

INSPECTION REPORT

THE BROOKSBANK SCHOOL

Elland, West Yorkshire

LEA area: Calderdale

Unique reference number: 107579

Headteacher: Mrs J Watson

Reporting inspector: Reverend E Milroy
7602

Dates of inspection: 11th-15th September 2000

Inspection number: 223849

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 to 19

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Victoria Road
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Councillor Lord Shutt OBE

Date of previous inspection: 22nd January 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Reverend E Milroy 7602	Registered inspector		What sort of school is it?
			School's results and achievements
			How well are pupils/students taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
			What should the school do to improve further?
Mr W P Walker 19366	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its' pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr G W Leach 19056	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils/students?
		English as an additional language	
Mr J C Collinson 15078	Team inspector	Mathematics	
Mr J A Whitehall 27984	Team inspector	Science	
Mrs S Innes 22524	Team inspector	Information technology	
		Design and technology	
Mr P Hanafin 31693	Team inspector	Art and design	

Mrs H Feasey 30215	Team inspector	Geography	
Mrs G Murray 30794	Team inspector	History	
Mr J F Connor 28178	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages	
		Sixth form	
Mrs S Stanley 30128	Team inspector	Music	
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Mr B McCann 31821	Team inspector	Physical education	
Mrs P Rourke 31008	Team inspector	Religious education	
		Special educational needs	

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Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Brooksbank School is a large 11-18 mixed comprehensive school situated near to the old town of Elland not far from the centre of Halifax. Pupil numbers have increased from 1344 at the time of the last inspection to 1407. Years seven and eight have 9 forms of entry, Years 9, 10 and 11 each have 8 forms of entry. There are now 183 students in the sixth form. Virtually all pupils are of white, British heritage. A small number of pupils (4.5 %) are of Pakistani heritage, with one or two pupils from other ethnic groups. Seventy three pupils have English as an additional language. The number of pupils who take free school meals is about average. The number of pupils with special educational needs is about average. The Local Educational Authority (LEA) has made statements with respect to 29 pupils in the current years in school. The LEA supports a mixed system with two grammar schools near to the school receiving most of the pupils of higher attainment. The school receives fewer high attaining pupils than in a fully balanced comprehensive intake. In recent years the school has drawn in more pupils from central Elland and Halifax, who experience greater extremes of social deprivation. Overall attainment on entry is below average. The school has relinquished its Grant Maintained status and is now a Foundation School under the provisions of the Local Educational Authority. The school is well accommodated in a pleasant residential area beside a busy main road. Brooksbank is a popular and oversubscribed school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is very effective: it has many more strengths than weaknesses and provides well for the needs of all its pupils including those of high and low attainment. The quality of teaching is good, often very good. Pupils leave school with attainments close to the average. The school has maintained the standards achieved at the last inspection with a trend of improvement in line with national trends. Recent changes in accommodation provide very good contexts in which pupils can learn. The school is aware of its strengths and weaknesses and manages its resources well to achieve improvement. Pupils are well cared for. They respond well to school. Parents like the school and work well to support it. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Although pupils enter with below average attainments, results in tests and examinations are close to the national average by the time they leave. The school adds value to pupils' education.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Those pupils who have English as an additional language are well supported and achieve well.
- The school provides a good, broad curriculum with many choices including vocational subjects at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. It has a good and very extensive range of extra-curricular activities at all key stages.
- Teaching is good, often very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and manage pupils very skilfully. There is a good team spirit among staff. The monitoring of teaching has a positive impact on standards.
- The school provides very good opportunities for the social and cultural development of pupils.
- Support for individual students and the monitoring of individual progress is good. It helps pupils and students to improve and is well appreciated by them.
- Leadership is excellent. The school has a skilled and supportive governing body.
- Accommodation, its cleanliness and maintenance are very good.
- The school's procedures to attain best value are very well informed, stringent, and very good.

What could be improved

- In subjects across the curriculum there is insufficient use of information technology.
- There is insufficient time for religious education at Key Stage 4 and none in the sixth form.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual development is limited. There is no daily Act of Collective Worship for all pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1996. In the face of expanding grammar school places locally it has maintained its standards and in some cases improved them. The quality of teaching has improved. The unsatisfactory provision for pupils with special educational needs is now very good. The school now complies with requirements for recording of attendance procedures. Its exclusion policy and procedures and the implementation of the Code of Practice on special educational needs meet requirements. There has been no progress on the requirement to provide religious education in the sixth form and there is still no compliance with the requirement for a daily Act of Collective Worship. Overall progress is good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 16 and 18 year olds based on average point scores in GCSE and A-level/AS-level examinations.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
GCSE examinations	C	C	C	C
A-levels/AS-levels	C	D	B	

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

At Key Stage 3 there has been an improvement in the national test results in English, mathematics and science in line with the national trend since 1996. Attainments in mathematics are higher than in the other two subjects. Pupils' standards are average in all other subjects by the end of the key stage except in art where they are below and in design and technology where they are above.

The school has maintained its standards at GCSE. Overall point scores for both boys and girls are close to the national average. In the 1999 examinations the proportion of pupils gaining a grade 'C' or better in English, mathematics and science was close to the national average for all three subjects. The school sets challenging targets. Work seen during the inspection shows that the school is making good progress towards these targets. Results for candidates entered for less than two GCE A-levels or AS equivalent are above the national average in terms of points scores. Those entered for more than two A-levels or AS equivalent achieve results close to the national average.

At Key Stage 3 pupils of all capabilities build on their prior attainment to achieve at least satisfactory progress. In English, mathematics, design and technology, geography, history, music and religious education pupils achieve better than expected and in other subjects progress is satisfactory. Key Stage 4 pupils achieve satisfactorily in art, geography, information technology and physical education, and above expectation in English, mathematics, science, design and technology and history. In music, the achievements are well above expectations. In religious education pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory as they do not receive enough teaching time to build up their knowledge, skills and understanding in depth. In modern languages staffing difficulties have hindered progress. In addition some teaching time is not used effectively. Students progress well on their sixth form courses. They build on their earlier attainment well in English, mathematics, science design and technology and history. Achievement is satisfactory in art and geography and very good in music. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress in achieving the targets set for them in their subjects at both key stages and in the sixth form. Those pupils and students who have English as an additional language achieve well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils almost without exception have positive attitudes. They co-operate in lessons, are generally attentive and committed. They often show enjoyment. Pupils speak with appreciation of the opportunities provided for them. Generally they are keen and enthusiastic, ready to take part and learn diligently.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good. On the rare occasions when it threatens to be difficult teachers manage it very skilfully. Generally pupils conduct themselves sensibly and with thought for their friends and teachers. Behaviour in and around school is mature and responsible.
Personal development and relationships	Very good relationships between pupils and with their teachers make for a positive learning context. Pupils work well together and cooperate effectively as partners, group or team members.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. Levels of unauthorised absence are very low.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 11-14 years	aged 14-16 years	aged over 16 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Very good

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

The quality of teaching is good and a strength of the school. Of the 209 lessons inspected the teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in ninety eight per cent and good or better in seventy three per cent. There is a high proportion of very good teaching. Nearly one in four lessons had this quality. The highest proportions of very good teaching were seen in Key Stage 3 lessons and in the sixth form. In the core subjects of English mathematics and science teaching is predominantly good. The largest proportions of very good teaching were seen in classical studies, design and technology, music and vocational subjects (health and social care). The very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching occurred mainly in geography in Key Stage 3. Teaching has improved since the last inspection. There is good teaching in all subjects. Particular strengths are seen in teachers' very good subject knowledge, their skilled management of pupils and the effective planning of lessons. Lessons contain a variety of logically sequenced and well paced activities to interest the pupils. The needs of different groups of pupils including those with special educational needs are equally well met. The school gives good attention to improving literacy and numeracy and this is proving effective in raising standards. There are few significant weaknesses in teaching. The main weakness is the lack of information and communication technology used in subject teaching. Occasionally in lessons teachers spend too long on exposition so that pupils become bored and are not sufficiently active or able to take responsibility for their own learning. All major aspects of learning are at least satisfactory. Pupils acquire new knowledge skills and understanding steadily throughout their time in school. The regular review of progress, assessment and the way pupils set targets for further work enhances learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A good, broad and balanced curriculum is provided at both key stages and in the sixth form. Wide opportunities are provided which include vocational and work-related courses at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. There is not enough time for religious education in Key Stage 4 and none is provided in the sixth form. The extensive provision of extra-curricular activities is a strength.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision is made. Pupils are taught and supported well. Pupils learning targets are clear and subject teachers modify them to suit the needs of subject learning. Teachers are well informed about their needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good support and monitoring of progress. Pupils achieve well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision for social and cultural development through a wide range of experiences and knowledge to stimulate understanding. Provision for moral development is good but provision for spiritual development is unsatisfactory. Many opportunities are missed. The requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship is not met.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are very well cared for. Home school liaison is very good. Staff have a good understanding of pupils' needs and social circumstances. Procedures for monitoring behaviour and progress are good.

The school has good links with parents and monitors attendance at parents' meetings to ensure good contact is retained. The home-school liaison coordinator acts swiftly to re-establish contact if there are problems such as decline in attendance or family difficulty. Parents are well informed about their children's progress and appreciate the personal comments which teachers make. The Brooksbank Association raises substantial sums to support the school. Links with the wider community are very good and a strength of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school are very good and give clear educational direction. Pastoral leadership is strong and effective. Management of all areas including subject departments is good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very active and effective and have piloted the school skilfully through its transition from Grant Maintained to Foundation status. The skilled governing body knows the school's strengths and weaknesses well and supports it very effectively. Statutory requirements are fulfilled with the exceptions of the provision of religious education in the sixth form and a daily Act of Collective Worship.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is self-aware and shows the weaknesses identified as points for action in the school development plan. Teaching and management are monitored and good practice shared.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. There is a strong link between educational priorities identified and decisions on spending.

The school has sufficient well qualified teaching and support staff to deliver the curriculum. Staff development and induction procedures are very good. The school has benefited from capital projects set in place during its Grant Maintained period. Accommodation is good and very well maintained. Resources are in good supply.

The school applies principles of Best Value very effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel their children are well taught and making good progress. • The school expects pupils to work hard. • The school offers good extra-curricular activities. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They would like more homework.

Inspectors agree with the positive comments of parents. The amount of homework provided is satisfactory although not all teachers comply with the homework timetable. There was a very small response rate to the questionnaire and thirty one parents attended the parents evening. Almost all the comments made universally supported the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. At entry to the school pupils' standards are below average. By the end of Key stage 3 at the age of 14 standards are close to the national average in the core subjects of English and science and above in mathematics. By the end of Key Stage 4 examination standards are close to the national average. Standards in the sixth form are generally above the national average. Since the last inspection standards have been at least maintained. Those achieved by pupils with special educational needs are much improved on the basis of better provision. Pupils with English as a second language succeed well. Overall standards are improving in line with the national trend. The school has set itself realistic but challenging targets. Inspection evidence shows that it is well placed to achieve them.
2. In English in 1999 pupils achieved results in the Key Stage 3 tests for the expected level five (5) or above at the national average, and for level six (6) or above slightly below but close to national figures. Overall results are average when compared with those from similar schools. These test results in English have improved since the last inspection in line with national trends. Girls perform better than boys in common with the national picture. The gap between boys' and girls' attainments, however, is much less than that usually seen. GCSE results are close to the national average. More pupils are entered for English Literature than in most schools and results are below the national average. The results in drama, while below the national average for grades A*-C were above average for grades A*-G. This reflects the lower prior attainment of pupils opting for the subject. Students who take the subject in the sixth form achieve results in line with the national averages in a range of courses. From time to time small groups of pupils take Theatre studies. In 1998, the latest year for which figures were available, students gained average results.
3. In 1999 standards of attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 3 judged by national tests were above the national average for the expected level 5 or above and well above those of comparable schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels of 6 or above was close to the national average and above those achieved by similar schools. There is little difference between the attainments of boys and girls. Inspection confirms rising standards at this key stage as the impact of numeracy initiatives is promoting better achievement. Attainment overall is above average and a study of the three year trend shows results well above those for similar schools. GCSE results were close to the national average in 1999 and for the two previous years. Overall results at A-level have been above the national average from 1997-1999.
4. In science, in the 1999 Key Stage 3 national tests pupils attained close to the average for the expected level 5 or above, but well below average for the proportions attaining level 6 or higher. When compared with similar schools pupils' test results are average. Overall GCSE results were close to the national average in 1999: high attaining pupils who took three separate sciences achieved results well above the national average. The majority of pupils who take the double science award achieved

below average results but the course is suited to their needs. Pupils with more learning difficulties are able to enter for Certificated Science Awards. They pass their examinations and gain the certificates. Results at A-level in 1999 were above the national average overall although standards were better in chemistry and physics than in biology. Results have improved since the last inspection.

5. In art, standards are particularly low at entry and below nationally expected standards at the end of Key Stage 3 in spite of the satisfactory progress which pupils make and their new achievements in skills and understanding in the Years 7-9. Results in GCSE at the end of Key Stage 4 have declined since the last report. To some extent this reflects the low prior attainment of the groups opting for the subject. However there are aspects of teaching which require improvement to boost attainment. These are the adoption of a wider range of teaching styles and better pace to release pupils imagination and generate excitement; clear description of learning objectives for a lesson rather than a description of content; and closer links with partner primary schools and other secondary schools to gain a better picture of national standards and the capabilities of pupils. Of the small 1999 A-level group all but one of the five students achieved grades A-E. This represents an eighty per cent pass rate.
6. In design and technology, pupils enter with below average practical skills but by the end of Key Stage 3 pupils have above average attainments in the subject as a result of very good teaching. Attainments in GCSE in 1999 were above average. At A-level students attained examination results which matched the national average. Very good use of homework and carefully matched challenges for pupils lift the levels of attainment of all pupils. Pupils are very keen to learn and acquire new skills at a good pace. They learn effectively how to use computers in design.
7. Standards attained by the end of Key Stage 3 in geography are at the national expectations as shown by teachers' national curriculum assessments. Teachers' assessments are confirmed by inspection evidence, from analysis of pupils' work and the satisfactory standards seen in lessons. Pupils cover much ground in acquiring geographical skills and in understanding geographical patterns and interactions. Progress is good at this key stage. There has, however, been an overall decline in results at GCSE since the last inspection. Fewer pupils gain grades A*-C than the national average, although the proportion gaining A*-G grades is at the national average. Boys' performance is considerably lower than that of girls. Overall results by the end of Key Stage 4 reflect the fact that the subject is being chosen by more pupils of lower prior attainment than previously. In spite of the high quality training given by their teachers many pupils have difficulty in collecting and handling data. The small number of pupils who take the subject at A-level means that national comparisons are difficult. Over the past two years all students have gained grades A-E, although there have been few higher grades.
8. Teachers' national curriculum assessments show that most pupils attain average standards in history at the end of Key Stage 3 on the basis of good progress from entry. Results in GCSE were below average in 1999, but had improved in 1998. The general picture is one of just below average attainment although standards in lessons are average and overall progress is satisfactory. Teachers have recognised the need to boost pupils' general literacy skills, to help them express their ideas more accurately. The initiatives taken promise well in promoting higher standards. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language

achieve at a good standard and in line with their peers. The small groups who have taken A-level (GCE Advanced Level) over the past two years have achieved average results. Inspection evidence confirms these judgements.

9. Standards in information technology match the national averages by the end of Key Stage 3, 4 and at the end of the sixth form respectively. There have been fluctuations in standards over the past three years due to weaknesses in provision, now being remedied. No pupils have taken the subject at GCSE level. At the end of the sixth form course students reach average standards in A-levels and in GNVQ Intermediate and Advanced levels. Given the levels of experience and use of ICT in subjects across the curriculum progress is satisfactory.
10. In modern languages, overall standards are below the national average. Teachers' National Curriculum assessments at the end of Key Stage 3 show that pupils are close to the nationally expected levels of attainment but just below. By the end of Key Stage 4, in the 1999 examinations at GCSE standards were well below national averages. This fallback can in part be explained by the considerable staffing difficulties which the school has experienced which have now eased. Teaching overall is better at Key Stage 3. At Key Stage 4 some lessons lack pace and the repetitive nature of curriculum topics built into the requirements, demotivates pupils to some extent. In 1999, sixth form students all gained a pass grade in A-level German and 80 per cent of the students achieved similar grades in French.
11. In music, where girls do better than boys, standards are at the national average by the end of Key Stage 3. In the 1999 GCSE examinations, the small numbers of pupils who took the subject attained results close to the national average. There were no candidates for music at A-level in 1999. Of the three students at A-level in 1998 all achieved pass grades.
12. Pupils in physical education achieve national expectations by the end of Key Stage 3. Those who take GCSE gain below average results reflecting the difficulties pupils have with theoretical aspects of the course. Practical skills are up to expectation for all pupils by the end of Key Stage 4. Four of the five students who studied sports studies for A-level in 1999 achieved pass grades, although none at the higher levels of A-C.
13. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils attain in line with national expectations in religious education. Their achievements and progress are satisfactory. They acquire a sound understanding of Christianity and a good introduction to other faiths. However, at Key Stage 4 attainment is below expectations and progress unsatisfactory. A good number of pupils, about half, gain grades A*-C grades in the GCSE short course but no national comparisons are available. There is not enough time to cover the full GCSE course in depth and detail, nor to cover the requirements of the Local Education Authority's Agreed Syllabus. In addition, time-tabling arrangements mean that some pupils have one lesson per week in half-term blocks which alternate with another subject. This arrangement makes it difficult for pupils to make continuous and consistent progress and to build up their knowledge and experience.

