of the standards the pupils should reach in order to make her assessment more rigorous.

Art and Design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results in GCSE examinations are significantly above the national average.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good; lessons are well planned with good integration of theory and practical work.
- The use of sketchbooks for research and development in Years 10 and 11 is good.
- Pupils' insufficient use of ICT and ceramics limits media experience in Years 7 to 9.
- Development of assessment procedures in Years 7 to 9 relating to levels would further improve the pupils' learning.

Commentary

69. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher grades A* - C in GCSE examinations in 2003 was well above the national average. Fifty per cent of girls achieved A* or A grades. The trends of high attainment in recent years have been maintained in GCSE examinations. The single lesson seen with pupils in Year 11 before they started their examinations confirmed that standards remain high. Middle and higher attaining pupils are able to show some influence of important movements in art and design or of particular artists. Sketchbooks are annotated and used most effectively and technical language develops well. Pupils demonstrate personal interests, ideas and responses to their own and other cultures through the work they produce. Pupils achieve very well over the two-year GCSE course. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well, benefiting from individual attention.
70. Standards in the current Year 9 are above average. This represents good achievement for many pupils in relation to when they started at the school in Year 7, including those pupils with special educational needs. These standards are reached because pupils are supported well in classrooms and apply themselves purposefully. Pupils of all abilities demonstrate increasingly good knowledge and understanding and are able to use line, tone and texture effectively in their drawings.
71. The quality of teaching and learning overall is good, and very good in Years 10 and 11. A strong feature of the most effective teaching is very sharp teacher questioning, which ensures the participation of all pupils. When pupils were actively engaged in debate about their work and clear about their immediate learning objectives, their responses were very positive. Where tasks were less challenging or lacking in pace, some pupils became restless. The full potential of ICT as a learning aid has not yet been fully developed. Higher attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11 are sufficiently challenged to achieve their full potential. In Years 7 to 9, pupils would learn better if learning objectives based on national expectations were shared with them. Such objectives would also help end-of-year assessments to be more realistic. Art and design is taught as a module to each pupil rather than taught continuously through the year, because of time constraints. This restricts the range of materials used and this has an adverse effect on teaching and learning. For example, insufficient use is made of working with clay for three-dimensional study.
72. The leadership and management of art and design are good. Improvement since the last inspection has been good, most notably in the use of sketchbooks for research in all years. Extra-curricular activities and visits to galleries and museums have a positive effect upon the quality and range of pupils' work. Departmental meetings are used well to share ideas and good practice.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the joint heads of department is achieving significant improvements.
- The range and extent of instrumental teaching are very good.
- GCSE results represent very good achievement.
- The development of core skills and subject knowledge needs more attention and consolidation in Years 7 to 9.
- Assessment procedures do not provide a sufficiently secure indication of attainment at the end of Year 9.

Commentary

One of the two teachers of music was ill during the inspection, so the amount of teaching observed was limited. It was supplemented by observations of standards and discussions with small groups of pupils, and sufficient evidence was gathered to make an overall provision judgement.

73. Teacher assessments for Year 9 indicate that standards are well above average, but the evidence from the inspection is that, overall, pupils perform in line with national expectations. This represents satisfactory achievement. Achievement at GCSE level is very good. Results are well above the national average and the numbers opting for the course have increased steadily. In Year 7 pupils work confidently with sounds, but need to achieve more control and refinement in the handling of ideas so as to produce compositions that are more focused on the effect or structure intended. In Year 9, pupils develop ensemble skills and experience the challenge of improvisation – though in some instances group work is not as productive as it should be.
74. The department has a strongly inclusive ethos. All groups have access to the music curriculum with girls and boys responding and achieving equally well overall. Schemes of work are broadly in line with national curriculum requirements, though singing and pupils' experience of music from the western classical tradition are underdeveloped. Opportunities for ICT work in the subject have now been identified, but their implementation is still in the early stages.
75. Assessment of pupils' work takes place, but the mechanisms for providing a secure basis for teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 and the informing of pupils of their attainment and targets for improvement need greater refinement.
76. Although relatively few lessons could be observed, the standard of teaching is good overall. Positive pupil/teacher relationships are a notable feature in lessons and the response of most pupils to the subject is good. Behaviour is generally orderly and well controlled. Lessons are thoughtfully planned and learning is effectively reviewed, but the subject knowledge and practical skills of pupils are not as well developed as they could be. These strands need to be reinforced regularly.
77. The provision for instrumental tuition is a strength of the department's work. The number of pupils involved is well above average for the size of the school and a wide range of instruments is available. This provision underpins the out-of-class ensemble playing, which is an increasingly important part of the corporate life of the school.
78. Leadership and management are strong and effective. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection in resources, curriculum planning and standards. Responsibilities are divided between the two members of the department. This unusual situation is working well – the complementary strengths of the staff enrich the learning and experience of pupils. Music is a successful department. There is a real sense of vision and forward momentum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieved well in last year's GCSE examinations.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of their subject; they apply it well in their teaching, but more time in lessons needs to be spent on skill acquisition and development.
- The good extra-curricular programme provides opportunities for all pupils to extend their learning.
- Regular, consistent and focused observation of teaching is needed to share good practice; the variety of activities used can be insufficient to meet the needs of the wide range of abilities in the class.
- Assessment procedures need further extending to check the progress that pupils are making.
- Limitations of the indoor accommodation restrict the breadth of the physical education programme.

