

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS COUNCIL
(ISC)**

INSPECTION OF

**QUEEN ELIZABETH GRAMMAR SCHOOL,
WAKEFIELD**

By the

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE
(ISI)**

on

November 10 – 14th, 2003

MAIN REPORT

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INSPECTION REPORT ON

QUEEN ELIZABETH GRAMMAR SCHOOL, WAKEFIELD

Full Name of the School	Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Wakefield		
DfES Number	3846115		
Address	154 Northgate, WF1 3QX		
Telephone Number	01924 373943		
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E-mail Address	Office@qegsss.org.uk		
Name of Headmaster	Mr M R Gibbons		
Spokesman	Rev. Canon R Gage		
Age Range	11 - 18	Gender	Boys
Number of Pupils	709	Number of Boarders	None
Inspection Dates	10 – 14 November, 2003		

This inspection report follows the framework laid down by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). The inspection was carried out under the arrangements of the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership. It was also carried out under Section 163(1)(b) of the Education Act 2002, under the provisions of which the Secretary of State for Education and Skills has accredited ISI as the body approved for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to ISC Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003.

The school must not quote the report selectively in the school prospectus or other promotional literature.

The inspection does not examine the financial viability of the school or investigate its accounting procedures. The inspectors check the school's health and safety procedures and comment on any significant hazards they encounter: they do not carry out an exhaustive health and safety examination. Their inspection of the premises is from an educational perspective and does not include in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features.

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1. MAIN FINDINGS

Overall Summary

- 1.1 Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Wakefield has significant strengths in many areas. It serves the needs of the pupils well, offering a rounded and fulfilling education in a secure, caring environment with imaginative support and an excellent induction programme for pupils. Among its strengths are its pleasant atmosphere, which is both disciplined and friendly, its hard-working, dedicated staff and its strong leadership. Links with the other schools in the Foundation provide many advantages, notably in governance and economic use of resources. There is a need to strengthen certain areas of management and to develop some aspects of the teaching.

What the School Does Well

- 1.2
- In their attitudes and behaviour the pupils reflect great credit on the school. They are courteous and respectful towards adults, proud of their school and supportive of each other.
 - The staff act as excellent role models for the pupils, setting the high standards of courtesy and care that they expect from them.
 - The quality of pastoral care provides the pupils with a secure environment in which they can grow and flourish in a community at ease with itself.
 - The achievements in public examinations in the last two years are outstanding, showing significant improvements at all levels and setting standards for the future.
 - The extra-curricular programme provides a rich and varied choice of activities for pupils to develop interests and talents, and to grow as well balanced young men.
 - The governors, the headmaster and the senior management team provide strong leadership, setting clear aims and standards, with a sense of direction and purpose, and giving the staff a strong feeling of confidence in the school and of pride in its achievements.

What the School Should Do Better

- 1.3
- The teaching in the school has proved extremely successful in achieving very good results in public examinations, but less so in encouraging independent learning or initiative in the pupils.
 - The management by heads of department is variable and the clear expectations set out for them are not consistently carried out as required.

Standards of Attainment and Progress in Subjects

- 1.4 Pupils achieve very good standards overall in relation to their abilities. Results in public examinations at GCSE over the last three years have been consistently above the national average for boys in maintained selective schools, and far above them in the level of A* and A grades obtained in 2003. The improvement in these grades over the last three years is also far above the level of improvement for boys in maintained selective schools. Results at A Level have also been consistently above the national average for boys in terms of passes, and

far above them with their percentage of A and B grades. In relation to the school's intake both sets of results are outstanding achievements.

- 1.5 In just over four-fifths of the lessons seen attainment was good or very good in relation to pupils' capability, being particularly high on the occasions when pupils were able to work independently and were challenged to think creatively. Students are articulate, and both oral and literacy skills are of a high standard.
- 1.6 In lessons observed at Key Stage 3 and in the sixth form there was sometimes insufficient opportunity for rapid progress to be made, particularly by the most able.
- 1.7 Weaker pupils, including those in need of learning support, are generally well catered for. These pupils generally progress well, although they do not always receive the extra help they need in the classroom. Outside the classroom there are many opportunities for pupils to be extended, and a number have achieved considerable success.

The Quality of Pupils' Learning, Attitudes and their Behaviour

- 1.8 The ethos of the school is clearly conducive to constructive relationships between pupils and with teachers and others at the school. Behaviour is very good and the very few examples of indiscipline noted were dealt with firmly and well.
- 1.9 On entry to the school clear standards for personal behaviour are set, which are well maintained. Both in class and in other situations, pupils show respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others.
- 1.10 Learning and behaviour were very good in almost half the lessons observed and good or better in nearly 90% of lessons. Pupils are eager to learn and enjoy doing so. They concentrate over long periods in class and ask questions that demonstrate their interest and their retention of knowledge from previous lessons.
- 1.11 Some evidence was seen of collaborative work in lessons, but this was not widespread and the overall view was that the majority of lessons did not invite initiative. That the library is under-used by most departments for promoting research is an indication of this.