Literacy

14. The school has shown proper concern for the development of higher standards of pupils' literacy and has established a literacy development committee of senior staff to oversee strategies. Initiatives include whole-staff training; liaison with contributory primary schools; some surveys of the reading demands made by subject materials; the display of keyword lists and the use of book boxes in tutor time in Years 7 and 8 to promote reading. The well-managed school library plays an important part in encouraging pupils to read. Literacy development features in departmental schemes of work except in physical education. Communication skills are included effectively in the programme for personal and social education. Standards of speaking and listening are generally good across the school. Pupils mostly listen attentively and are articulate in question and answer sessions and group work. In some subjects like design and technology, art and drama pupils are encouraged to talk about their work and clarify their thinking. Reading is limited in most subjects other than English to textbooks and worksheets but opportunities are offered, for example, in religious education, geography, classical studies and languages for reading aloud. In music there is an emphasis upon diction in singing. There is a desire to improve the quality of writing, which, in history, for example, is seen to be preventing the achievement of higher grades at examination. Teachers are aware of their responsibility; in lessons attention is paid to the development and use of subject-specific vocabulary and emphasis is placed upon its correct spelling. Keyword lists are displayed in classrooms and also, in mathematics, for example, in pupils' books. Apart from English, writing opportunities are generally formal and factual; notes, short answers, accounts of processes. Opportunities are offered for longer and empathetic writing in geography and religious education however. Some help is given to pupils to structure their writing with the provision of task sheets which help pupils to organise and set out their work coherently, for example, in design and technology. Pupils of low levels of prior attainment have good support both in the classroom and in additional sessions away from the main class for intensive literacy development. These measures are raising standards.

English as an additional language

15. Provision for the 73 pupils on the school roll who have English as an additional language (EAL) is good and promotes high standards. The school receives specific funding to staff their teaching and support. Under the management of the school's coordinator for special educational needs (SENCO) this has been utilised to provide literacy development for pupils with fundamental language difficulties and support for pupils who can function at a basic language level but need assistance to improve. A combination of support in the classroom and withdrawal for individual teaching enables EAL pupils to make progress. Unfortunately at present two posts, for a teacher and a classroom assistant, are vacant but it is anticipated that they will soon be filled.
16. EAL pupils are identified on entry to the school through the SENCO's programme of assessment and testing, though most will have been previously identified through the SENCO's visits to primary schools. Their needs are assessed and if they are seen to be acute they are placed on the register of pupils with special educational needs. At present only 8 EAL pupils are on the register in Years 8 to 13. The intake of EAL pupils has changed in recent years, with pupils entering the school with increasingly less acute language difficulties as a result of work done in primary schools to

improve language development. Some EAL pupils do, however, need help to become fully integrated into the school community and this is sensitively provided by learning support assistants.

17. Work has been done with subject departments to raise awareness of the particular needs of EAL pupils and there is some provision of appropriate support materials, particularly in GNVQ courses. The progress of EAL pupils is carefully monitored and good records are kept. Where necessary, their parents are given bilingual support at parents' evenings and reviews, usually by family members.
18. The standards of attainment of EAL pupils are satisfactory and commensurate with those of their peers. In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 3 in 1999, all EAL pupils achieved level 4 or above and two thirds achieved level 5 or above in line with school and national averages. In GCSE all EAL pupils entered achieved 5 grades A*-G or more and two thirds achieved A*-C, above both school and national averages.

Special Educational Needs

19. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress in all subjects at Key Stages 3 and 4 and in the sixth form. Their learning is guided by detailed individual education plans and they are helped in many classes by support from a large team of learning support assistants. Their progress is closely monitored by teachers in the special needs department and they work to targets as do their peers. The development of Foundation level GNVQs in Key Stage 4 is helping to motivate very effectively some pupils who find learning and good attendance at school particularly difficult. Pupils on the special needs register for whom English is an additional language make progress in line with their peers as they are fully integrated into the life of the school and their work in class is normally supported by two specialist staff. Gifted and talented pupils are helped to make good progress through setting in some subjects, the provision of three separate sciences in Key Stage 4 and enrichment activities in many subjects.
20. The school has a project to try to improve the achievements of boys led by the SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) and there is evidence of some success. The gap between boys' and girls' attainments at GCSE is narrowing in several subjects without depressing the progress of girls.

Numeracy

21. Standards in numeracy in the curriculum as a whole reflect standards in mathematics and are in line with national averages. Standards of numeracy are rising and show the positive impact of the national numeracy strategy. In mathematics lessons, particularly in Key Stage 3, attainment is improving through the influence of the national numeracy strategy. In most mathematics lessons attention is given to number and calculation skills through brief introductory activities which include practice in mental calculation and the use of games and puzzles. The school has a Policy Group leading developments in numeracy across the curriculum, and time is given to numeracy once a week in Year 7 form periods. There are good examples of encouragement of the use of numerical skills in other subjects. For example, in geography the use and interpretation of graphs is included in an activity on

population distribution and change. In science, the use of formulae in density, pressure and kinetic energy provides opportunity for numerical and algebraic activities. In design technology, the importance of accuracy in measurement is recognised in the use of materials and in food technology.

Information and communication technology

22. Not enough provision is made in most subjects to involve information and communications technology (ICT), so that skills and understanding are just average and behind those achieved in many schools. There is evidence especially in English, science and design and technology, where the school is spearheading its developments, that pupils are already increasing their competence, for example, in word processing, the use of spreadsheets and the use of computers for research and study. The uneven provision of equipment has hindered the development and use of the skills in many other curriculum areas, as have the different levels of confidence and skill of teachers of other subjects.
23. Pupils, overall, achieve well across the key stages and in most subjects make good progress. They are helped especially by the schools' initiatives in literacy and numeracy to boost their progress and increase their confidence. Pupils' skills of analysis are well promoted by their work in modern foreign language and the good experiences offered through participation in classical studies. Written work in science is of a good quality. Pupils take a pride in their work. A notable achievement is the good presentation of work from pupils with special educational needs. Very little is incomplete and most manage their assigned tasks well. In art some powerful pieces of work on the Berlin wall make a strong contribution to pupils' personal understanding of the response of the human spirit in adversity. In design and technology pupils build their knowledge of materials successfully so that they know how to use them. Achievements in drawing skills help pupils to express their ideas clearly. Pupils build rapidly on their skills in geography at Key Stage 3. They enjoy discovering and using specialist vocabulary and technical terms in many subjects. In history, pupils acquire skills to recognise bias and to see beyond obvious 'facts'. In information technology lessons pupils acquire the skills to use computers confidently, although lack of provision inhibits the full application of skills across the curriculum. In modern foreign languages pupils gain a satisfactory understanding of the spoken language and understand a range of written materials as well but often need support in using past or future tenses accurately. In history pupils show that they can understand and build on the knowledge that they have gained. However except in the sixth form, in this subject, they rarely initiate discussion. In physical education, pupils' abilities to observe and evaluate their own performance and that of others have improved since the last inspection. Pupils demonstrate these abilities in lessons and so raise their standards of performance.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

24. Pupils and students at Brooksbank enjoy their schooling and, like their predecessors at the time of the previous inspection, are responsive and well motivated learners. Attendance rates have remained very consistent and compare satisfactorily with those for other schools nationally. Exclusions continue to be at a low level.

25. There is a civilised and orderly atmosphere in the school which reflects the good standards of behaviour which are found there. Pupils and students generally arrive in good time for the start of the school day. They gather around the grounds and the building in a relaxed but orderly way and go quickly to their classrooms when it is time for the school day to begin. Movement about the school is purposeful. Despite the size of the premises, pupils generally reach their destinations in time to enable teachers to make a prompt start to lessons. In the inevitable bustle of the crowded corridors some pupils rush and forget to hold open doors but there is very little unpleasantness and no reason for younger pupils to feel intimidated.
26. Pupils and students are very proud of their school and many of them, from all year groups, showed a ready willingness during the inspection to talk about their work, the facilities they are offered and their involvement in the daily life of the school. They are very pleasant and personable people who smile easily, make visitors feel welcome and do their best to help them find their way around the complex of buildings. They speak with enthusiasm of a wide range of lunchtime and after school activities, particularly in the fields of sport, drama and music. As the inspection took place at the start of the school year there was little opportunity for these activities to be observed directly although there is ample documentary and photographic evidence to indicate their success and popularity. The enthusiasm of pupils is reflected in the classroom. Pupils react well to the high expectations of their teachers, quickly become involved in lessons and concentrate effectively on the work in hand. There were, in Key Stage 3, two occasions during the inspection when unsatisfactory management of pupils resulted in a loss of interest and some poor behaviour. This is clearly untypical and does not significantly detract from a positive picture of a good, and often very good response in lessons.
27. Behaviour throughout the school is good. In lessons and about the school pupils show much maturity. They treat their teachers with proper respect and little time has to be devoted to the establishment of order and discipline. At break times and during the lunch hour pupils socialise in small groups in a very mature manner; they wait patiently for their turn to dine, an occasion which is conducted with good manners; some of them engage in sporting activities in a combative but friendly way. Pupils show a good awareness of the main tenets of the behaviour policy and they respect the code of conduct on which it is based. Parents have expressed some concerns about behaviour, particularly in the area surrounding the school. This latter has not been the subject of observation. Within the school whilst there is undoubtedly some poor behaviour, it is the exception rather than the rule and managed skilfully by teachers.
28. The behaviour of pupils with special educational needs is good in all lessons. They are interested in their work and keen to succeed, particularly in Key Stage 3. Small groups of pupils with serious learning difficulties and some behavioural problems are withdrawn from their main classes for one or two lessons a week to receive intensive support in literacy. They are open about the nature of their difficulties and respond well to the pressure and possibilities of one to one teaching and learning. The relationships between pupils with special educational needs and with adults in the school is good. The school operates an effective policy which ensures that pupils with special educational needs are included and free to participate in all school activities. Pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated. Students in Year 13 see this inclusion as a considerable strength of the school and value the

understanding they have acquired in school of the different learning needs and abilities of others. Pupils with special educational needs hold positions of responsibility in the school such as that of library assistant and take much pride in doing them well.

29. Since the previous inspection the school has reviewed its policy and procedures for exclusions. They now comply with statutory requirements. There have been no permanent exclusions in 1999. Fixed term exclusions, usually for a period of two or three days, have been made appropriately for unacceptable behaviour such as assault on a pupil, obscene language towards a member of staff, or cumulative disruptive behaviour. Compared with schools of similar size nationally, the use of both permanent and fixed term exclusions is below the average.
30. Relationships at all levels are very good and are a strength of the school. Form teachers and heads of year come to know their pupils particularly well, and through their commitment and the support they give to those in their charge, they set a good example, providing good role models. Pupils from all backgrounds work and play well together.
31. The benefits of the well planned personal and social educational provision are apparent in pupils' behaviour and attitude towards those less able or fortunate than themselves. One of the School Council's earliest actions was to raise money for both local and international charities; another was to consider how the victims of bullying can be helped by the implementation of a "Buddy" system to support them. In a scheme sponsored by the police, some older pupils are working to develop links with primary school children to assist their transfer to secondary education; others are engaged in a "paired reading" partnership with younger colleagues to further their literacy skills. Evidence can also be gleaned from discussions in many aspects of the curriculum. For example, Year 9 pupils, in a history lesson on the First World War, talked of the cold, the misery and the boredom of life in the trenches, and went on to surmise that life was very much the same for the German participants as it was for the British. Such occasions present pupils with many opportunities to reflect on their own and other people's lives and beliefs. They were not seen to be fully exploited during the inspection in lessons or assemblies.
32. In all subjects of the curriculum pupils and students support each other well and most show a growing ability to organise their own work and study without supervision. The School Council formed only in January 2000 has, in its short life, made an impressive impact on school affairs. The recently appointed head students are beginning to take an active part in whole school issues. Along with those pupils in various year groups who volunteer to help in the library, or to build confidence in younger colleagues, they are setting a pattern for students and pupils to take a more active part in the day to day life and organisation of the school. This is having a beneficial effect on their personal development.
33. The school works hard to encourage regular attendance and is rewarded with a consistent level which compares satisfactorily with standards, locally and nationally. Registers are completed promptly and properly for each session. There is no significant difference between year or ethnic groups.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

34. The quality of teaching is predominantly good throughout the school and a significant strength. It was satisfactory and better in 98 per cent of lessons and very good and better in more than 23 per cent of lessons. Teaching was good and better in 73 per cent of lessons. Good teaching occurs in all subjects, in both key stages and in the sixth form. Teaching has improved since the last inspection, it is predominantly good whereas it was mainly satisfactory at the last inspection. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching is now very low. The quality of teaching is more consistently good across the subjects. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and there is no evidence that pupils of average and lower attainment receive weaker teaching as was the case at the last inspection. The proportions of very good teaching are highest at Key Stage 3 and in the sixth form.
35. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and skill which create respect among pupils and gives them confidence to learn. Pupils' capabilities and needs are well known and teachers manage their behaviour with great skill. Lessons start promptly and no time is wasted. In English and modern languages well planned, logical sequences of varied activities promote learning very effectively. Lessons generally have a crisp introduction with a quick review of previous knowledge to locate pupils at the threshold of new learning. In most lessons teachers make clear to pupils the purpose of the lesson and the expected out comes so that they know what is expected of them and what has been achieved.
36. Work is generally carefully matched to pupils' needs. Often task sheets closely matched to pupils' different capabilities are used to help them to make good progress. In English, for example, Year 7 pupils with special educational needs used these follow- up materials to the main activity very effectively. They consolidated reading and writing skills as well as the new material they had learned in the mixed - ability class. Questioning skills are sometimes of a very high order. In a Year 7 lesson in classical studies pupils were challenged to give their own opinions about the artefacts they had been examining and to justify their ideas. The teaching prompted them to think hard so that they learned the difference between speculation and proof. In a Year 12 lesson on Mithraic worship in classical studies, an exemplary reflective approach prompted students with a further question immediately they answered. Their learning deepened and they acquired greater subject knowledge and how to challenge themselves in organising and composing written answers. The more scholarly demands of sixth form work were made evident to them.
37. Sometimes vivid and effective descriptions by teachers stimulate pupils to raise their own questions and increase their social and cultural understanding. In a Year 11 history lesson on trench warfare in the First World War pupils spontaneously asked, 'did the Germans have the same problems?' Teachers generally have high and appropriate expectations for pupils of all abilities. In an excellent lesson in Year 7 in music (singing) the teacher made considerable demands of the mixed-ability class so that they learned a great deal about technique. They were assessed continually through the lesson and learned to assess themselves. By the end of the lesson they were able to sing in parts, breathing and tone had improved, and pupils were able to start looking at the piano accompaniment which formed the focus for homework. In other subjects the placing of pupils of similar attainment in groups (sets) also helps teachers to pitch the academic expectations effectively.

38. The good resources of the school are used well in informal teaching. Library facilities, the teacher librarian and her full-time assistant offer significant help to pupils and sixth form students who improve and extend their reading, research and information skills effectively. They show confidence in using the facilities. The regular competitions help to engender a love of books and literature in pupils.
39. The weaknesses in teaching are very few. The predominant weakness is insufficient use of information and communications technology to promote learning. The school is behind many other secondary schools. In some subjects it awaits delivery of new equipment. Some teachers are not confident in the use of ICT or its possibilities for their subject. Nevertheless the school is moving fast in its planning and training. It has some expert practitioners and there is very good direct teaching in the discrete subject but it has a way to go in implementing its programme across the curriculum. The school is very aware of its weaknesses in this aspect of teaching and has made good progress in remedying them.
40. In the very small number of unsatisfactory lessons half were attributed to teachers who later in the week taught good lessons. In one of these, an over ambitious practical lesson in science, with a large, new class at the end of a very hot day, pupils behaved badly. In another lesson in geography, an undemanding task took up far too much time, but, nevertheless, later produced very good homework indicating that pupils had been taught well previously. The other weaknesses occurred when teachers took lessons outside the major subject specialism in geography, occasional lack of pace, and a very small number of lessons where high attaining pupils receive inadequate challenge at Key Stage 4. The strengths in teaching far outweigh the weaknesses.
41. Pupils with special educational needs are taught almost entirely in classes in which they are integrated with their peers, so that they all experience the same overall high quality of teaching. All teachers have a good awareness of pupils in their classes who have special educational needs and of the nature of their difficulties, as detailed in pupils' individual education plans. Work in all subjects is more appropriately modified to make it accessible to these pupils than at the time of the last inspection. This is particularly effectively done in English, history, art and design technology. Pupils' learning is further assisted by special needs teachers and learning support assistants who help pupils, individually or in small groups, within the classroom. On the limited number of occasions when pupils leave their normal lessons for intensive work with specialist teachers, the quality of teaching is good. There is particular expertise among staff in the special needs department in the teaching of literacy and numeracy. However, the development of pupils' numeracy skills, for example, by sharpening the precision of numeracy targets on pupils' individual education plans, is at a much earlier stage than the promotion of literacy skills.
42. Considerable concerns were expressed in the last report over the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. The teaching of these pupils is now as good as that of the majority.

43. Gifted and talented pupils are taught effectively. The headteacher monitors their progress and learning assiduously through regular meetings with a group of identified pupils. Pupils are helped to manage the demands of high achievement, pressure of work and personal and social matters. All are helped to achieve well in school, not least by the expert subject knowledge of their day to day teaching and the wide curriculum opportunities open to them.
44. The high quality of relationships between pupils, students and their teachers promotes good, and closely matched teaching and the development of social and academic skills.
45. The teaching of pupils with English as a second language is good. By the end of Key Stage 4 many of these pupils achieve above the school and national averages.

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

46. The curriculum offers breadth and balance in both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, and the post 16 provision offers a wide range of academic opportunities, enhanced by a programme of optional courses to enrich and extend students experience. Some of these courses can lead to qualifications. The time allocated to subjects is in line with national averages and the total teaching time of 25 hours per week conforms to the national recommendation.
47. At Key Stage 3 the school offers a broad and balanced curriculum which fulfils all statutory requirements. There is no separate provision for information and communications technology (ICT), but it is delivered principally through design and technology and, to an extent, within the limitations of the school's facilities, through other subjects. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is provided in a well devised programme taught by form tutors in the weekly lessons. The curriculum is enhanced by the provision of classical studies throughout the key stage which includes opportunities to study the Latin language. The time -tabling of drama as a separate subject in Years 8 and 9 extends curricular opportunities. The consequent reduction of time for modern foreign languages appears to have no detrimental effect upon pupil progress and pupils can also begin to study a second foreign language in Year 9.
48. At Key Stage 4 the curriculum is equally broad and balanced and all pupils receive their entitlement to the subjects of the national curriculum although in religious education their entitlement is restricted by teaching time at Key Stage 4. In addition pupils have a good range of optional subjects from which to choose, including vocational subjects to GNVQ. It is possible to take two foreign languages and three separate sciences. In form periods all pupils continue to follow the carefully planned programme of personal and social education which includes sex and drugs education and, in Key Stage 4, effective careers education is given. The school has good links with outside agencies and visiting specialists make a useful contribution to pupils' development. Although all pupils follow a course in religious education the amount of time allocated is insufficient to meet the demands of the Agreed Syllabus of the Local Education Authority and in this respect the school does not fully meet statutory requirements.