Commentary

79. Pupils arrive at school with broadly average standards in physical education. By Year 9 pupils' standards are average; all pupils of all abilities achieve satisfactorily over the first three years at school. Teacher assessments of standards of Year 9 last year were higher than the evidence of the inspection showed. Pupils start to show some competence in rugby, hockey, football and netball; they successfully learn many of the basic skills required for playing these activities. In hockey, most pupils successfully make a push pass over a distance of about eight metres. In rugby the concept of moving forward and passing the ball back is understood but many Year 9 pupils find it difficult to apply it in a game. Basic skills need to be progressively developed so that they can be more effectively used in games.
80. In Year 10, current pupils are achieving well in the core physical education programme. This was well exemplified in a Year 10 rugby lesson where pupils applied the skill of running forward with the ball, tackling in both open and confined situations, mauling and rucking. GCSE pupils are well motivated and build successfully on their core physical education programme. The current standards of the small group of Year 10 GCSE pupils are well above average; they are achieving well. Results in the 2003 GCSE examinations were well above average with most pupils gaining better grades than expected from their prior attainment.
81. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory, but in Years 10 and 11 they are good. Pupils benefit from knowledgeable teachers; their subject knowledge helps the pupils to develop a depth of understanding in the subject that is particularly helpful for the older year groups. For instance, in a Year 10 rugby lesson pupils learned to discriminate when a maul ends and a ruck starts. Lesson planning is effective and objectives are set and shared with pupils. Teachers usually have good expectations of behaviour and performance. This is well reflected in good levels of participation in extra-curricular sport by pupils, standards of dress and behaviour. However, there were examples where immature pupil behaviour constrained learning in a Year 9 rugby lesson. In lessons teachers need to use a wider range of activities and teaching methods to meet the needs of all abilities of pupils. More time needs to be spent on skill acquisition and particularly skill development into competitive situations, so that all pupils have improved skills, which they can use successfully in different games.
82. Overall leadership and management of the department are satisfactory. Good teamwork, organisation and documentation enable the department to run smoothly. The head of department shows a clear understanding of the direction of development needed, but regular and systematic observation of teaching is needed to share and develop good practice. The department development plan identifies appropriate targets but does not show costings in time and money; nor does it use pupil outcomes as a measurement of success. Greater

consistency in GCSE marking and refinement of assessment procedures will enable pupils to be more aware of the progress they are making and support their improvement. Good improvements have been made since the previous inspection, especially in examination results between 2002 and 2003. Accommodation and facilities for physical education are unsatisfactory, however. The lack of a large indoor space severely restricts curriculum breadth and the resulting necessity to use outside areas even in less clement weather has a negative impact upon teaching and learning.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

The school does not offer these courses, so there is no report in this section.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship was inspected in full and is reported below. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) was sampled.

83. There is an appropriate planned programme for **PSHE**, which is partly taught through discrete lessons and partly through other subjects. Two lessons were seen during the inspection; one was judged good and one very good. In one lesson, with Year 7, the topic of bullying was particularly well explored, and the discussion very well managed. In a Year 9 lesson the tutor followed up an assembly well, helping pupils to gain a mature understanding of how subject choices should be made ready for Year 10.

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Cross-curricular development and links with careers and community provision are good.
- Citizenship is led and managed well; there is a clear vision of future development.
- There is a need for monitoring and training to ensure that all teachers feel confident in teaching citizenship.
- Assessment procedures are not fully developed.

Commentary

84. Standards are average in Years 9 and 11. Pupils have satisfactory levels of knowledge about becoming informed citizens and they are developing good skills of enquiry and communication. They are achieving appropriately.
85. In Year 9, individual higher attaining pupils are enthusiastic and take real interest in the citizenship-related aspects of lessons and in the media. They understand about complex environmental issues such as the possible effect of global warming on the Gulf Stream and the impact of tourism in Africa. Pupils questioned were very clear about our ethical responsibilities, for example in safeguarding the environment and in responsibility toward animals. In Year 11 pupils are able to discuss a range of issues, including the reasons for tension in Northern Ireland, in a mature way and higher attaining pupils show an impressive level of knowledge about current affairs such as the war in Iraq and its consequences.
86. Pupils have some understanding of what is meant by democracy and human rights. These topics are covered in humanities lessons and pupils have many opportunities for debates, discussions and role-play in English and drama. The school provides very clear messages and

models for them concerning their rights and duties in the wider world. It contributes to a range of charities and local and wider community links are good. Each class has representatives who meet and discuss issues like the provision of water fountains. Senior pupils volunteer as prefects and are then elected. This enables pupils to be active in improving the life of the school while providing a model of the democratic process.

87. Teaching is satisfactory. Planning shows that aspects of citizenship should be taught in all subjects and also planned as part of specific lessons that also provide PSHE and careers education. There is a clear focus on developing communication skills, particularly through discussion. In the majority of lessons observed planning was effective but in some, teachers were not well prepared and resources were not used well. Learning is sound because of the range of activities in lessons and the contribution from assemblies and tutor periods. Teachers usually have good knowledge, manage pupils well and encourage lively debates. Most teachers are confident in planning and teaching citizenship although others would benefit from extra training, support and guidance.
88. Leadership and management are good and the citizenship programme is making a valuable contribution to raising standards in all aspects of school life. The library has a range of useful books and suitable resources are available for use in class. Assessment procedures are being developed but assessment, recording and reporting procedures are not fully in place.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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