The Quality of Teaching

- 1.12 The quality of teaching overall is always satisfactory, usually good and often very good. It complies with the regulatory requirements, as does the school's teaching policy. The school has made significant advances in the quality of its teaching in recent years and is well placed to develop more opportunities for the pupils' independent learning. In most subjects the needs of all students (including those needing learning support and those for whom English is not the first language) are properly catered for, although in lessons observed there was little evidence of differentiation.
- 1.13 The teaching staff are knowledgeable and have a secure, and in many cases excellent, understanding of their subject areas. There is evidence that pupils are challenged and extended academically, although this is not always the experience of the most able students.
- 1.14 Planning and organisation are always very good and sometimes exemplary. Time is normally used efficiently, although the level of pupil involvement over a fifty-minute period is at times limited. There are many examples of very good practice evident in the school which could, with benefit, be disseminated.

Other Aspects of the School

Attendance

- 1.15 Arrangements for checking attendance meet in full the regulatory requirements, and attendance levels are very good.

Assessment and Recording

- 1.16 Systems for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress are generally thorough, and appropriate for the age of pupils, their particular needs and their development.
- 1.17 Most departments have well documented assessment policies and departmental mark schemes. The quality of the best marking is very good. At the other end of the scale the marking in some departments is inconsistent, cursory and perfunctory.
- 1.18 Records of examination results are kept centrally to provide a full and useful resource for monitoring of attainment and progress, both for departments and for the pastoral system. The information is used effectively to monitor progress, to determine curriculum decisions and to plan future developments.
- 1.19 On entry to Year 7 all pupils are screened for their literacy ability, and those that show weakness in this area undergo further testing and may be given support within the school on a withdrawal basis.

Curriculum

- 1.20 The school's curriculum is broadly based and balanced, contributing effectively to pupils' academic and personal development. The whole-school curriculum is further enhanced with a range of extra-curricular activities. The curriculum provides appropriate experience of linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human, social, physical, aesthetic and creative areas of study.
- 1.21 In Year 7 all pupils follow a common curriculum. It is broad and well balanced. In Years 8 and 9 a second language is introduced. In Years 10 and 11 the curriculum is flexible, to accommodate the wishes of the pupils. The sixth form curriculum is suitably broad and pupils have a free choice of option subjects. However, opportunities for academic curriculum enrichment are limited in the sixth form to an examined general studies course in Year 13. No formal arrangements exist for the consideration of personal, moral or philosophical issues within the sixth form curriculum.
- 1.22 The curriculum is positively enriched by activities beyond the timetable, notably music, residential visits home and abroad, expeditions, foreign trips and sports tours.

Teaching and Non-teaching Staff

- 1.23 The teaching staff are a strength of the school; they are dedicated, well informed and fully committed to the interests of the pupils. The support staff also make a full and effective contribution to the efficient running of the school.
- 1.24 Teachers are given sufficient non-contact time for marking and preparation of lessons, and many are granted additional time for management responsibilities. The deployment of both the teaching and support staff is generally effective.

- 1.25 A detailed performance management scheme has been introduced, which includes observation of lessons and target setting, and is expected to run on a regular cycle. The staff handbook gives good guidance to new members of staff.
- 1.26 Appropriate Criminal Record Bureau records are held for all teaching staff who have been employed since 2002 and certain other staff who have contact with pupils. Checks on medical fitness do not occur. Certain others working at the school are not checked at all and some of these staff do have contact with pupils. The school must carry out CRB checks for these members of staff and carry out medical checks on all staff.

Resources for Learning

- 1.27 The quality of resources for learning is very good. The investment in resources for learning allows the school's curriculum to be fully and effectively supported.
- 1.28 The budget allocation system works well and gives heads of department management responsibility. There are very good resources dedicated to sport, field trips and other visits which support these activities.
- 1.29 The school is very well equipped with ICT facilities. A considerable amount of investment has been made over the past year, which has included interactive whiteboards. This should help the school to better achieve its aim of increasing the use of ICT to support teaching and learning across the curriculum.

Libraries

- 1.30 The learning resource centre (library) is situated in the main school building and offers a supportive, although poorly lit, environment for users. The central situation and use as a thoroughfare create problems of noise and security, and a new centre is planned for 2005. Management of the centre is vigorous and imaginative in the promotion of reading. Nevertheless, book issuing figures for pupils are low.
- 1.31 Most departmental libraries are well stocked, but liaison between departments and the manager is limited, and little interest is shown in the resource centre beyond a general acknowledgement of its adequacy.