49. The sixth form curriculum provides a wide range of academic and vocational courses, including business education, economics, law, psychology and sports studies, leading to Intermediate and Advanced GNVQ, GCE AS (Advanced Subsidiary) and A (Advanced) level. Careful attention is paid to the size of groups and some courses are not offered from year to year if the numbers are too small. The weekly form period is used by form teachers and the head of sixth form to monitor progress. All pupils follow optional enrichment courses, which offer a good variety of activities from which pupils must choose. During the week of the inspection, a strenuous and enjoyable team building exercise was observed. Other choices lead to qualifications, for example, in first aid or community sports leader awards. The modules cover the requirements of the AS general studies syllabus and many pupils take the examination and go on to do the full two year A-level course. One optional module includes the study of morality and religious belief but otherwise there is no formally time-tabled religious education. In this respect, as at the time of the last inspection, the school is in breach of statutory requirements.
50. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is less satisfactory. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 attend three assemblies each week, led by senior staff, heads of year or visiting speakers. These sometimes take the form of collective worship and offer pupils the opportunity to make a private personal response to questions or situations that challenge their values and beliefs. This was done particularly effectively in one assembly by using the moral dilemma of separating conjoined twins to invite pupils to reflect on what was so important to them that they would make a stand. Through a brief moment of absolute stillness and silence another group of pupils shared what the speaker described as a glimpse of God while watching dolphins in the wild. Other assemblies, however, offer little more than extended opportunities for notices and reminders for pupils and do not contain an act of worship, nor does an act of worship take place in the daily sessions with form tutors. The sixth form do not have assemblies nor any acts of collective worship. The school is in breach of its statutory obligations in this regard and is in some respects not using the first 25 minutes of each morning to full and good effect for pupils' personal development. Some subjects contribute well to pupils' spiritual development. The study of a number of texts in English, particularly Shakespeare, leads pupils to consider supernatural forces and a power beyond humanity. In design and technology, pupils delight in the beauty of marbling effects in fabrics. Empathy is developed in geography by reflection on the reality of other people's lives in less developed parts of the world. Religious education challenges pupils to consider the meaning of personal existence and responsibility for themselves and for others as well as the meaning of prayer and worship. A Year 9 project on the Berlin Wall in art lessons focuses pupils' attention on the feelings and emotions of people directly affected by it. In other subjects, opportunities are missed to further pupils' spiritual development.
51. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Pupils can clearly distinguish right from wrong and respect the rights of others to learn in lessons. The school has a balanced system of rewards and sanctions in place with a proper emphasis on seeking to reward success rather than punish failure. Pupils value this reward system and strive to collect credits. A home-school agreement and a detailed pastoral policy make explicit the development of a clear framework of values. Sex education and drugs education are taught in PSHE and in science lessons. In physical education, pupils conform well to the rules and etiquettes of games, and good sporting behaviour was observed during school sports' matches. In geography lessons pupils

reflect on the moral issues implicit in emigration, immigration and foreign aid, on global warming and the preservation of endangered environments. Through instances of moral dilemmas pupils are taught to appreciate that there are, at least, two sides to every question.

52. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Wherever possible, form groups remain with the same form tutor for five years so that the group can become cohesive. Strong professional and social links between parents and form tutors and heads of year are developed by the same strategy. Good relationships between pupils and with their teachers, based on mutual respect, are evident in the school. Pupils have confidence that if any bullying occurs, they are able to go to teachers who will support them in dealing with it. Pupils work harmoniously in class in pairs and groups, sharing ideas and understanding. In PSHE lessons they move easily from one pupil grouping to another and do not seek to work always with friends. There is a rich variety of extra-curricular opportunities of which pupils take good advantage. Apart from the curricular enrichment, these opportunities provide pupils with the wider experience of participating in sports, music, art and drama activities with pupils outside their normal friendship groups and from other years in school. Opportunities exist for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility. The teacher librarian is aided by a large team of pupil librarians and assistants. The school council is drawn from pupils in every year group. It is active in seeking to improve, with the support of senior staff, pupil facilities in the school. It has already had some success in the development of a recreational garden with benches on which pupils can sit. Visits to theatres, opera and art galleries, fieldwork in geography and trips abroad, give pupils opportunity to work and relax together with other pupils and teachers outside school and develop new social skills.
53. Provision for pupils' cultural development is also very good. The provision of classical studies for all in Key Stage 3 gives an extra dimension to their understanding of ancient cultures and the roots of Western European culture. Much good teaching in history, geography and religious education contributes to pupils' awareness of recent and contemporary cultures both in Britain and elsewhere. Some five per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority groups and they contribute their knowledge and experience to lessons and the establishment of a harmonious multi-cultural community. Many subjects emphasise the cultural and multi-cultural aspects to be found in their areas of study. In design and technology, pupils complete projects on food from other cultures and have contributed to a display of clothes from China, Japan, Russia and India; in music, pupils study world music and musical traditions in Britain; in modern languages, pupils develop a very strong awareness of that which make France and Germany distinctive through much work on customs, colloquial speech and their food and drink. The English curriculum contains a range of novels to read in class from Year 7 upwards which are specifically concerned with other cultures and nationalities. The poet Levi Tafari worked with English classes during the inspection week. The influence of the work of artists from other cultures is very evident in art work displayed in the school, for instance work by Year 8 pupils based on the Aboriginal concept of Dreamtime. A particularly wide-range of extra-curricular activities which includes visits to World War I battlefields, to classical sites of Greece and Italy and to the Diwali Festival in Halifax completes the picture of opportunities for a rich cultural development.

54. The school's very good and extensive links with other schools, colleges and agencies generally support curricular development well. Links with Leeds University for initial teacher training and the University of Bradford, increase the opportunities for pupils. These links also help the school to offer good vocational choices when pupils complete their statutory education at the age of 16, or after their period in the sixth form.
55. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into all aspects of school life and have access to the same full curriculum as their peers. The GNVQ Foundation course has helped to meet the particular needs of some pupils in Key Stage 4. Pupils' learning is supported by extra-curricular provision in the form of ICT- based literacy support before school, a homework club at lunch time in which teacher support is available and a valuable paired reading scheme in which sixth formers offer reading practice with pupils in Key Stage 3. Many pupils with special educational needs are involved in the extensive programme of extra-curricular activities, particularly in sports, art, music and drama, but they also take on positions of responsibility such as that of library assistant. There is some curricular provision for gifted and talented pupils. Many departments have more demanding extension materials available for pupils; music, art and PE offer demanding extra- curricular activities; some subjects place pupils in ability sets and three separate sciences can be studied for GCSE. However there is scope for further development of these strategies and some lack of awareness by some teachers of the needs of gifted and talented pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

56. Provision for pupils' welfare and guidance was considered to be good at the time of the previous inspection. That is still the case: indeed the health and safety provision for the premises is very good, and the quality of educational support and guidance for pupils is of a high order and a strength of the school. However, there are also areas for development.
57. Brooksbank is a very caring community where the welfare of pupils is paramount. Most form tutors work with the same group of pupils over a five year term and get to know them very well. Heads of year monitor individual pupils who may give cause for concern and keep extensive and detailed records which are regularly updated. Very good links are maintained with the school's own support workers, notably the home/school liaison coordinator, and with parents and outside agencies.
58. The health and safety policy complies with local authority guidelines. It is a comprehensive document which is effectively implemented by the school administrator. Overall school formal risk assessments are carried out annually and regular reports are submitted to the governing body. The school premises are a safe environment. Health and safety procedures for lessons are listed in the appropriate curriculum policy documents. There is, however, no regular audit of day-to-day practice to ensure, for example, that Bunsen burners are always used in accordance with the guidance in science lessons and that in art the need for care in the safe use of equipment such as craft knives is always emphasised.

59. Child protection arrangements comply with the procedures of the Local Education Authority and appropriate training has been given to key, designated members of staff. However there has been no training in recent years for other members of staff to raise their awareness of the possible signs and symptoms of child abuse and to update their knowledge and understanding of procedures. This weakness was the subject of comment in the previous inspection report.
60. The school places much emphasis on regular and punctual attendance. Following criticism in the previous inspection report, there is now a clear policy with explicit guidelines, ensuring that procedures comply with legal requirements. Reminders are given to parents in a variety of letters and documents and they are strongly discouraged from taking their children for holidays during the term time. Heads of Year have overall responsibility for the detailed monitoring but they are very effectively supported in this by the day to day work of the home-school liaison coordinator and the education welfare officer. An impressive initiative is the telephone enquiry made promptly on the first morning of any unexplained absence. Where merited, certificates and awards are given to recognise high levels of attendance by individuals and by groups of pupils.
61. The behaviour policy is based on a code of conduct which is well publicised throughout the school. It contains clear guidance to teachers on the maintenance of good behavioural standards in the classroom and provides a range of rewards and sanctions within which they should operate. Heads of Year monitor the implementation of the policy very effectively. Through this policy the school has been successful in establishing good standards of behaviour and in minimising the incidence of any bullying. Pupils and parents give evidence that any bullying is speedily and effectively dealt with. Where necessary, pupils are appropriately excluded to allow time to sort out the issues.
62. Much positive development has taken place over the last three years in the assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic attainment. Procedures are now very good. Pupils are well motivated by being involved from the start in setting their academic and personal targets. These procedures sponsor pupils' academic and personal development well. As pupils move through each year they are given very fruitful opportunities to discuss with their form tutor information provided by each subject teacher on their potential, progress and effort. Detailed records are kept by heads of year who arrange for themselves or other senior members of staff to provide further effective support to those with learning difficulties, the higher attainers or others who, for whatever reason, are failing to fulfil their promise. Imaginative strategies are used to sustain motivation, including letters to parents and personally to individual pupils. The school builds up a clear picture of each pupil's strengths and weaknesses, including all aspects of their work, behaviour and personal development. Teachers work very hard to ensure that effort and achievement in any aspect of school life is recognised and rewarded. The head teacher also ensures that cumulative data are used effectively to monitor the achievements of groups of pupils by their previous attainment, and gender or ethnic heritage so that pupils' targets for attainment are realistic.
63. The school fully meets the statutory requirements of provision for pupils who have statements of special educational needs.

64. The majority of pupils with special educational needs are identified by their primary schools, with whom the school enjoys extremely good relationships. The needs of these pupils are therefore well understood before they join the school and their transition to secondary school is very much eased. The school's policy for further identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs is well developed and implemented. This was a key point for action in the last inspection report and the issue has been thoroughly reviewed and remedied. After identification, the pupils are well supported and advised both in their academic and personal development. Special needs staff support the form tutors in helping pupils to set targets. Subject teachers work with special needs staff in developing individual education plans; transition plans for continuing education are drawn up in consultation with the careers service and sixth form staff. A variety of external agencies, such as the careers services, school psychological services and further education colleges with whom the school enjoys good relationships, further supports its work. Students are helped to find the best provision for them when they move on from statutory education at the age of sixteen towards work or new opportunities in education.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

65. The school enjoys the support of parents, as was the case at the time of the previous inspection. Parents particularly appreciate the good teaching which enables their children to achieve and make good progress. They recognise that their children are required to work hard but find that they also enjoy their schooling. They express warm praise for the support given to pupils with special educational needs.
66. Teachers at all levels are conscious of the important contribution which parents can make to support their children's learning. The teachers are at pains to ensure that the quality of information provided for parents is good and that it is presented in a way which enables them to give constructive support to their children's learning. The school has many avenues through which it informs parents and seeks to involve them with the work of the school. Routine information about the school, its policies, procedures and day-to-day organisation are set out effectively in the prospectus, the governors' annual report and the twice-termly newsletters. Information specific to particular events or issues, such as an open evening or a reminder about school dress or general discipline, is well conveyed by letter. The head teacher makes very constructive use of the meetings of the Brooksbank Association of parents and teachers to give a report on new developments at the school such as those relating building or staffing and progress with educational priorities. When there are innovations on which parental views would be of particular value then questionnaires are circulated. Recent examples are the introduction of the home-school agreement and a change in the school uniform. It is by such means that the school has been able to retain and extend the support of the great majority of parents.
67. The sense of partnership with parents is made effective by the sharing of information about pupils. The results of the school's very good procedures for assessment and monitoring of academic and personal development are reported to parents each term and parental comments are encouraged. Some parents have indicated that those reports which are computer based give much detail but are rather bland; inspectors have found some justification for this view as the quality of reports is variable. However, most reports are of good quality, and the school implements its own quality

control system. By inviting dissatisfied parents and others to comment both on the report itself and through the recently circulated questionnaire on the subject the school has found that the majority of parents are satisfied with reporting standards. Parents have the opportunity to discuss reports at parents' evenings, or individually, by appointment with teachers and those who need to, avail themselves of this possibility.

68. The school's links with parents makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning at home. There is a coherent homework policy which is brought to the attention of all parents. Specific and very useful advice is provided to the parents of pupils in each year group about the curriculum and about how they can best support their child's learning. A small number of parents raised concerns at the parents' meeting that there is insufficient homework. Inspectors judged that homework is satisfactory on the evidence presented to them. Not all teachers stick closely to the homework timetable which can lead to the impression of too little at times, and too much on other occasions. A home-school agreement has been recently introduced, after consultation with parents. It has been well received and over 90 per cent of parents and pupils have signed it. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in identifying their children's needs and reviewing their progress. The criticisms made in the last inspection report, of lack of adequate parental involvement in the process of assessment of pupils with special educational needs, have been thoroughly rectified. Parents are now fully involved in all stages of assessment and there is good attendance by parents at annual reviews.
69. The school has demonstrated a proper awareness of the principles of best value by consulting parents, for example, about its curriculum and about major spending decisions, particularly in relation to the building. Overall the school works well in partnership with parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

70. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key senior managers are very good. The head teacher joined the school after the last inspection three years ago. She quickly identified the school's strengths and weaknesses, and took and set in place some difficult decisions about performance and teamwork. Teamwork among staff is now very good: a strength of the school. There is shared commitment to improvement, shown for example, in the monitoring which the senior team and heads of department and heads of year have done and in the openness of teachers to discuss these matters. It is shown too in the training teachers have undertaken to improve teaching and learning. There is great commitment to the good and improving education of every pupil and especially in the provision for those who have special educational needs. Since the last inspection significant training for middle managers, heads of department and heads of year has been undertaken to beneficial effect. The previous oversight of deputy head teachers for curriculum support has now been devolved appropriately to senior teachers in the last year. They now give close support at the same time as extending their own management skills. All these managers are reviewed each term by the head teacher with a particular and timely focus, for example, in the Autumn term there is specific review and monitoring of examination standards. Accountability is well placed. Good levels of performance take place at all levels. Those who have pastoral responsibilities as heads of year and form and subject teachers perform well. Attitudes and relationships in the classroom and around school reflect the importance of individual pupils and the

enthusiasm and commitment of managers. A major area where managers do not do as well as they should is in the explicit analysis of provision for spiritual development at subject and whole school level. Many opportunities are lost here. Nevertheless the leadership of the school, overall, through all its teachers and support staff, its governing body, structures and procedures is excellent.

71. The overall management structure is cohesive and helps the school to function efficiently and effectively. The comprehensive School Development Plan identifies educational priorities clearly and earmarks funds appropriately to achieve them. The school began to monitor teaching very effectively through heads of departments last year, (1998-99) and teachers became increasingly confident in sharing good practice. The travails of Performance Management at national level and its link with finance have set the school back, probably by a year in its planning and development. The school has not lost sight of its objectives and has taken steps to improve situations where necessary. There is good and strategic use of the analysis of pupil performance to give information to teachers about the entry performance of pupils and their expected success by the end of Key Stage 4. A comprehensive range of statistics is collected but not enough use is made of them to give information about the predicted success of groups as a whole.
72. The school is fortunate in its governing body who give loyal and devoted service which is effective in moving the school forward. The chair of governors, recently elevated to the peerage, has served the school for 21 years. All governors are assiduous in their work except with respect to the statutory obligations for religious education and the act of collective worship which have not improved since the last inspection. There is insufficient provision for religious education at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. There is no daily Act of Collective Worship.
73. Financial control and management are very good: prudent and stringent. There is no recent auditor's report beyond the last in (1997) when the school was Grant Maintained and had full control of its finances. Its bursar, formerly a quantity surveyor, is vigilant in keeping strict control to ensure best value. Each month the school employs a finance officer from the LEA who monitors spending against budget requirements effectively. The school knows its position and where to cut back, spend or move monies from one section to another to meet changing needs. Administration staff make good use of new technology to support their systems.
74. The school is acutely aware of best value principles from its previous experience as a Grant Maintained School. Its management procedures assure best value. The governors are knowledgeable and committed and maintain vigilant oversight. Taking into account the attainments of the pupils at entry, the costs and expenditure and the context in which the school operates it provides good value for money as it did at the time of the last inspection. Procedures and insight have, however, been sharpened by the school's experience as a Grant Maintained school. Leaders and management are self-aware, practical and forward-looking.
75. The school enjoys a very good provision of teaching and support staff. There is a good balance of new and experienced teachers, all appropriately qualified, except in geography where a significant amount of teaching is carried out by teachers who do not have a qualification in the subject. Ten experienced learning support assistants give classroom help to pupils with special educational needs and there is provision for two members of staff to help with the learning of pupils for whom English is not

their first language. Pupil welfare is supported by a care assistant and a home-school liaison coordinator. Qualified technical assistants support the work of the science, information technology, design and technology and art departments. The work of the whole school is ably supported by six clerical assistants under the leadership of an administrator, whose qualification as a quantity surveyor has helped significantly to keep all the recent extensive building programmes on target.

76. The school completed its last formal cycle of teaching staff appraisal a year ago. Since then, staff development has focused particularly on improving lesson observation skills, prior to the full implementation of a Performance Management Policy which is currently awaiting ratification by the full governing body. The governing body operates an appraisal system for the headteacher in accordance with statutory requirements. Good training is provided by the school for learning support assistants and appropriate external training is made available to all teaching and support staff. An effective and well managed induction programme is in place for newly qualified and newly appointed staff. The school is an effective provider of initial training of teachers through a successful and long standing partnership with the University of Leeds.
77. The department of special educational needs is very well led and managed by an experienced co-ordinator, appointed since the last inspection. The senior management team gives strong support to the work of the department. Teachers are all aware of the requirements of the Code of Practice as they affect them. Of the statutory requirements of the Code of Practice, some of which were not met at the time of the last inspection, all are now met. Subject teachers are fully involved in the drawing up and monitoring of individual education plans. They are available to, and used effectively by, all staff. This represents a considerable improvement on practice at the time of the last inspection.
78. The staffing of the department of special educational needs is very good. Three qualified and experienced teachers are supported by a team of ten learning support assistants. The in-class support offered by the teachers is a useful form of in-service training for other staff, but is not always the most cost effective way of using so much of their time.
79. There are two attractive specialist classrooms for pupils with special educational needs which are used for activities such as small group teaching and pupil testing. The provision of an office for the special educational needs co-ordinator ensures that confidential records are stored conveniently and securely, and privacy is provided for meetings.
80. The school's accommodation is very good. It is maintained to very high standards of cleanliness and care through the hard work of cleaners and caretakers. Since the last inspection the school has undertaken an ambitious programme of refurbishment and building. The fabric of the building has been improved including replacement of basic features such as windows, the heating system and some rewiring and redecoration. A complete refurbishment of the modern foreign language rooms and some science laboratories has been undertaken. A 12-classroom block has been built together with extensive sports' hall facilities. Most departments now enjoy the benefits of adjacent rooms following changes to art and science provision. ICT accommodation has also benefited substantially. Changes were planned in close co-operation with departments to ensure that the needs of the subjects are met and that

pupils' learning benefits. Some laboratories are in need of attention and English rooms are in separate blocks and their storage scattered. Some of their rooms are too small for larger groups to use them comfortably. Rooms and corridors are well decorated and maintained and there is little litter and no graffiti. However, the use of the sports field is impaired by the dropping of bottles and cans during recreational periods. There are attractive and useful displays throughout the building. There is some congestion in the oldest part of the building where one-way doors impede the smooth passage of pupils particularly at change of lesson times.

81. Learning resources are good in all subject areas but there are significant difficulties in access by departments to ICT specialist facilities to support learning. Particular difficulties exist in mathematics, English and modern foreign languages (MFL). An exception is the special educational needs department where five networked computers and dedicated software offer excellent pupil support. In design and technology, a small but adequate room is a very useful resource for pupils' learning. There is currently a programme of improving ICT resources, which will improve pupil access and enhance learning opportunities.
82. Overall resources available to subjects are very good. Resources for mathematics are generous and pupils benefit from a range of textbooks available to best support different parts of the Programmes of Study. In geography, the resourcing of the new sixth form courses has been carefully planned and in physical education there are sufficient good quality resources. Pupils benefit from good keyboard provision in music, as well as many instruments available for pupil loan. There are very good resources in English, drama and science, and good resources in MFL and history. Learning is enhanced in history by an archive of good quality World War II artefacts which offers pupils a rich insight into an important period of twentieth century history. There is some shortage of textbooks in religious education. Art is well resourced but there is an over-reliance on teachers' own reference books.
83. The library is an effectively used learning resource. There are extensive arrangements in place to ensure that pupils can have good access and make maximum gain from this generous resource. These include a teacher with responsibility for library resources and a library assistant. A library assignment follows the Year 7 pupils' introduction to the library. Library work supports Year 9 study skills in PSHE and library skills are taught to every Year 12 pupil to develop higher study skills necessary for A-level courses. The work of departments is supported with specific resource boxes to support the teaching of various topics and an archive of artefacts to give pupils wide insights as they study the local area. Pupils' literacy is well supported with boxes of books in form rooms to stimulate reading. Department and pupil use of the library is monitored by dedicated software and results fed back to departments. The library is used well by boys and girls equally and by pupils of all levels of attainment including those with special educational needs.
84. In the previous report the range of books was reported to be good but lacked sufficient choice to develop multi-cultural education and provide for lower achievers. There has been a comprehensive programme to purchase and use poetry and fiction with multi-cultural backgrounds. There is now adequate provision for low attainers. The total library stock of 9000 books is below the Library Association recommendation of 10 books per pupil. The school is aware of this shortfall and has plans to remedy the weakness.

85. The school has an outstandingly professional approach to the application of the principles of best value in its management and use of resources. Its expertise is such that on occasion it is called upon as a source of advice by the LEA. The principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition are rigorously applied to all major, and many minor, spending decisions to seek to ensure that the best value for money is obtained and that the school offers that which the community wants. Consultation with the School Council has led to the development of a school garden with benches on which pupils can sit. Consultation with local residents led to changes to lighting and car parking arrangements in connection with the new sports hall. The school has been very successful in obtaining funding from external sources to enable it to undertake an extensive building programme. All spending decisions are underpinned by the comprehensive school development plan which determines the school budget.
86. The overall effectiveness of the school is very good. It is well governed, self-aware and knows its strengths and weaknesses. It seeks constantly to develop and to remedy its weaknesses by decisive action and training. There is a general commitment to the maintenance and development of high standards.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

87. In order to improve the quality of education provided and standards attained by pupils, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

Raise the pupils' standards of attainment in information and communication technology by: (e.g. paragraphs 23, 39, 95, 138, 147, 155, 173)

- improving the provision of resources for information and communication technology across the curriculum;
- ensuring that teachers use information and communication technology in the subjects in a planned and effective way;
- monitoring the pupils' experience and progress.

Increase the opportunities for pupils' spiritual development by: (e.g. paragraphs 31, 50, 211)

- helping teachers to identify points in their subject teaching where explicit reference may be made;
- extending the provision for a daily Act of Collective Worship.

Revise the timetable for religious education at Key Stage 4 to maximise the time available for pupils to learn the subject. (e.g. paragraphs 13, 48, 197)

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

Comply with statutory requirements for the provision of religious education in the sixth form by: (e.g. paragraphs 49, 200)

- providing opportunities within the main curriculum and revising its curriculum option programme to enable students to study the subject.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	209
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	67

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	22	50	25	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	1224	183
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	177	0

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	27	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	271	0

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	73

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	25
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	8.7
National comparative data	7.9

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	1.1

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	1999	116	125	241

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	58 (49)	81 (64)	66 (53)
	Girls	93 (90)	91 (81)	73 (58)
	Total	151 (139)	172 (145)	139 (111)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	62 (56)	71 (59)	58 (46)
	National	63 (65)	62 (60)	55 (56)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	22 (30)	37 (31)	15 (12)
	National	28 (35)	38 (36)	23 (27)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	52 (46)	76 (64)	58 (51)
	Girls	95 (98)	96 (94)	71 (85)
	Total	147 (144)	172 (158)	129 (136)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	61 (57)	71 (63)	54 (55)
	National	64 (62)	64 (64)	60 (62)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	26 (12)	37 (30)	17 (17)
	National	31 (35)	37 (36)	28 (27)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	130	109	239

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	42 (32)	112 (83)	120 (89)
	Girls	47 (57)	93 (107)	106 (109)
	Total	89 (89)	205 (190)	226 (198)
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	37.2 (42)	85.8 (89)	94.5 (93)
	National	46.6 (44.6)	90.9 (89.8)	95.7 (95.2)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	35.9 (38.0)
	National	38.0 (36.8)

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

Vocational qualifications	Number	% success rate
Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	38 52.4
	National	72.9

Attainment at the end of the sixth form

Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 on roll in January of the latest reporting year who were entered for GCE A-level or AS-level examinations	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	22	29	51

Average A/AS points score per candidate	For candidates entered for 2 or more A-levels or equivalent			For candidates entered for fewer than 2 A-levels or equivalent		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
School	18.2	16.4	17.3	0	7	4.2 (4.3)
National	17.7	18.1	17.9	2.7	2.8	2.8 (2.8)

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

Vocational qualifications	Number	% success rate
Number in their final year of studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	10 71
	National	N/a

International Bacculaureate		Number	% success rate
Number entered for the International Bacculaureate Diploma and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all they studied	School	N/a	N/a
	National		N/a

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	4
Pakistani	63
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	4
White	1335
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	20	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	83.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	20
Total aggregate hours worked per week	464

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y11

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	77.4
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 2	-
Key Stage 3	23.5
Key Stage 4	21.8

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	3,398,995
Total expenditure	3,382,643
Expenditure per pupil	2,534
Balance brought forward from previous year	38,716
Balance carried forward to next year	55,068

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

1335

Number of questionnaires returned

97

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	39	53	7	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	43	52	3	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	52	14	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	16	51	28	4	1
The teaching is good.	25	74	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	58	10	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	44	43	8	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	43	4	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	15	64	16	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	29	59	7	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	54	8	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	48	3	1	14

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

ENGLISH

88. Pupils enter the school with below average standards of attainment in English. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected level 5 and above in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 3 in 1999 was broadly in line with the national average and with the average for similar schools. The proportion achieving the higher level 6 and above was below the national average, but in line with the results achieved by comparable schools. Since 1996 there has been an upward trend in performance, in line with the national trend. Girls do better than boys as they do nationally, but the gender gap has narrowed and by 1999 there was only a marginal difference between them compared to the national averages for boys and girls. The proportion of pupils achieving grades A* to C and A* to G in GCSE English at the end of Key Stage 4 in 1999 was in line with the national averages both for all pupils and for boys and girls separately. Since 1996 the proportion has varied slightly but has remained broadly in line. The proportion of pupils achieving grades A* to C in GCSE English Literature in 1999 was below the national average. It was, however, broadly in line at grades A* to G and the school enters a greater proportion of pupils for literature than the national average. Girls did comparatively better than boys. In GCSE Drama, the proportion of pupils achieving grades A* to C was below the national average. It was, however, above the national average at grades A* to G. All pupils entered achieved a grade and a greater proportion of pupils is entered than nationally. A wide range of courses is offered at GCE A-level. In 1999, pupils achieved grades in line with national averages in Language, Literature and joint Language and Literature as they have done in previous years. No pupils were entered for Theatre Studies in 1999 but in the previous year a small entry achieved grades in line with the national average. Standards in English have been maintained in the examinations in 2000.
89. Standards observed during the inspection confirm these levels of attainment. From a below average level of prior attainment on entry, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress. They reach standards by the end of each key stage which are close to the national average. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils develop satisfactory skills in speaking and listening, responding articulately to questions, sharing ideas in pair and group work and reading aloud. Pupils in Year 7 prepare and confidently present group readings of poems they have chosen. Pupils in Year 8 contribute with interest to a discussion of the class reader "Abomination" and exchange ideas purposefully in pair work on the theme of bullying. In Drama, pupils develop good understanding of presentation skills and express themselves without inhibition. Pupils' reading development is fostered by a carefully-structured introduction to the school library and the promotion of reading for pleasure. By the end of the key stage pupils develop reading skills sufficiently to respond to a good range of modern and pre-twentieth century texts including poetry. Pupils in Year 7 sequence the narrative of a traditional poem, "The farmer's wife", and identify the steps by which the wife's true nature is revealed. Pupils of lower levels of prior attainment in Year 9 extract information from the text of their class reader "Buddy" to write his diary. Writing skills develop well through the exploration of a wide range of written forms for different

purposes in each unit of work. Pupils are accustomed to the process of drafting and revising to improve the quality of their writing. The quality of handwriting and presentation is mostly good and all pupils convey meaning despite the difficulties of a small number with correctness of expression. Pupils of lower levels of prior attainment are assisted by the provision of frameworks, which enable them to structure their writing; the majority of pupils produce extended responses independently. Pupils who have English as an additional language achieve well. Within the limits of the school's resources good use is made of ICT with a programme of activities throughout Key Stage 3.

90. The good rate of progress in relation to levels of prior attainment is maintained across Key Stage 4. By the end of the key stage pupils' speaking and listening skills are generally good, they are attentive and responsive in lessons and express ideas and judgements articulately. Pupils of lower levels of prior attainment in Year 11 contribute briefly but cogently to a class discussion about their set play, "Our Day Out", comparing the text with a film/video presentation. Good group preparation of analyses of advertisements for a media assignment produces very assured presentations in a Year 11 class. In Drama, pupils develop good skills of improvisation through planning, rehearsing and performing group responses to topics set. Reading skills are well-developed to meet the demands of set texts, so that pupils in Year 10 respond to the poetry of Simon Armitage and relate it to their own experiences and, in Year 11, begin to analyse the characters of Macbeth and his wife. Pupils' reading for understanding is well-supported by the provision of a range of task and information sheets and enhanced by the judicious use of video. Written expression is of a satisfactory standard in most pupils' first drafts; writing frames assist pupils of low levels of prior attainment, and the final coursework submissions show a good range of extended writing. The general level of productivity is high. Written work is well-presented, with a significant number of pupils word-processing coursework pieces.
91. Pupils in the sixth form are comfortable in dialogue with their teachers. In Year 12 Literature, pupils perceptively explore the atmosphere generated in the opening of "Hamlet" and respond to the excitement generated. In Year 12 Language the study of different examples of the use of language produces lively discussion with the use of newly-learned technical terms. In Year 13 pupils meet the challenge of set text study capably. Their responses are well informed with references to previous reading and, in Theatre Studies, reading the text aloud with feeling. Their written work confirms levels of attainment in line with national expectations.
92. Pupils' attitudes to work are good. They work cooperatively and show appreciation of the efforts of their peers. Well-paced and planned lessons capture their attention and they maintain their concentration. The very few whose attention wanders readily accept teacher sanctions.
93. Teaching and learning are good at all key stages. All teaching observed was good and a fifth was very good, principally at Key Stage 3. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject which, together with good planning, enables pupils to make steady progress. Lessons making good use of teaching aids offer a variety of relevant activities, which engage and stimulate pupils. For example, in a Year 11 lesson preparing for an assignment for GCSE media studies pupils worked in groups to analyse an advertisement, made judgements about its style, content and presentation and then prepared and presented the findings of the group.

Good pupil management ensures the successful pursuit of the activities and good concern is shown for standards in regular and helpful assessment of work. Care is taken to meet the particular needs of pupils through good cooperation with support staff and the provision of additional materials to assist understanding and help structure written responses. In a Year 7 poetry lesson, for example, pupils identified as having special educational needs received a different task sheet tailored closely to their needs which helped them to achieve success. Homework supports and extends learning very effectively.

94. The English curriculum meets statutory requirements and all pupils have equal access to it. A high proportion of pupils takes both language and literature at GCSE and there is a good range of courses offered for students post-16. Drama is well-developed as a subject in its own right in Key Stage 3 as well as Key Stage 4 and makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development both in lessons and in extra-curricular activities. Assessment of pupils' work is thorough and referenced to national criteria and standards. Pupils are given guidelines for improvement and progress towards achievement targets carefully monitored.
95. English and drama are taught by a large team of well-qualified and committed teachers with a good range of experience. Good management and regular meetings enable staff to share responsibilities, contribute to planning, development and review and exchange good practice. Pupil progress and the delivery of the curriculum are properly monitored by teachers and the head of department through the sampling and moderation of pupils' work, classroom visits and the setting of common tasks. These procedures help to ensure the application of common, high standards by different teachers. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Teaching and learning have improved; all the teaching observed is good or very good, there are no instances of passive learning, poor control or pupil inattentiveness. Standards of pupils' speaking and listening skills are uniformly satisfactory. Pupils of low levels of prior attainment are assisted by the provision of good support materials to meet their particular needs and there has been a careful selection of reading material to avoid gender stereotyping and foster awareness of cultural diversity. The scheme of work makes good provision for the development of extended writing. Arrangements for storage of stock have improved and the facilities generally are good, although there is no departmental ICT facility. The subject is well led and managed
96. English and Drama are successful subjects in the school.

Points for development:

- Raise the standards of achievement of pupils in Key Stage 4 GCSE Literature to the level of GCSE Language.
- Further develop the use of ICT.
- Raise the standards of achievement of pupils in Key Stage 4 in GCSE Drama.

MATHEMATICS

97. The general level of performance in mathematics is below average when pupils enter the school. Pupils make good progress so that standards of attainment in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 3 are above the national average. There was an upward trend over the three years to 1999 when the results in national tests were well above those of similar schools; and similar results were achieved in 2000. There is little difference in the performance of girls and boys. In GCSE the results are close to the national average in grades A* to C. This level of performance has been maintained in the three years up to 1999 and continued in 2000. The results were good in comparison with other subjects in school. In recent years there has been little difference in the performance of boys and girls, although there was a fall in boys' performance in 2000. In A-level the results were, overall, above the national average from 1997-9.
98. The inspection findings confirm the upward trend in Key Stage 3. The full range of the mathematics attainment targets is covered and the work proceeds at a good pace. All pupils have a wide experience of mathematical activities. Attention which is now given to numeracy provides a firm foundation for raising the achievement of all pupils. The majority of pupils show sound numerical skills and all pupils' knowledge and understanding are extended in the practice of mental calculation and the use of numbers in problems. Higher attaining pupils manipulate algebraic expressions successfully and use formulae, for example, to solve simultaneous equations. They apply these skills to problems. Lower attaining pupils draw symmetric shapes and identify diagrams which have line and rotational symmetry. They demonstrate in a practical way knowledge of angle measurement and properties of angles of simple shapes. In Key Stage 3, pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of mathematics well. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for in mathematics and make good progress. Pupils who have English as an additional language succeed as well as their peers and there is no hindrance to progress. There is good attention to literacy so that pupils are helped to develop a good technical vocabulary. The mathematics department is taking the lead in developing numeracy strategies across the curriculum and supports the direct teaching of numeracy strategies in form time by means of specially prepared materials.
99. The improvements seen in Years 7 to 9 are now having an impact on the performance of pupils when they reach Years 10 and 11. Pupils cover the full range of topics required for GCSE quickly and have time for revision. All pupils benefit from the effects of the development of numeracy skills which has taken place throughout the school. Key Stage 4 pupils continue to extend their knowledge and skills in all areas of the mathematical curriculum and in the application of these skills to problems. Higher attaining pupils are able to apply mathematics to harder problems and develop algebraic formulae for sequences and patterns. They use ideas of ratio in questions of arcs and areas of circles, and develop rules of indices in algebraic expressions. Lower attaining pupils use their knowledge of decimal numbers well in questions on measures and angles. In doing problems they develop knowledge of the use of negative numbers. All pupils in the key stage take courses leading to GCSE and some pupils are also entered for Numeracy Certificates of Achievement. The good pace of the work in mathematics and the development of numerical skills provide a sound basis for the high expectations and levels of work seen in Key Stage 4; and the progress of pupils at all levels of attainment is good.

100. In A-level lessons, the students build effectively on previous knowledge and skills and demonstrate good levels of achievement in the range of pure mathematics topics, mechanics and statistics. Progress in these lessons is good and matches the levels achieved in A-level performance in recent years. Results in mathematics at A-level are above the national average.
101. In mathematics lessons, pupils are well motivated. Behaviour is good. They show initiative in their work, for example, in investigatory activities and in response to the games and puzzles in numeracy sessions, and when they are able to make choices and work independently they do this sensibly. Attitudes to mathematics and in mathematics lessons are good in both key stages, and have a beneficial effect on the work done.
102. The teaching in mathematics is good in both key stages and in the sixth form. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. In Key Stage 3, the teaching is good in more than half of the lessons. In Key Stage 4, the teaching is good in almost all lessons. In A-level teaching, the teaching is good in more than half the lessons with some very good teaching. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and understanding, for example, in teaching A-level topics related to conservation of momentum, and in the curriculum as a whole. In Key Stages 3 and 4 the teaching has variety and the majority of lessons start with a short number or calculation activity. The planning of lessons is generally good and there are effective examples of mental arithmetic activities using prepared materials, such as cards and a number stick, to practise multiplication facts and short-cuts in calculations. In many lessons, teachers provide a variety of approaches, for example, in a lesson in the practice of skills of using directed numbers in the context of simple problems and situations. However, in a few lessons teachers set limited objectives, concentrating on skills but with little indication of their relevance or the context in which they are used. The management of lessons is very good, so that teachers and pupils work effectively in lessons and a lot of work is covered. The points raised on teaching styles and pupils' learning in the previous inspection report have been given attention and the teaching has improved substantially. Attention has been given at a departmental level to the discussion of teaching styles and the planning of lesson activities. This is an on-going process and further development is in hand. The use of ICT in mathematics lessons is restricted at the moment until new resources are installed. Investigatory activities are provided for all classes and are included in the schemes of work. The marking of homework is satisfactory but the marking of class-work varies. There is not always enough comment helpful to the pupils so that they are sometimes not clear about what they must do to improve.
103. The leadership of the department is good. The priorities identified by the department to improve pupil performance, numeracy and the development of teaching styles, for example, provide a forward-looking development programme for the department. There is a strong commitment to improve pupil performance. Departmental management and day-to-day working are also good. The schemes of work provide an effective structure and support for the work of the department, and the schemes for Key Stage 3 and post-16 have been reviewed for use this term. Delegation of responsibilities within the department ensures that a wide range of work and development is taking place. The systematic monitoring of the work of the department has begun and there are effective procedures for monitoring curriculum through the schemes of work and assessment procedures. Very good records of

pupil assessment are maintained by the department and provide an effective basis for checking pupil progress and target-setting. Teaching is monitored and the process is effective in raising colleagues' good performance. The mathematics teachers are well qualified and the department has a good range of expertise and experience. The accommodation is very good. It is well looked after and maintained. Resources are of good quality and support the work of the department effectively.

Points for development:

- Extend the range of objectives in lessons to help pupils apply skills and see their use in relevant contexts.
- Ensure more consistency in the marking of pupils' class work.

SCIENCE

104. The attainments in the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 3 are close to the national average for all schools at level 5 or above but below the national average at level 6 or above. The results in comparison with similar schools are below the national average at level 5 or above and well below the national average at level 6 or above. There is no significant difference in the results for boys and girls. The results are similar to those of English and not as good as mathematics. Results have improved since the last report.
105. The 1999 GCSE results were close to the national average. Higher attainers entered for the three separate sciences of biology, chemistry and physics achieved results above the national average. The majority of the pupils took the double science award, their results were below the national average. Lower attaining pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, gain Certificate in Science awards. The performance of boys was better than that of girls. Results have improved since the last report in 1996. The 1999 A-level results were above the national average with chemistry and physics better than biology. In chemistry six students from an entry of seven gained good passes at grade C and above, the corresponding figures for physics were nine from thirteen students and for biology five from eleven students. Results show an improvement since the last report.
106. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment by pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 matches the national average. Pupils have a sound knowledge of basic science ideas with work pitched at a level suitable for their development. For example, in Year 7, pupils understood how the theory of the structure of matter accounts for the change of state of materials. In Year 9 these ideas develop further to enable pupils to examine the structure of the atom. Other pupils identify the differences between the object and the image in a plane mirror. Observation skills are well developed and safe practices emphasised. For example, Year 8 pupils safely dissected a heart and identified the component parts. Pupils in Year 7 were able to distinguish between variable and value, frequently making the connection between them. Year 9 pupils investigated the reaction between potato and hydrogen peroxide.

107. Inspection evidence confirms that attainment by pupils by the end of Key Stage 4 is in line with national averages. Their understanding of scientific ideas is good and they are able to communicate their ideas using correct scientific terminology. Pupils in Year 11 are able to predict the location of oil deposits and to explain how the oil had been formed. Lower attaining pupils can identify parts of the ear and explain in simple terms how sound travels into the ear. Pupils follow safe procedures when undertaking practical work and show good practice and careful observation. Lower attaining pupils make good progress. They review their understanding of the structure of matter before investigating properties of materials practically. Others, in a different experiment, use gentian violet to take fingerprints on sticky tape which involves careful practical technique and keen observation. Pupils of all abilities apply their mathematical skills. They use bar and line graphs to evaluate results, observe patterns and produce good quality written work.
108. Attainment of students in the sixth form is above average. Students understand abstract concepts, for example, they structure the development of the gas law equations from first principles. Ideas of electronic structure are extended to involve the concept of ionisation energy. Students of biology gain further understanding of the physiology of transport systems. Written work is of good quality particularly in biology and chemistry. Practical work is undertaken conscientiously and with interest. One group worked successfully to investigate the relationship between current and potential difference of a water-cooled resistor, tabulated results, and drew a graph of the relationship to help them evaluate their conclusions accurately.
109. Achievement of pupils in Key Stage 3 is satisfactory in relation to their prior attainment. Written work is of a good quality and shows that pupils take a pride in what they can do. Year 8 pupils understand the function of the nutrient medium in which they grow their microorganisms and know the effect of incubating at too high a temperature. Pupils in Year 9 know the difference between reflection at a plane surface from that at a rough surface. Pupils at Key Stage 4 achieve well in relation to their prior attainment building on their previous learning effectively and increasing their knowledge of details and accuracy. By Year 10, for example, pupils when dissecting a heart were able to identify finer details and explain each part. Lower attaining pupils make good progress. They have acquired the ability to identify the stages in the transport of a range of dangerous and other materials. They suggest possible hazards and relate symbols to hazardous substances. Pupils with special educational needs produce neat work on short specific units. For example, the energy content of foods used by the human body was understood. Higher attaining pupils have learned to recognise light as part of the wider electromagnetic spectrum as well as the impact of various wavelengths and frequencies on human beings and the environment.
110. Pupils' attitudes to science are good, they respond well in lessons and produce good quality notebooks. Their response to questions is satisfactory but only a minority of pupils are keen to express their own ideas. Some lack confidence but they are ready to present their ideas in a more informal manner. Pupils work well in groups showing a high level of co-operation and respect for each other. They listen attentively and follow instructions readily. For example, in Year 9 they were eager to share ideas on reflection, responding well to the main teaching points. Sixth form pupils respond well to a variety of teaching styles. They maintain high levels of concentration, listening and responding carefully to questions. They have clear respect for each

other and for their teachers and generally strive to make the most of the opportunities presented.

111. The quality of teaching is good: over half is good in Key Stage 3, with only one, atypical unsatisfactory lesson. Teaching is good at Key Stage 4 with a high proportion, one third of (33 per cent) of very good teaching. Three quarters of the teaching (75 per cent) in the sixth form is very good. Overall across the school ninety five per cent of the teaching is satisfactory or better, seventy five per cent is good or very good, and the very good teaching in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form amounted to thirty per cent. Teaching overall has improved since the last inspection. Lessons are well planned in relation to the abilities of pupils and offer sufficient challenge. They are delivered at a good pace to ensure interest and encourage learning. For example, Year 7 lessons have clear aims, concise explanations and good pupil activity followed by further work to consolidate their knowledge. In Year 10, procedures for heart dissection are given precisely, the dissection techniques demonstrated clearly and the class practical is supervised very carefully. New practical techniques were learned. The pace of lessons in the sixth form is very good, challenging the pupils well. For example, students were invited to attempt the derivation of gas laws themselves before a clear structured pattern was presented. In this way the students recognised the importance of breaking down work and analysing it into discrete parts. Teachers have good control and organisation of class activity and use a variety of teaching methods. The management of pupils is almost always good and promotes an orderly atmosphere which enables learning to occur at a good rate. Very occasionally the start of a lesson becomes confused when explanations are too involved or the review of previous work is too detailed so that the initial impact is reduced. Homework is set regularly and notebooks are usually marked with helpful and encouraging comments but there are occasional examples of superficial marking. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good and make a significant contribution to the rate at which pupils learn.
112. The well-planned curriculum fulfils all statutory requirements. It is structured around separate sciences, biology, chemistry and physics. The units at Key Stage 3, are in the process of review and first drafts of these units are of a good standard. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 are taught in mixed ability classes in groups of 3 classes. These are regrouped based on test results and the learning needs of the pupils. An appropriate range of courses at GCSE provides for the needs of all pupils. The majority of pupils whose attainments are average or below are entered for double science. Assessed coursework investigations form an important part of Years 10 and 11, but little investigation work occurs in Years 7, 8 and 9. Strong links are formed with information technology. Pupils by the end of Key Stage 4 will have experienced word processing, spreadsheet and database work with the beneficial results.
113. Procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress are good. Homework is set regularly and end of unit tests in both key stages are used to assess each pupil's performance so that a view of progress can be made and individual targets set. The close match between the assessments made by teachers and results obtained in Key Stage 3 tests shows that teachers' judgements are accurate.
114. The department is very well led with a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils and a concern to improve standards. The supportive departmental handbook is of a very high standard. It includes strategies for improving literacy and useful suggestions for improving teaching. Staff cooperate well in sharing ideas and

curriculum development work. The development plan focuses well on the need to improve teaching and achievement. Responsibilities are clearly defined. Teaching is monitored and scrutiny of notebooks is undertaken regularly. The department's financial allowance and resources are well managed. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in both Key Stages 3 and 4. The provision of technical help is satisfactory with an efficient system in support for teachers. Risk assessment is carried out in curriculum planning, however, no system exists to make available risk assessment forms at the start of each practical lesson on a day to day basis.

115. Teaching accommodation is satisfactory. Newly refurbished laboratories are of a high standard and are well-managed. They enable practical activities to take place with easy class management. Older laboratories have limited workspace. Resources are satisfactory and enable each course to be undertaken in line with the course requirements.

Points for development:

- Extend the opportunities for investigation in Years 7, 8 and 9.
- Provide risk assessment forms at the start of practical lessons.

ART

116. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is below nationally expected standards, on the basis of evidence from the inspection. In the 1999 GCSE results the percentage of grades A* - C fell from the previous year and were well below national averages. In 2000 they significantly improved, meeting school targets, but are still very low compared to the available, 1999, national averages. Girls continue to do better than boys and this year the difference was greater than ever. There has been no improvement in pupil attainment since the last inspection. GCSE results were below average and are now well below average. In A-level examination in 1999, all but one student achieved a pass grade. In the small number this had an undue effect on the overall percentage pass-rate, which fell from the previous year and was below the national average. Boys do almost as well as girls in line with national averages. No pupils were entered for the examination in 2000.

117. Standards on entry are low. Year 7 pupils had been taught to mix and apply colour with accuracy though this did not transfer to pattern making which was very basic, with colour poorly applied. Drawing and painting from direct observation that was seen was under-developed and, even in higher attaining pupils, line and tone was used in a very basic way. There was some sensitive use of coloured pastels in portrait work and this was evidence of progress being made over the year. By the end of the key stage, pupils can make personal response to a theme or issue, organise their ideas, experiment with materials and use them appropriately. Powerful pieces of work were produced by Year 9 pupils in a project on the Berlin Wall, in which they examined issues of personal freedom, combining a wide range of materials and techniques to good effect. All pupils can describe their ideas, how they have been developed and how they intend to proceed, using specialist language. Pupils are not able to relate their work to artists' work from a sufficiently wide range of periods and cultures including contemporary artists, designers and crafts persons. However, a Year 8 project about the art of Aboriginal people was in its early stages and all pupils were responding and learning well, including those with special educational needs.

118. Year 10 and 11 pupils are able to work in a sustained way, developing personal pieces reflecting their feelings, views and interests. In all pupils' work a wide range of sources is used including personal photographs and found materials and, with the novel combinations of media. Pupils produce creative, controlled effects showing a good level of attainment. They are able to work in a good range of media including, printmaking, batik, ceramics, glass painting, graphic design and drawing and painting. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is good. Middle and higher attaining pupils use their sketchbooks intelligently and sensitively to collect visual material, experiment with media, develop their ideas and describe their intentions for their work in words. Much of this is in retrospect and pupils should be encouraged to use the sketchbook as a tool as much as a record. Lower attaining pupils need structured sketchbook activities to ensure they develop the necessary skills. Accurate drawing and painting from direct observation is not as well developed as would be expected. Drawings of faces, hands and man-made objects are rudimentary and rely too much on simple outline with some added detail.
119. A-level students produce highly personal work in a sensitive and sophisticated way. They sustain their studies over an extended period and bring a wide range of ideas and influences into their work, including a varied choice of artists' work. Students work confidently in two and three dimensions using a wide variety of materials including plaster, wire, found materials, paper pulp, foils and more usual drawing and painting materials. Good use is made of local and more distant galleries to support learning, including the West Yorkshire Sculpture Park and the Walker Art Gallery. Their attainment is in line with national averages, showing a range of standards within the A-level pass range.
120. Teaching and learning are generally good. Teachers' subject knowledge and expertise are good and quality discussion results in pupils being able to talk clearly about their work and their plans for it. Well-planned work builds on previous learning and homework is consistently well used to consolidate and extend learning. Short and medium term targets are used and pupils are able to organise their work, maximise time and make good progress. In a Year 11 group, a teacher had made a written analysis of every pupil's coursework, setting targets. Pupils had a clear idea of what they needed to do in the short, medium and long-term and were able to plan their work and make improvements. Very good relationships are evident between teachers and pupils and an atmosphere of quiet collaboration is often evident in art lessons. Teachers plan work for pupils of all abilities, including extension work for the gifted, and support the work of pupils with special educational needs with tailored activities. However, sometimes lesson objectives lack a clear focus and describe an activity rather than what the pupils will learn during a lesson. This results in a confused response from pupils when progress could be better. The use of one main teaching style misses opportunities to inject more excitement and pace into lessons.
121. The department provides generously for pupils to work in the department at lunchtimes and after school and there are opportunities to visit galleries built in to the GCSE and A-level courses. The department has useful links with the local community, industry and businesses, which should be nurtured and developed. Information technology provision has been enhanced though access is difficult. The accommodation and furniture has been very much improved and the additional A-

level studies room is a great asset. Two of the rooms need further replacement of furniture, as some tables and stools are of mismatched heights, making work difficult or tiring. Problems with storage act as a disincentive to work at larger scales.

122. Insufficient work has been done with contributory primary schools to help pupils build on prior learning effectively. Not enough links have been developed with other local art departments to enable teachers to get a better feel for national standards in general. Initiatives should be made to improve boys' involvement in the subject starting in Year 7 and focusing on GCSE success. A coherent policy for end of Key Stage 3 should be developed covering assessment, recording and reporting, which will satisfy the new National Curriculum requirements and provide a valuable tool to inform planning for Key Stage 4. A systematic department-wide risk analysis should be undertaken to ensure full compliance with all requirements.

Points for development:

- Ensure lessons have clear learning objectives.
- Extend the range of teaching styles to inject more excitement and pace into lesson.
- Strengthen the curricular links with partner primary schools and local art departments.
- Conduct a department-wide risk analysis.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

123. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are above the national average at the end of Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. In the 1999 Teachers' Assessments at the end of Year 9, pupils reached standards which were above the national average. The proportion of pupils gaining grades A*-C in the 1999 GCSE examinations was above the national average. Boys perform less well than girls but better by comparison with their results in other subjects and with national results. Provisional GCSE results for 2000 show a sustained improvement in recent years, particularly for food technology. In the 1999 A-level examinations sixth form students gained grades which matched the national average.
124. Standards of attainment by the end of Key Stage 3 are above average. Pupils design products well to suit the needs and preferences of consumers, for example, when they design and make mechanical wooden toys. They have a good understanding of simple mechanisms and finish work to a good standard. In all aspects of the subject, pupils have a good knowledge of the materials they use and approach their work enthusiastically. This enables them to make well informed choices about what they will include in, for example, the food, textiles and resistant materials products they design. Pupils have good drawing skills and communicate their ideas clearly, as sketches for initial ideas and finally as useful working drawings. Pupils welcome the opportunities to work creatively and demonstrate flair and imagination in their work in textiles when they use decorative techniques such as Batik and marbling on the fabrics they make up into holders for photographs and CDs. They have a good knowledge of tools and processes, use them competently and confidently and work safely and sensibly in lessons.

125. Standards of attainment are above average by the end of Key Stage 4. Pupils are keen to learn and approach examination coursework methodically to produce well organised and well presented folders which make a significant contribution to their overall marks in GCSE examinations. They work conscientiously to meet deadlines and work to a good standard when they design and make products from food, textiles and resistant materials. Pupils research ideas well and design products which meet consumer needs such as when they plan special diets for vegetarians or to combat obesity. They have a good knowledge of nutrition and the underlying scientific processes for food preparation which they learn about during investigation work. Graphic skills are good and pupils communicate their ideas clearly throughout the design process. They evaluate and modify ideas and work as it develops so that they finish with well designed, good quality products. Pupils are trustworthy and behave in a mature manner in workshops, paying good attention to health and safety issues.
126. The current Year 13 students are attaining above average standards in resistant materials. Students design products from wood, metal and plastics which are of a high order and show a very good understanding of design and of consumer requirements. Drawing skills are very good and designs are clearly communicated with much evidence of modifications to improve them. Students have a good understanding of the materials and construction points when they plan to make, for example, kitchen workstations, computer desks and fitness aids. In textiles, they are reaching average standards. Student research their work in depth and detail and discuss their ideas in a mature manner. Practical skills are of a high order.
127. Pupils achieve well and make good progress in Key Stage 3. They enter the school with below average practical skills and knowledge of the subject but increase their skills and understanding with very good progress. They make particularly good progress with learning basic skills of the subject such as using the design process to develop ideas and make products from a wide range of materials. They learn to work safely in workshops and acquire a good working knowledge of the tools, materials and process they use. In textiles, they learn to use a range of decorative techniques for fabrics and to develop original products. They learn about the role of individual ingredients in food technology so that they know which ingredients to choose to obtain the best results, for example, when making pastry. Pupils make very good progress with learning to mark out and cut and join materials accurately. They recognise the importance of this in the early stages to produce good quality, well finished products such as wooden mechanical toys and novelty items from acrylic. The quality of learning is very good because teachers use their very good subject knowledge to plan interesting and challenging work and pupils are keen to learn. Pupils learn to use computers effectively to design, for example, packaging for their food products.
128. Pupils continue to achieve well in Key Stage 4. They make good progress with planning GCSE projects and learning to manage them. They build on the skills and knowledge acquired in Key Stage 3 where they are effectively prepared to undertake their chosen examination courses. Pupils make good progress with selecting tools and materials for their work to obtain the best possible results for them. Drawing skills improve and pupils learn to use sketches and working drawings more effectively. Teachers provide pupils with a good balance of support and opportunities to work independently so that pupils develop mature attitudes to taking an active part in their own progress in learning. They know how well they are doing in lessons and

what they need to do to improve through the effective assessment of work which is clearly communicated to them. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported by teachers and learning support assistants in lessons. They are provided with appropriately challenging tasks and helped to succeed with them. Pupils with English as an additional language succeed well.

129. The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school. Teachers plan their lessons successfully to motivate pupils. The very good relationships they establish with pupils result in high levels of co-operation and productive work. Teachers encourage pupils to think for themselves and to work creatively so that they obtain pride and satisfaction from their work. They encourage pupils to take responsibility for their work so that, for example, pupils work for extra time in the lunch hour prior to food lessons in Year 11. Teachers manage time well in lessons and provide a good variety of activities which keeps the lesson moving at a good pace and pupils maintain interest and concentration. Homework is effectively used to prepare for lessons and to extend learning. Pupils recognise the value of homework activities and the importance with which teachers regard it. Teaching methods are very effective because teachers know their pupils well and plan their work based on this, using good assessment procedures and using the information to build appropriately on skills and knowledge. The most able pupils are provided with challenging work which enables them to achieve their potential in the subject. Teachers have high expectations of good work from all pupils who respond positively. Pupils sometimes express delight in the results they achieve in lessons, for example, when they create a special effect with paint and fabrics in textiles.
130. A broad and balanced curriculum is provided which is very effectively planned to build skills and knowledge as pupils' progress through the school. There are well constructed schemes of work to guide teachers' planning for lessons. Pupils' work is thoroughly marked and teachers use the information they gain from their assessments to modify and improve the curriculum. Both teachers and pupils keep records of work so that they can see the progress being made.
131. Leadership and management of the department are very good. The Head of Department provides very clear direction for the work of the department and has the full co-operation of all members of staff. There is a very good team spirit and a shared and strong commitment to continue to raise standards. Good progress has been made since the time of the previous inspection. Standards have risen in Key Stage 3, very significant improvement has been made in GCSE results in food technology, pupils' evaluation skills are better and form a valuable part of the design process which helps to raise the overall standard of work and the work of the department is monitored more effectively. The department is well placed to continue to improve because of its evaluative approach to the development of the subject and the strong commitment of the department under very good leadership.

GEOGRAPHY

132. At the end of Key Stage 3 assessment of work by teachers and evidence from the inspection show that pupils reach satisfactory standards which match national expectations. At the end of Key Stage 4 standards of work are below those achieved nationally. Since the last inspection, the pass rate in the GCSE examination at grades A*-C has declined and has continued to do so over the past three years. The

pass rate at grades A*-G, however, is in line with national standards. The performance of boys is consistently lower than that of girls. This reflects to some extent the lower prior attainment of the groups choosing the subject but does not account for the fact that pupils generally perform less well in this subject than in others they study within the school. In the sixth form, the small number of pupils entered for Advanced Level makes comparisons with national standards difficult. For the last two years, all pupils have achieved a pass grade, although very few have achieved the higher grades of A-B.

133. During Key Stage 3, pupils build rapidly on their previous geographical knowledge and achieve well with good progress. They learn how to use geographical skills with confidence. For example, in a good lesson in Year 7, pupils collected and classified information from each other on their primary schools and travelling patterns, then transformed it into accurate graphs. The teachers encourage pupils to discover and use specialist vocabulary and to practise accurate writing to accompany their practical work. At the end of the key stage they understand some of the processes involved in the evolution of landscapes and the complexities and choices facing different communities. Information technology (ICT) is sometimes used to present their findings, for example, on regional contrasts in Italy. In a very good lesson in Year 9, the teacher's excellent resources enabled pupils to identify and describe tectonic processes accurately. They were encouraged to appreciate the force and dramatic nature of the natural world. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in their learning. The teachers have developed a wide range of materials for use by pupils with different levels of attainment. They have established good relationships with support staff who make valuable contributions to pupils' understanding during lessons. Pupils with higher levels of attainment are often encouraged to extend their learning. Regular, consistent marking of activities in class and homework helps all pupils to produce a good record of work in their books. Some pupils, however, do have difficulty in completing accurate written work. Occasionally their concentration and behaviour deteriorates so that learning opportunities are lost. At this stage there is no noticeable difference in the performance of boys and girls, or between pupils of different ethnic origin.
134. In Key Stage 4 pupils' achievements and progress are satisfactory when compared with their previous attainment. Pupils are encouraged to take a pride in the presentation of topics and to discuss the quality of their work in a mature way with their teachers. Opportunities are grasped in lessons to extend pupils' understanding, for example, of the plight of refugees and the distribution of immigrant communities in local areas. The teachers make very good use of the surrounding environment for fieldwork excursions. Pupils use these visits to generate meaningful independent enquiries on topics of local interest. They are able to develop their own ideas and to feel more confident in these activities as a result of the high quality training they receive from their teachers in techniques of data collection and handling. Many pupils do find this work difficult, however, and need a great deal of help and encouragement in its completion.
135. Pupils in the sixth form make satisfactory gains in knowledge and understanding throughout the advanced level course. During Year 13 they carry out individual studies, making good use of the training which they receive from their teachers during an intensive residential course in the previous year. They gradually develop more independent habits of work, occasionally using ICT skills for data collection and

processing. Through constant dialogue with their teachers, pupils are well aware of their level of attainment and how to improve upon their performance.

136. Teaching by full-time specialists is always at least satisfactory and, in two thirds of the lessons observed, it was good or very good in Key Stages 3 and 4. Both unsatisfactory lessons occurred in Key Stage 3. Specialist teachers have very good subject knowledge and they plan and prepare their lessons well. Stimulating resources are readily shared and used, thus adding to pupils' enjoyment of their work. Lessons which are most successful are those in which the aims are explained clearly to pupils, which proceed at a good pace and which have a variety of activities appropriate for all levels of attainment. The teachers make increasing use of information on pupils' previous levels of attainment in order to track their progress. Regular and thorough assessment of pupils' work is used to adapt lesson plans, for example, in the refinement of course work programmes in Year 11. The department makes every effort to support the achievement of boys, particularly in Years 10 and 11, without losing sight of the needs of the girls in these groups.
137. Members of staff whose main subject is not geography teach several classes in Years 7 and 8. Most lessons were satisfactory but two were judged to be unsatisfactory. In one lesson, pupils' learning was restricted by the time spent on a routine task with no geographical content. In the other, the lack of rigour and accuracy in the work provided, together with poor classroom management, created confusion in pupils' minds.
138. The department has made significant improvements since the last inspection, particularly in the use of assessment and the provision of appropriate materials for all levels of attainment. The head of department provides positive leadership and manages effectively with a high level of personal commitment. Strenuous efforts are made to overcome the staffing problems that the department faces and non-specialist teachers receive very good support to develop their geographical understanding and increase their skill in teaching when necessary. The head of department retains his high expectations against a background of lower levels of attainment in the GCSE examination than at the time of the last inspection. Priorities for the future are the development of the programme for monitoring and evaluating the work of all the teachers in the department which has been established over the last year, the continued sharing of best practice amongst colleagues and the extension of the use of ICT in lessons.

Points for development:

- Increase the amount of specialist teaching in the subject in Key Stage 3.
- Extend the use of ICT in lessons.
- Extend the monitoring of teaching and the sharing of best practice.

HISTORY

139. By the end of Key Stage 3 most pupils reach national expectations and average standards. Teachers' assessments and work seen during the inspection confirm these findings. By the end of Key Stage 4, at GCSE results vary year on year. They were better in 1998 than 1999 but still below national averages. The history department has already put in place strategies to improve the results. Standards of attainment in Key Stage 4 lessons are average. Careful target setting and monitoring of the progress of individual pupils ensures that the extra revision classes which are

provided focus on specific weaknesses. Standards at A-level are at the national average. After two years of small sixth form classes, numbers are increasing and in Year 12 there are two groups taking A/S history under the new curriculum arrangements.

140. The department is aware that achievement in history is adversely affected by poor literacy skills. Improvement in this area is a priority for this year. Teachers are insisting on correct sentence structure and the need to use precise English. Pupils are helped to set out their work properly by good guidance in how to organise and tackle their writing. Lists of the most used historical terms are posted in all history rooms. Higher attaining pupils write fluently and grammatically as Year 9 individual studies show. Inspection evidence indicates that standards of achievement are improving throughout the key stage. Pupils who entered the school with low prior attainment are making good progress. They are acquiring new or further developing, historical skills. The great majority are able to recognise bias and to see past the obvious facts. A Year 9 class working on the reasons why men joined up in 1914 are, with guidance, able to find examples of government propaganda and gain a good understanding of how propaganda is used. A Year 11 group studying the Middle East worked out the motives behind the British promise of a homeland for the Jews. Co-operation in class is good and pairs of Year 10 pupils successfully use primary sources to find out why casualties at Gallipoli were so heavy. In most classes the introductory questioning by the teacher shows that pupils have understood and can use information gained in the previous lesson or homework. A very new Year 7 class looking at contenders for the English throne in 1066 is well able to explain why a boy, however good his claim, cannot be king. Pupils ask questions and make comments but, except in the sixth form, rarely initiate discussion. Sixth formers interpret evidence well and use it effectively to construct an argument. The majority produce detailed and mature essays with well supported conclusions. In assessing an historical issue, they can appreciate the difference between what contemporaries saw and thought was happening and what, in fact, did happen. For example, students explained why the government feared revolution in 1918 and how, as a result, the provision of decent housing was accepted as a government responsibility for the first time.
141. The good progress made by pupils throughout the key stages is largely the result of good teaching. Teaching at Key Stage 3 is very good. In the sixth form it is always good and in a quarter of lessons very good. In Key Stage 4 sixty per cent of teaching is good and the rest satisfactory. Only one, atypical lesson at Key Stage 3 was unsatisfactory. Teachers create a safe environment. Pupils feel confident and learn quickly, effectively and with enjoyment. Confident, energetic teaching ensures that pupils are fully involved in lessons, their attention held and their concentration sustained. They know what is expected of them. The teacher provides a good outline framework for a topic but the information to fill it out is drawn from the class by patient questioning. The reinforcement of learning is good and pupils acquire good study habits from Year 7. Year 8 pupils discuss World War I propaganda and plan their work with a 'spider' diagram which helps them expand and organise their understanding of the topic before writing an exercise on the dangers of propaganda. Teaching methods are varied. Year 8 pupils studying the causes of the French Revolution follow an argument which links dissatisfaction with the gabelle, (salt tax) with that concerning the current petrol tax. The learning becomes relevant because it is put into a context which pupils understand. Year 9 pupils learning about life in the trenches were fascinated by the artefacts produced - a silent picket and a

cavalryman's penknife. They were horrified by descriptions of trench foot and mature enough to ask about the conditions in which German soldiers lived. A sixth form lesson on Lloyd George's Post War Government which combines careful questioning, discussion and vivid anecdotes provides both factual knowledge and intellectual stimulation. The management of classes is a strength of the department. Large and potentially restless Year 7 and 8 groups are kept active, involved and eager to contribute to the lesson. Planning and timing are good. Class exercises are not rushed and time is left for what has to be done. At the end of lessons instructions for homework leave no doubt. With senior classes, teachers' planning is flexible enough to amend a lesson plan and to extend a topic into the following session if the response from the class warrants it. Relationships between pupils and with teachers are very good. Courtesy and good humour are evident. Sixth formers appreciate being treated as the intellectual equals and learning partners of their teachers and fellow students.

142. The departmental policy for pupils with special educational needs is good. Materials closely matched to their needs are extensive. Simpler, foundation versions of standard textbooks are provided. Lower attaining pupils, for example, are given the opportunity to show an understanding of progression by arranging cartoon pictures of a developing situation in sequence instead of writing a paragraph. These pupils make progress in line with their peers. Able pupils make good progress and reach higher standards. The department has strategies in place to see if this progress is sufficient or underrated through scrutiny of their work and comparison with previous attainment.
143. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. It gives ample opportunity for pupils to gain an appreciation of other cultures, for example, Native American peoples, and to consider moral issues, for example, in their study of the holocaust. They also learn tolerance as they begin to realise that there are at least two sides to every question. The monitoring of academic performance is good. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored and the results used to decide whether extra resources or, for GCSE pupils, extra revision classes are required. Assessment procedures are in place and are being further refined through the 'Active Teaching File' which the department maintains. Assessment results are used well to adjust curricular plans. For example, a change of topic from the Middle East to the Cold War is currently being considered for Year 10.
144. The department is very well managed and efficiently led. It is progressive, forward looking and receptive to change. The work of the department is monitored effectively by the head of department through various administrative procedures. Teachers work as a team, for example, in building up the Active Teaching File in which good practice is shared and to which all staff contribute.
145. Resources and accommodation are good. The department does not yet have its own computers but has produced its own internet project on the Slave Trade and pupils use school facilities to word process their individual studies. There is an impressive collection of educational videos. The sixth form benefits from relevant academic periodicals.
146. Since the previous inspection work more closely matched to a range of pupils attainments has developed and improved. Marking is more diagnostic and more consistent across the department. A good collection of artefacts has been set up.

147. The history department has already identified and is working on identified weaknesses. Ways of extending higher attaining pupils and improving literacy across all groups are being developed in the Active Teaching File. A bid has been put in for two departmental computers. The introduction of more academic controversy, such as the consideration of disputes between professional historians is lacking at present. Such study stimulates discussion and teaches pupils how to deal with uncertainty.

Points for development:

- Increase the use of ICT across the subject.
- Consider introducing perspectives on more controversial issues.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

148. Standards of attainment match national averages at the end of Key Stage 3, 4 and by the end of the sixth form. There has been some variation in attainment over the last three years due to changes in provision for the subject. In 1999, the last year for which national comparisons can be made, teachers' assessments at the end of Year 9 indicated above average standards. Pupils do not follow GCSE courses in the subject. In the Sixth Form, students reach average standards in Advanced level examinations and GNVQ intermediate and advanced levels.
149. Standards of attainment are average at the end of Key Stage 3. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and use computers confidently to word process their work and to use simple databases and spreadsheets. In English, for example, they create pages for newspapers and in design technology they use publishing software to design packages for products. They write basic computer instructions to control lights and motors in design and technology and they measure environmental changes in science.
150. Standards of attainment are average at the end of Key Stage 4. All pupils have opportunities to study the subject and have a positive attitude to working independently to solve problems. They concentrate well in lessons which has a significant effect on the quality of learning and the standards they reach. They have the skills and knowledge to use computers to present coursework effectively and to research information for their projects. For example, they use computer software and the Internet for research. Pupils have a good understanding of the wider use of computers in society and good keyboard skills.
151. Standards of attainment are average in the sixth form. Pupils are appropriately entered for GNVQ and advanced level courses and have a sound understanding of the course content for each. Coursework is clearly and logically developed and students have a good understanding of the use of computers in society which they discuss in a mature manner.
152. In relation to their prior attainment, pupils achieve well in all key stages and make good progress. They systematically build skills and knowledge which they apply to tasks such as presenting information as charts and graphs or illustrated text. The quality of learning is significantly enhanced when pupils develop skills in the context of other subjects such as science, English and design and technology at all key stages. Because activities are presented in a meaningful way, pupils are interested and involved in lessons and see the work as meaningful and helpful to their studies

as well as providing enjoyment. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they have good facilities and they are provided with relevant and challenging tasks which help them to achieve targets identified in their individual education plans. In the sixth form, students apply themselves very conscientiously and maturely to tasks. Their uneven experience of using information and communications technology in earlier years means that Year 12 are currently beginning courses at a more basic level to consolidate learning on applications such as databases and spreadsheets which they are doing effectively. Students in Year 13 make good progress with more advanced work which requires higher order skills in aspects of the subject such as systems analysis and creating workable data capture forms.

153. The quality of teaching is good and better in eighty per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the rest. The teaching of subject specialists is very good. Teaching of the subject is effectively distributed between departments, most notably science, English and design technology. In other subject areas, many teachers have a good knowledge of how they can enhance their teaching through the use of information and communications technology and provide relevant and interesting tasks for pupils. For example, in music, they use computer software and keyboards and in modern foreign languages use computers to improve language skills. However, not all teachers are confident. The mathematics department does not contribute significantly to the programme but a good scheme of work for information and communications technology is in place, ready to be launched. Information and instructions are clearly communicated by teachers so that pupils can proceed with tasks confidently.
154. Teachers encourage pupils to work independently, to explore the potential of using computers and to solve problems which leads to good quality of learning in lessons. This is further enhanced by the receptiveness of pupils to learn. Teachers have high expectations of good work and behaviour in lessons to which pupils respond positively. Teaching methods are generally effective but occasionally do not actively involve pupils sufficiently during direct teaching sessions. The school has appointed a network manager to coordinate work across the school. She makes a good contribution to the smooth running of the department.
155. Management of the subject is good. The curriculum meets statutory requirements but there has been insufficient use of information and communications technology across the school. The school is fully aware of this and new arrangements for the management and implementation of the subject have now been put into place. There are good systems for assessing the work of pupils and co-ordinating their achievement across all subjects of the curriculum. Information gained from assessment is used to plan lessons and to modify the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. This includes the introduction of a more efficient and effective management system, improvement to the quality of resources and to the quality of teaching. Because of the effective arrangements for teaching aspects of the subject and the positive attitudes of most teachers to raising standards in the practical use of computers, the school is well placed to make good improvement in the future.

Points for development:

- Increase the use of ICT across the subjects of the curriculum.
- Provide appropriate training to increase the skills and confidence of teachers.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

156. Levels of attainment overall are below average. In 1999, the assessments that teachers made showed that by the end of Key Stage 3 pupils were close to national expectations, but just below.
157. By the end of Key Stage 4 when pupils leave the school, attainment is below national averages in both French and German. There has been some fluctuation in GCSE results between 1997 and 1999. The trend in French has been a slight drop in 1998 followed by a rise in 1999, while in German a slight rise in 1998 was followed by a drop in 1999. These fluctuations can be explained to a degree by uncertainties in staffing during this period. In general, girls have done better than boys, in line with the national trend, but the gap between boys' and girls' performance has not been as great as the national picture shows.
158. The number of students obtaining a pass at A-level in 1999 was 80 per cent in French and 100 per cent in German. These good results have to be seen in the context of the small number of students taking the examinations.
159. During the inspection levels of attainment for pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 seen in classrooms were in line with expectations. This is confirmed by the results of the assessments made by teachers. Pupils understand spoken language made up of familiar material, including references to past or future events; they can ask for and give information in simple terms, express opinions and refer to past experiences or future plans. Pupils understand a range of written material including references to past or future events, and note main points or details. They write in simple sentences asking for and giving information, and referring to past or future events. However, they need support in order to be able to do these things. They are less confident when that support is withdrawn. Progress of pupils in Key Stage 3 is satisfactory. Most make sound achievements from the time when they enter the school and meet the subjects for the first time.
160. The attainment of upper sets of pupils in Key Stage 4 is in line with expectations, while the attainment of lower sets of pupils is below average. Examination results at the age of 16 support this view. Pupils find it difficult to make the references to past or future events and they encounter problems when attempting to speak or write at any length and in these aspects have made insufficient progress.
161. Pupils with special educational needs also attain as well as can be expected in relation to pupils of the same age. Individual education plans (IEPs) for these pupils are available, and staff have adapted them to the requirements of the subject. Teachers have a good knowledge of the pupils in their groups who are on the Special Needs register. Learning support assistants (LSAs) are used to good effect with these pupils. Their work is jointly planned with the subject teacher, although other pressures mean that this planning does not always happen systematically.
162. The quality of teaching and learning overall is good. All teaching is satisfactory and better, and is good and better in nearly two thirds of lessons. It is very good in nearly one fifth of lessons. It is better in Key Stage 3 than in Key Stage 4 where there is some loss of motivation and the impact of earlier staffing difficulties has had an impact. The results of GCSE examinations and the assessments that teachers make at the end of Key Stage 3 confirm this view.

163. The good and very good teaching in the department shows the following characteristics. Teachers plan their lessons well, and make clear to pupils what is expected of them. The lessons follow a logical sequence of activities which help pupils learn in the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Teachers have a good command of the spoken language and use it regularly as a means of routine communication in the classroom as well as for the purposes of practice, which gives pupils a good model to imitate. There is a variety of activity which gives the lesson a sense of pace and progress. This means that pupils are occupied purposefully for the whole lesson. For example, pupils in a Year 8 lesson on parts of the body and minor illness took part well in whole class speaking work, played a communication game using an overhead projector, worked in pairs, concentrated well on a taped exercise, and consolidated their learning effectively with a reading exercise. Teachers are aware of the needs of the different learners in their classrooms, and plan work so that all can participate and experience success. Expectations of the pupils are high: teachers insist on accuracy and encourage pupils to participate in oral work which improves their confidence, pronunciation, intonation and fluency. Teachers are skilled at using a variety of working methods to ensure that pupils have opportunities to practise the language in a variety of different working situations, as individuals, in pairs and in groups. Pupils are engaged and participate willingly. Pupils' work is marked regularly. The helpfulness of the comments in showing pupils how to improve the next piece of similar work varies across the department. Teachers write comments in the foreign language to give pupils more opportunities to read and understand it but this again, is not done consistently.
164. The vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons and show positive attitudes to the subject. They are willing to work with their teachers towards common goals. They cooperate with each other in pair work and group work situations, and participate in listening activities with concentration and perseverance. On the rare occasion when behaviour is less acceptable, this is partly because the teacher has not used time in lessons quite as effectively. Approaches to discipline are low key but firm and fair.
165. The department is well led by an effective head of department who is a good classroom practitioner with vision and commitment to the subject. She gives clear educational direction to the work of the department. The department works together well as a team. Documentation is in good order. The schemes of work are appropriately pitched and sequenced so that pupils have opportunities to reach the levels expected of them. They await review in the light of changes to curriculum requirements from September 2000. At present, they do not identify opportunities for assessing pupils through the course materials closely enough. There is no statement about how the department contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. The arrangements for providing appropriate work for pupils at different levels is not refined to capitalise on the good experience the department now has.
166. Assessment procedures are in place, but the work done on providing a portfolio of exemplar material to show achievement at different levels is at an early stage. It is not always clear how teachers use the results of the assessments that they make to devise their subsequent teaching and curriculum planning.

167. The departmental development plan follows an appropriate format. Some of the targets identified for the department to meet are not easy to measure, and some of the resources needed to achieve the targets are not fully costed.
168. The department is staffed by well qualified specialist teachers who are for the most part teaching to their specialism.
169. The department is well housed in a suite of rooms in its own block. In recent months the rooms have been refurbished to a high standard. This has provided both staff and pupils with comfortable accommodation that is in excellent decorative order. The presence of carpet has contributed greatly to the improved acoustics in the block. Listening to tapes, speaking activities and chorus work is less intrusive in neighbouring classrooms and pupils have more opportunity to develop concentration without distraction, and to work co-operatively. The accommodation has helped in no small way to contribute to the fostering of the team spirit in the department. Each classroom is well provided with a whiteboard, an overhead projector and a good quality cassette player to support the teaching.
170. The current allocation of funds is satisfactory, and expenditure is prudently managed. There are sufficient textbooks for each pupil to have access in the classroom, although some groups have to share, and it is not always possible for pupils to take a textbook home.
171. Library provision is basic. The provision of more up-to-date readers and a greater variety of texts, including magazines is limited and inhibits wider reading.
172. The subject has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection. There is evidence of a high level of challenge in most lessons, either through the content and the material that pupils work with, or the expectation that the foreign language is the normal method of communication.
173. The use of ICT remains insufficient, although there is evidence that pupils are beginning to have access to word processing for some aspects of their work. While the department remains under-equipped in this respect it is hampered in developing this aspect of its work at an adequate pace.
174. There has been some progress made on teaching styles. Appointments made since the previous inspection have helped bring new perspectives to the work in the classroom.
175. Investment in published course materials in both languages has helped to give the work of staff a focal point, and has also helped reduce the amount of duplication of effort.

Points for development:

- Share good practice through the department to help increase the amount of good and very good teaching, with particular reference to the 14-16 age group.
- Make a more focused analysis of pupil performance data by gender and the follow-up monitoring of how boys and girls perform.

- Increase the use of ICT both in terms of the use of software and Internet access.
- Extend the range of reading material both within the department and the library, to include a variety of texts such as magazines and specific readers which will appeal to the age group.
- Exploit the portfolios of pupils' work more fully.

MUSIC

176. By the end of Key Stage 3 attainment overall is at least at expected levels and occasionally above. Girls are achieving higher standards than boys. This gap is more significant in those of lower attainment working towards, but not yet achieving expected levels. Results have improved by the end of Key Stage 3 since the previous inspection. Results in GCSE were lower in 1999 than in 1998. This reflected the different attainments of the pupils opting for the subject. In 1998, 62 per cent of pupils gained A*-C grades and 100 per cent gained A*-G. In the summer of 1999, results reached expected levels. Forty four per cent of pupils gained A*-C grades and 100 per cent of pupils gained A*-G. No pupils gained A* grade in either year. The decline in the percentage of pupils gaining standards of A*-C grades has been recorded by the department as the result of pupil change, one joining the course after one year and two pupils did not attend some elements of the course. The small number of pupils who take the subject at Key Stage 4 makes comparisons with national averages unreliable. In 1998 there were only 3 candidates for A-level music. All students gained a pass grade, two at the higher levels. There were no candidates for A-level music in 1999. The number of candidates for GCSE and A-level has fluctuated since the previous inspection. As a result it is not possible to describe trends accurately.
177. Current standards in music in Key Stage 3 are broadly in line with national expectations. A significant minority of pupils, including those who receive instrumental lessons, are achieving above average, especially in performance and composition skills. Standards of work seen at Key Stage 4 are in line with national expectations. Standards in the sixth form are above national expectations for the small number of pupils who take the subject.
178. The school does not receive information on pupils' prior attainment in music for Year 7 pupils from contributory primary schools. However, good departmental planning and schemes of work, meet the varied needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs well.
179. Taken as a whole, the quality of teaching is very good. Fifty per cent of the teaching is very good and better. All teaching in the sixth form is very good. More lessons were seen at Key Stage 3. In one lesson, at Key Stage 3 teaching was excellent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. The teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject and efforts are made to ensure that all pupils understand what is being taught and how they are to work through the set tasks. Activities to develop literacy skills, as well as those designed to give beneficial musical experiences, feature regularly in lessons. Staff are very skilled in using and teaching music technology. Keyboards and computers are used effectively by staff and pupils during most lessons. Lessons are well planned. Teachers use a wide range of strategies for teaching mixed ability classes which include pupils with special educational needs. Resources are well prepared in advance, lessons start promptly and full use is made of the time

available. Lessons are lively and pupils are offered a wide range of interesting activities. The department is supported very effectively by 9 peripatetic teachers who teach a wide range of instruments. The contribution they make towards preparing pupils for external examinations and performances is much valued.

180. The very good quality of teaching has a positive effect on pupils' learning and achievements so that pupils make good progress in all key stages. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as do those pupils with English as an additional language. Pupils are mostly well behaved and listen carefully. They respond well to quick question and answer sessions and follow instructions carefully, especially during practical sessions. They are offered a wide range of music and are equally enthusiastic about music from different cultures and times. In Key Stage 3, pupils are learning keyboard skills and making good progress. For example, in Year 7 they begin to learn co-ordination in playing with both hands and using all fingers. By the end of the key stage, in lessons seen and in recordings listened to, they are able to programme the keyboard, enabling them to compose and perform in a variety of styles with a choice of instrumentation and rhythm. Pupils who play other instruments and sing, are encouraged to use those skills in the classroom to good effect.
181. Pupils beginning their examination courses in Years 10 and 12 are enthusiastic, concentrate well and are working in line with GCSE and A-level examination requirements. One Year 13 student, working beyond expectations in music technology showed great motivation working successfully as a team with the teacher in highly specialised aspects.
182. Teaching staff are friendly and have a professional manner with the pupils. High standards of behaviour and manners are expected by staff. This results in an atmosphere that is totally conducive to good music making.
183. The music curriculum is broad and balanced and has adapted well to meets the needs of the new national curriculum. In particular the department has worked hard to include the development of singing in the classroom and in extra-curricular activities. Schemes of work are well planned and meet the needs of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs. School choirs and instrumental groups perform regularly in school and in the community. This year a group of pupils performed at the Dome, representing Calderdale. Parents are supportive towards the music department and give generous help with transport when needed.
184. The department has remedied the issue from the previous inspection and now has a more consistent approach to teaching. Good practice in teaching and the development of departmental planning is shared, and particular strengths of staff are used to full effect in the timetable arrangements. The department is aware of the weaker attainment of boys by the end of Key Stage 3, especially those working towards expected levels and is developing strategies to improve attainment. Existing links with the partner primary are insufficient so that schools do not share ideas on curriculum development and information on pupils' attainment in music.

Points for development:

- Raise the attainment of boys in Key Stage 3.
- Strengthen links with contributory primary schools.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

185. Inspection evidence shows that standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 are in line with national expectations and show an overall improvement compared to standards observed at the time of the previous inspection in 1996. Most pupils are competent and confident in a range of activities, which during the inspection included football, gymnastics, netball, hockey, badminton and basketball.
186. A total of 31 pupils sat the most recent GCSE short course examination in physical education. Of those 22.5 per cent achieved the higher A*-C grades. This represents a decline in the results from the previous year.
187. Only five students sat the A-level examination in Sports Studies. Four students obtained pass grades, three gaining a grade D and one a grade E.
188. Inspection evidence shows that standards of practical attainment among most pupils at Key Stage 4 are also in line with national expectations. Secondary evidence indicates that standards of work in the theoretical elements of the GCSE course are often below average. In part this may be a reflection of the school's previous entry policy in which a number of pupils who lacked the necessary interest or motivation were obliged to follow the examination course against their wishes. That approach has now been changed. A significant number of individual pupils at both key stages reach above average standards particularly in football, cricket, netball, athletics, hockey and cross-country running.
189. In relation to prior attainment most pupils achieve well and make good progress. For example, in Year 7 pupils' learning was particularly good in two introductory lessons involving badminton and netball. The same positive rate of progress was seen in a Year 9 girls' basketball group where the girls were experiencing the game for the first time. Boys in Year 9 who had played basketball before were able to build upon their existing level of skill very effectively. Pupils with special educational needs who are fully integrated into all physical education lessons also progress well. Progress is at least satisfactory at Key Stage 4 where pupils consolidate and extend skills acquired earlier as well as experiencing new activities. Most sixth form students who opt for the A-level course in Sports Studies make satisfactory progress.
190. The curriculum offered now meets national curriculum requirements which was not the case at the time of the last inspection. Extra-curricular provision remains very good and offers additional learning opportunities for pupils of all ages. During the inspection, which took place during only the second week of the term, activities that included football and netball were extremely well attended by large groups of enthusiastic pupils. The full programme of activities, which involves all members of the physical education department supported by several other colleagues, is impressive.
191. The attitude of pupils towards physical education is extremely positive. Levels of participation are high throughout the school. Almost all pupils listen carefully to instructions and co-operate with others very willingly in practices aimed at improving their level of performance. They are aware of safety aspects and they treat the equipment with respect. Behaviour in almost all lessons is very good. Pupils are correctly dressed for physical activity and most participate enthusiastically and with enjoyment.

192. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and in more than half of lessons teaching is good or very good. Most of the very good teaching was seen in Key Stage 3 Although four of the teachers seen during the inspection were new to the school and were meeting groups for only the first or second time, they quickly succeeded in establishing positive relationships with pupils resulting in purposeful and productive lessons. Within the department generally class management is efficient and effective. In most cases lessons begin with an appropriate warm-up and objectives are explained very clearly. Good use is made of time, space and resources. In some lessons pupils could become more actively involved in their own learning. However teachers have recognised this and at Key Stage 4 units on coaching and officiating and work on developing fitness-training programmes are being introduced this term.
193. The weakness relating to planning, evaluation and personal performance analysis amongst boys that were mentioned in the previous report have been rectified. Thorough attention has also been given to the safety aspect mentioned which concerned the organisation of some outdoor activities. Until the start of the current year boys and girls were still regarded as being in two separate departments but that is in the process of rapid change. The new head of department who took up his post only a week before the inspection began faces the task of re-uniting the two sections under one curriculum area to bring about a more consistent approach to teaching and learning. Good progress has already been made in this respect. Changes already introduced this term at Key Stage 3 include some mixed gender teaching groups, the introduction of badminton and an expansion of the outdoor and adventurous activities programme. At Key Stage 4 option choices have been introduced for all pupils in Year 10 and in the GCSE theory lessons the previous inequalities in the size of teaching groups has been rectified. Teachers are working effectively as a united team and share a commitment to raise standards particularly among examination pupils.
194. There are currently no timetabled recreational opportunities for sixth form students and there is only very limited use of ICT to support learning. Accommodation and resources for physical education are very good. The recently opened sports hall, which includes a well-equipped fitness suite and two classrooms, is an excellent new facility. The playing fields are also extensive but the number of used bottles and drink cans on the field poses a potential risk to pupils taking part in games.

Points for development:

- Extend the use of ICT to support learning.
- Involve pupils more actively in their own learning where it does not already occur.
- Ensure that the playing fields are free of hazardous litter.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

195. At Key Stage 4 most pupils follow a non-examination course and only relatively small numbers have been entered for the full GCSE examination in the last few years. Nearly half the pupils entered for the GCSE short course in 1999 and 2000 obtained grades A*-C. These are good results for the pupils but there are no national data available with which this attainment can be compared. In the sixth form in 1997 and 2000, when very small numbers of pupils took A-level examinations, all pupils gained at least grade C so results were well above the national average.

196. Inspection findings show that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with national expectations. As pupils' ability on entry to the school is below the national average, their progress in Key Stage 3 is therefore good. They acquire a sound understanding of Christianity and other major world faiths. They use religious terms and concepts accurately in their written work and in their oral responses in class. Much of their written work shows personal reflection on the significance of religious belief and practice; they are able to relate the experiences of other people to experiences in their own lives. Pupils in Year 7 write thoughtfully of Abraham's feelings on being asked to sacrifice his son and have a good grasp of the concept of sacrifice. Pupils in Year 8 begin to understand the complex nature of God in the Hindu religion by reflecting on the variety of roles each has in his or her own family, school and friendship groups. By Year 9 pupils have a sensitive and thoughtful understanding of why people pray and show some insight into understanding the widespread need for belief in something above and beyond the rational and mundane. Pupils with special educational needs show equally good insight into religious beliefs and practices, though they are often able to express this better orally than in writing. All pupils show considerable respect for the beliefs of others and regard religious practices which are not their own as activities which are reasonable and valuable to believers. Progress in knowledge skills and understanding of the subject is good at this Key Stage.
197. Achievement in Key Stage 4 is below national expectations. Pupils following the modular course which tackles topics in short sequences show good awareness of the complexity of moral and social issues such as euthanasia and abortion, of marriage and divorce. Pupils following the GCSE short course in Year 10 reveal a good grasp of four different forms of love and a familiarity with features of Christian love as illustrated in the New Testament. However, the limited time available for pupils on the modular course means that although some pupils produce work of a good standard, most are unable to complete sufficient work to cover the GCSE course adequately or to meet the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus of the Local Education Authority. Although a teacher of religious education contributes to the study of some moral issues in the General Studies programme, religious education is not offered in the sixth form and the lively awareness and engagement in the subject shown by pupils in Key Stage 3 is lost. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language make progress in line with their peers. Progress is good at Key Stage 3 and unsatisfactory at Key Stage 4.
198. All teaching at both key stages is satisfactory or better. At Key Stage 3 over half is good and very good (fifty seven per cent). At Key Stage 4 one quarter is good and three quarters satisfactory. Almost all lessons are strengthened by the teachers' very good subject knowledge and their enthusiasm for sharing it with their pupils. In the best lessons this knowledge is used effortlessly to inform and enliven pupils' learning and to engage pupils' interest so that they are attentive to the teacher and are keen to learn and to work. Teachers always use accurate subject specific language and explain difficult concepts with clarity, often by effective use of analogy or the use of everyday objects, as when explaining the multiplicity of forms of God in Hinduism to a class in Year 8. This ensures that pupils understand well and acquire a vocabulary that helps them to explore further and give precision to their understanding. Where teaching is good, discipline is quietly but very effectively maintained, often with gentle humour and always with good humour, and the class is managed in a way that engages all pupils in discussion and shared learning. Lessons where the teaching is satisfactory only have less secure discipline and learning is less certain. However,

relationships between pupils and with their teachers are always good and are mostly very good. Pupils show mutual respect for those of other faiths. In lessons on Islam in Year 9, Christians, Moslems and non-believers shared their understanding of the importance of prayer in Islam and the difficulties faced in maintaining the proper practice of prayer while living in Britain. In all lessons seen during the inspection, pupils with special educational needs generally cope well with the demands placed upon them, but their difficulties in literacy slow their progress on occasions and they cannot always complete their work in the time available. Since the last inspection, teachers have successfully developed the use of longer pieces and more creative writing by all pupils. These weaknesses, which were commented on at the last report, have now been remedied.

199. Most lessons in Key Stage 4 and some in Key Stage 3 were taken by an outside speaker during the inspection. The teaching was satisfactory but on occasions incorrect or illogical assertions were presented as fact which diminished the effectiveness of using an external stimulus to present new topics. Evidence of the school's own teaching in Key Stage 4 indicates that it is of the same good quality as in Key Stage 3. In a lesson in the Year 10 GCSE short course a lively, engaging teaching style, with much expected of pupils, secured good learning. A Year 11 GCSE class shared personal experiences of Christianity and Islam to come to a deeper understanding of the Islamic idea of God.
200. A very small group of pupils in Year 11 follow a full GCSE course. All other pupils in Key Stage 4 follow either a modular course, nationally validated, or the GCSE short course. This is taught for one period per week in half term blocks – for the other half of the term, pupils are timetabled for physical education instead of religious education. This creates discontinuity in teaching and does not provide sufficient time to meet the requirements of the Local Agreed Syllabus. No religious education is taught in the sixth form. It is planned that the time allocation for religious education in Key Stage 4 will be increased next year, but at present the school is in breach of statutory requirements to offer religious education in the sixth form and to cover adequately the Agreed Syllabus in Key Stage 4. A further weakness in curricular provision is the lack of use of information technology by pupils for research or for presentation of their work.
201. The department has continued to be well led and managed through a series of changes of leadership. The department is well staffed with the subject taught almost entirely by three well qualified and experienced teachers. There are two specialist classrooms enlivened by displays relevant to religious education. Since the last inspection the policy on assessment has been revised and pupil self assessment introduced, but there is still a lack of more formal assessment which would let pupils know, objectively, how well they are doing and what they should do to improve further. Through circumstances beyond the control of the department there is still no statutory religious education in the sixth form, which was noted in the last inspection report.

Points for development:

The department should:

- Develop further its assessment policy to include more formal assessment.

The school should:

- Offer religious education to the sixth form.
- Carry out the planned increase in time allocation for religious education in Key Stage 4.

VOCATIONAL AND OTHER SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE INSPECTION

Short reports on other subjects are given. These were not specified in the contract but make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

BUSINESS EDUCATION

202. Business education is offered in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. Standards are at least average in Key Stage 4. Of the large group of 61 pupils who entered the GCSE examination in 1999 just over half gained the higher grades A*-C in line with the national average. These results also show that they do better in this subject than in other subjects of their curriculum. Standards have been maintained in the group who took the GCSE examination in 2000. Students in the sixth form achieve above average results. In the 1999 A-level course all of the 12 students gained a pass grade in the A-E range, a quarter at the highest A-grade. In the current Year 12 a large group of 22 students are being well inducted into the course for AS level. In lessons students at this early stage show that they are on track to achieve the objectives of the courses they are studying. Scrutiny of work of Year 13 pupils shows average and occasionally above average standards.
203. Teachers show good subject knowledge which holds the interests of the pupils and stimulates alert and attentive learning. Lessons are well planned and well structured and make good use of the contributions which pupils make. As a result they broaden their understanding and extend their knowledge. All teaching is satisfactory and some is very good. The very good teaching is characterised by lively, animated questions, very effective demonstrations of computer skills and excellent, genial but demanding relationships. The teacher generates confidence helping pupils to understand essential concepts as she teaches effectively some basic core skills. As a result students work hard and effectively. One well supported sixth form student with a statement of special educational needs increased and reinforced her ICT skills and understanding of the topic very well. Students are generally well motivated at each at all stages of their learning and see the purpose of their work. Learning is less effective when older students play a less active part and are too quiet in lessons so that they lose opportunities to clarify and extend their thinking.
204. Teachers' practical and theoretical planning is thorough and leads to systematic and demanding courses.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

205. During the inspection, levels of attainment seen in Key Stage 3 lessons were in line with expectations in terms of the skills pupils are developing through their study of the subject. They interpret source material, write imaginatively and at length, and work co-operatively. Their knowledge of the Latin language is developing; they learn vocabulary at a satisfactory rate and their awareness of grammar is increasing so

that by the end of the key stage they are already dealing with some quite complex constructions.

206. The inclusion of Latin and Classical Studies in the school curriculum provides an enrichment of educational opportunity for pupils. It makes a significant contribution to the development of both linguistic and analytical skills and enhances their cultural awareness. Levels of attainment are above average. By the age of 16, when pupils leave school, examination results show that in 1999 almost half the students who followed courses in the subject gained a GCSE grade between A* and C. There has been some inconsistency in results over the last three years, with a similar level of attainment in 1997 being followed by a significant drop in results in 1998. There has been a good level of success at A-level, in line with the level of prior attainment of the students.
207. Pupils with special educational needs attain as well as expected in relation to pupils of similar age. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for these pupils are available. Staff have adapted them according to the requirements of the subject. Teachers know these pupils well and plan their work to enable pupils to make progress.
208. Study of the subject makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy, and they also acquire a wider-ranging awareness of language in general, for example, through work done on derivation of words.
209. The quality of teaching and learning overall is good. All teaching is satisfactory and better; it is good in nearly three quarters of lessons. Good teaching shows the following characteristics. Lessons are well planned and structured. Pupils are made aware of what is expected of them and teachers check their learning at the end. Teachers are aware of the different needs of the pupils working at different levels and provide appropriate material to enable them to make progress and experience success. For example, in a Year 9 lesson different ways of organising writing were provided so that pupils could produce written work at their own level. There is less emphasis on teacher direction and more responsibility is placed on the pupils for developing their own learning. Pupils are invited to speculate, hypothesise and make inferences and connections based on the material presented to them by the teacher. In a Year 7 introductory lesson on archaeology pupils were invited to establish connections between photographs of artefacts, for example. They were then invited to write imaginatively about them. There is a variety of activities and lessons move at a good pace. Pupils work confidently in different groupings within the lesson; in pairs and in small groups as well as individually.
210. Pupils behave well in lessons and show positive attitudes to the subject. They show perseverance and concentration, as, for example, in a Year 11 lesson where pupils were working with a demanding text. They help each other unbidden when in difficulty. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and manage pupils well in a relaxed but purposeful atmosphere which increases motivation.
211. The department is well led by a good classroom practitioner who provides colleagues with a clear educational direction for the work of the department. She has a great sense of commitment to the subject. Documentation is of a high order, with schemes of work that are detailed and appropriately pitched and sequenced. There is no statement on how the subject contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural

development of pupils although it does so significantly. The appropriate assessment procedures in place include a detailed form which allows pupils to reflect on their own performance and assess their own progress. Marking is regular and supportive, although in the Key Stage 4 age groups there is sometimes insufficient guidance as to how to improve the next piece of similar work.

212. The subject development plan is well structured with appropriate priorities for action.
213. The department is staffed by well qualified full-time specialist teachers who teach to their specialism. The small amount of part-time teaching does not have any negative impact on standards.
214. The department is well housed in a suite of rooms that are comfortably furnished and carpeted which helps to produce an atmosphere conducive to study. Each classroom is well equipped with a white board and overhead projector. There are not sufficient textbooks for each pupil to have their own copy. However, resourcing of the department is enhanced by contributions from outside agencies such as the Hellenic society.
215. Library provision is adequate, with some reference works and some works of literature. The department's use of ICT in mainstream lessons is insufficient.

Points for development:

- Increase the use of ICT both in terms of software and Internet access.
- Broaden still further the range of teaching and learning styles to create even greater variety of experience for pupils.

ECONOMICS

216. Economics is offered as an option in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. In 1999 of the ten pupils entered seven gained a pass at grades A*-C and nine in grades A*-G showing good standards of attainment. Of the six students entered for A-level in 1999, all gained a pass grade at A-E and half gained grade B. Although national comparisons are difficult with such small numbers the individual standards of attainment are good for the pupils and students who take the subject. No candidates were entered for the 2000 examination, but there is a small group of 4 students in Year 13 due to take the examination in 2001. There is no economics group in the current Year 12.
217. Teaching in the small number of Key Stage 4 lessons seen proceeds at a lively pace. Pupils' interest and enthusiasm is maintained. Good teaching in the sixth form enables pupils to consolidate their previous knowledge, clarify their ideas and have confidence to debate their views with each other.
218. Economics is a very successful part of the business studies department. An experienced and efficient head of department plans effectively for the fluctuating numbers of pupils who opt to study the subject and provides very supportive help to colleagues.

219. The school is fortunate in the expertise and flexibility of staff in the department which also offers law as an 'A' and AS level option. In the current Year 12, nineteen students have begun the course and are again being well inducted into their new studies and responding well.

GNVQ particularly Health and Social Care

220. Health and social care is offered at Foundation, and Intermediate levels at Key Stage 4 and at Intermediate and Advanced levels in the sixth form. Many of the pupils taking these courses have low prior attainment. The school's intense monitoring, support and counselling programmes and close links with parents ensure that they finish the courses and achieve success. The small number of candidates make year on year comparisons difficult. Courses and numbers have increased from 1999 to 2000 for which much more detailed information is available. Taken together all the advanced GNVQ courses (including advanced business and information technology achieved a 71 per cent pass rate; In health and social care completion and success rate was 100 per cent. On the intermediate courses taken completion rates overall were 100% for both health and social care and business studies. The 67 per cent completion rate for intermediate information technology reflect the lower level of skills, knowledge and understanding with which pupils begin the course. No national comparisons are available.
221. In Key Stage 4 lessons, where pupils had commenced the course in June after the main examination period, progress over the six teaching weeks was very evident. Pupils write carefully if sometimes slowly but their work shows increasing precision in the use and understanding of technical vocabulary e.g. stamina or suppleness in relation to an exercise on fitness. In Year 12 lessons pupils make very good oral contributions.
222. Teaching and learning are at least good, two thirds is very good. In Key Stage 4 clear, capable and competent teaching with clear rules gives good support and direction to learning. Pupils show increased independence in researching their work and in sharing their findings with the class. The teaching encourages full physical and intellectual effort from pupils. Short well-timed activities help pupils to think for themselves and come to sound judgements. Teachers emphasise responsibility for attendance in those whose patterns of attendance have been weaker than the rest. There is good emphasis on aspects of literacy such as spelling and structuring written responses.
223. Lessons have a very good introduction which captures the attention of students. The teacher establishes a very good, stimulating atmosphere where mutual respect is established. In a sixth form lesson on provision for the elderly straight talk, humour, and excellent reference to features to which students could relate helped them learn sensitively about the ageing process. Stereotypical views were challenged, students' own experience was valued and shared; for example, distress at the condition of grandparents. Moral issues were explored, such as the discovery of stealing. Very good links to future work were made explicit.
224. Overall, the courses make a very good contribution to pupils' personal development not least in understanding the response of the human spirit in health and in adversity. The students' theoretical and academic understanding increases as does confidence in their own abilities to contribute to those around them and in the wider world.

NAME OF OTHER SUBJECT INCLUDED IN THE INSPECTION

SIXTH FORM

225. The presence of a sixth form in the school enhances the school's standing in the community, and has a positive effect on recruitment to the school at age 11. The entry requirements for the sixth form are wide and inclusive to provide opportunities for pupils of average and higher attainment as well as those with special educational needs. Those students aiming for at least two full, two year Advanced level courses require four GCSE subjects at grade 'C' or better to proceed. However pupils with lower attainments are offered courses at AS level as well as GNVQ's at Intermediate and Advanced levels. Occasionally the school will offer foundation level starts if this is appropriate to the further education of students with lower prior attainment.
226. In 1999, by the age of 18, when students leave the school, attainment was above average. Students at Brooksbank gained an A-level points score higher than the national average.
227. A basic analysis of the income the school receives against the cost of providing tuition suggests that sixth form provision at the school is subsidised to an extent by the lower years. This has to be seen in the light of current discussions between head teachers and the local education authority on levels of funding allocation for this element of the school's work which is lower than for other post-16 provision. The subsidy is to a degree counterbalanced by the fact that working at advanced levels actually enhances the skills of the teachers, which in turn improves the experience for younger pupils.
228. The wide curriculum is determined largely by student demand, although in the interests of prudent financial management some courses that do not recruit in sufficient numbers do not run. The curriculum is appropriate for a sixth form of its size, and is further enhanced by a varied enrichment programme. In addition, a form period was introduced last year to give students closer contact with their pastoral tutors. There is no provision within the curriculum for religious education, which does not meet statutory requirements. There is some consideration of moral and social issues through the General Studies programme. This often involves outside speakers, for example, a planned visit by the Bishop of Wakefield's pastoral team in November this year to run sessions on the family.
229. The school monitors the performance of students both in terms of their performance in subjects and their personal welfare. The school is currently evaluating two different packages for measuring value added, although nothing formal is in place at the moment. Students have regular opportunities to discuss their progress and raise issues of concern with their group tutors in a series of planned one-to-one interviews. The head teacher and head of sixth form regularly inspect samples of students' work. The school analyses where students go after leaving and is beginning to use this information to help students make realistic choices after their GCSE results and before starting courses in the sixth form.
230. The teaching of the key skills of numeracy, literacy and information and communications technology (ICT) is gradually developing. Links with Bradford University and local employers have stressed the value of key skills to students. Numeracy will be the first of the key skills to be placed on a formal footing this year.

231. The allocation of time to subjects for AS Level this year is towards the minimum identified in effective sixth forms, at 4 hours per subject. There are some subjects in which both AS and full 2 year A-level students are taught together, but this affects only a small number of subjects, such as music, design and technology and art.
232. The guidance programme is equally focused on helping students into work and into higher education. For example, the school has secured valuable support from the Halifax Building Society which helps students understand the importance of presenting themselves well during the process of applying for a job.
233. The school provides satisfactory facilities for private study, a feature monitored by teachers to ensure that students make efficient use of their time outside lessons. The designated area for the use of ICT by sixth form students in the library is used well.
234. Interviews with students and an analysis of questionnaires show that students respond well to what is provided for them in the sixth form at Brooksbank. They praise their teachers' helpfulness and encouragement, they appreciate what is provided for them in terms of the social aspects of their life at Brooksbank, for example, the common room. They make favourable comparisons with their expectations of life at a college of further education based on what they describe as a close-knit community and their relationships with their teachers. There is a sense of community among the students. A team-building exercise carried out during the inspection gave pupils an opportunity to work together outside the pressures of the classroom, and was enjoyed by all who participated in it. They take responsible positions in the life of the rest of the school, for example, participating in paired reading schemes with Year 7 pupils and helping to mentor younger pupils as part of an anti-bullying strategy. They also assist with the recently introduced numeracy lessons for Year 7 pupils.

Points for development:

- The introduction of religious education into the curriculum, to comply with statutory requirements.
- The adoption of a system for analysing value added between GCSE and GCE A-level, and GCSE and vocational qualifications.