Premises and Accommodation

- 1.32 The overall quality of the premises and accommodation is good. The buildings, accommodation and other facilities are adequate and appropriate for the numbers, abilities and ages of the pupils. The main school buildings occupy an attractive site in a city environment. The site is restricted in size but is used efficiently and enables the curriculum to be delivered effectively.
- 1.33 Extensive and well maintained playing fields are in close proximity and provide an outstanding facility. The sports hall is a valuable resource for indoor use and is heavily used both within and outside the curriculum. In the dining area, space is cramped and this part of the building lacks graciousness. It is the intention of the school to embark on an extensive building programme in the near future.

Links with Parents and the Community

- 1.34 The school has developed highly effective links with pupils' parents, who are provided with good information about the school at different stages of their children's school careers. The pupils' homework diary provides an excellent means of communication between tutors and parents.

- 1.35 Many opportunities exist for parents to become involved with the life of the school. The school handles parental concerns with due care and deals with complaints in accordance with the regulatory requirements.
- 1.36 Links with the community are numerous, extensive and mutually beneficial, and there are routine weekly collections on behalf of the school charities. The school's sporting facilities are used by a variety of societies and clubs throughout the year. Music performed by pupils is provided at all kinds of events in the community and the school has good connections with local industry.

Pupils' Personal Development

- 1.37 Good opportunities exist within the curriculum for pupils to reflect on faith and to develop a sense of wonder. The atmosphere in full school assemblies is characterised by a sense of dignity, conducive to quiet reflection. Very good opportunities exist for reflection on moral issues. Expectations of behaviour are explicit and strongly reinforced by the courtesy and civilised treatment shown by staff to the pupils.
- 1.38 Very good opportunities exist for pupils to appreciate their own and others' cultural traditions in many of the subjects taught, and these are reinforced by a wide range of trips, exchanges and tours at home and abroad. Very good opportunities exist also for pupils' social development and great encouragement is given to pupils to participate fully in the school's activities.

Pastoral Care

- 1.39 The overall pastoral care is very good and makes an invaluable contribution to the life of the school. Staff and pupils enjoy excellent relationships. Instances of bullying are rare, and staff quickly address problems that do arise.
- 1.40 The induction of new pupils is carried out in an excellent programme of support which develops team spirit. Pupils' progress is closely monitored, principally through the homework diary, which has markedly improved the work ethic.

Governance and Management

- 1.41 The governors and senior management have clear aims for the school and a good structure in place to ensure they are met. They have access to the information that they need to make decisions and have produced a well considered development plan for the next five years. The recently appointed headmaster has given the school a strong sense of direction, with clearly stated aims and high expectations. He is ably supported by the senior management team.
- 1.42 Management by heads of year is very strong. Management of academic departments is more variable. The school has a comprehensive complaints procedure, which is available to parents. The school is well administered and runs smoothly.

Achievement and Quality in Activities

- 1.43 The activities programme is a strength of the school. Pupils take full advantage of the large number of activities on offer, which constitute a very good extra-curricular programme. Pupils are committed, enthusiastic and well motivated, and parents greatly appreciate the richness of this aspect of the school.

Progress Made by the School since its Last Inspection

- 1.44 The school was last inspected in 1996 by HMC. Since that time all of the main recommendations have been carried out, with the exception of improved provision for the sixth form. This forms part of the governors' next major development.

Compliance with the Regulations for Registration

- 1.45 The Independent School Standards Regulations apply from the beginning of September 2003, but schools have had relatively little time to implement them. This applies especially to the detailed Regulations for providing parents with information and for establishing a parental complaints procedure.

DfES Standard		Does the school meet the regulatory requirements?
1 Quality of education: .	1.(2) Curriculum	Yes
	1.(3)-(5) Teaching	Yes
2 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils .		Yes
3 Welfare, health and safety of pupils .		Yes
4 Suitability of proprietors and staff .		It meets almost all of the requirements
5 Premises and accommodation .		Yes
6 Provision of information .		Yes
7 Manner in which complaints are to be handled .		Yes

Actions Required for Compliance with the Regulatory Requirements

In order to meet all the requirements, the school must:

- carry out medical checks on all members of staff
- carry out CRB checks on all members of staff having access to pupils.

In addition to the actions set out above, the school is asked to address any issues highlighted in What the School Should Do Better. These are set out as recommendations for the school in Section 2 of the report.

2. MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

The school's strengths significantly outweigh its weaknesses. In order to improve further the quality of education provided the school should:

R1 Develop still further the quality of teaching by:

- setting goals for teaching which encourage independent learning and the pursuit of academic study for its own sake (4.4; 5.2; 5.4; 8.16; 8.27; 8.29; 8.36; 8.40; 8.48; 8.68; 8.70; 8.82; 8.90; 8.98; 8.102; 8.137).
- developing a programme of inter-departmental observation of teaching, so that the best practice may be disseminated (5.5; 7.3; 8.9; 8.33; 8.43; 8.49; 8.54; 8.84).
- analysing the use of time in the fifty-minute period and developing more active involvement of the pupils in lessons (5.5; 8.92; 8.98).

R2 Develop consistency in the management of departments by ensuring that:

- expectations of marking are carried out in accordance with school policy (5.8; 7.3; 8.6; 8.18; 8.30; 8.37; 8.43; 8.50; 8.55; 8.68; 8.93; 8.99; 8.108).
- responsibility for the professional development of members of departments is appropriately discharged (5.25; 8.52; 8.54; 8.55).
- the needs of pupils receiving learning support are recognised and met in class as appropriate (4.5; 5.2; 6.22; 8.14; 8.82; 8.92).

3. INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the School

- 3.1 Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Wakefield, was founded by royal charter in 1591 and moved to its present site in Northgate in 1854. It belongs to the Wakefield Grammar School Foundation of five schools, all of which are within a few minutes' walk of each other. The proximity of the schools and their governance by a single governing body bring benefits to all.
- 3.2 There are 709 boys aged 11 – 18 in the school, of whom 169 are in the sixth form. Some 11% are from ethnic minorities, no one group being larger than 5%, and a small number for whom English is not the first language. No special provision is made for these, as it is not necessary.
- 3.3 No pupils have statements of special educational needs: 32 are listed as needing learning support.
- 3.4 The governors are aware of the school's former status as a grammar school and are committed to retaining a good number of bursaries for children whose parents cannot afford full fees. At present some 25% of the intake receives some financial support at an annual cost of rather more than £370,000.
- 3.5 Many of the pupils come from Wakefield, but the catchment area is wide, and buses from many parts of Yorkshire are run jointly by the Foundation schools. Some 60% of the intake comes from the Junior School, the remainder coming from some 40 local independent or state schools.
- 3.6 Entry is via the school's own examination in English, mathematics and verbal reasoning at 11, plus an interview. Evidence from the Middle Years Information Systems (MidYIS), a test taken by the pupils in the first year in the school, indicates that the school's ability profile is close to that of maintained selective schools, but with a small proportion of pupils unlikely to have been selected by grammar schools. Requirements for entry to the sixth form also indicate this. The benchmark used for comparison of performance in public examinations in the Attainment and Progress section and in the full reports on subjects is, therefore, the national average of boys in selective maintained schools.
- 3.7 The numbers of pupils leaving before the sixth form have averaged about 10 over the last few years, and these have, in large measure, been replaced by new admissions to the sixth form. All the pupils leave the sixth form with qualifications for Higher Education and some 95% percent go on to university, the vast majority of which are of their first choice. Some 5% take a gap year.
- 3.8 The school lays great emphasis on pastoral care, and within a secure environment, seeks to provide a stimulating academic climate and a full, all-round education with rich extra-curricular opportunities.
- 3.9 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

Key Indicators

- 3.10 GCSE
-

	Most recently completed Year 11	Average for the last <i>three</i> Year 11s
Entered for 5+ subjects	100%	100%
Achieved 5+ @ A* - C	100%	99.7%
Achieved 5+ @ A* - G	100%	100%
Average score per candidate*	62.31	61.17

* Scoring is 8 for GCSE grade A*, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 for grades A – G.

3.11 A Level and AS

	Most recent year group	Average for the last <i>three</i> years
Average score per candidate	35.5	3.14
Average score per subject entry	7.9	7.4

Scoring is 10, 8, 6, 4, 2 for A level grades A – E, and 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 for AS grades A to E. .

3.12 Attendance for First Half of Summer Term 2003

	Authorised	Unauthorised
Percentage absence	1.4%	0%

3.13 Exclusions Over the Previous 12 Months

Temporary exclusions	Permanent exclusions
0	0

4. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and Progress

- 4.1 Pupils achieve good standards overall in relation to their abilities and very high standards in public examinations. Results at GCSE over the last three years have been consistently above the national average for boys in maintained selective schools, and far above them in the level of A* and A grades obtained in 2003, which was rather more than two-thirds of the entry. The improvement of some 15% in these grades is also far above the level of improvement for boys in maintained selective schools. Given the range of ability of the intake this is an outstanding achievement. Results at A level have been consistently above the national average for boys in terms of passes, with a pass rate of 100% over the past two years. The figure of three-quarters of the entry with A and B grades is far above the national average and places them in line with the most selective schools in the country. In relation to the school's intake this too is an outstanding achievement.
- 4.2 For the last three years at GCSE, art, biology, chemistry, English language, geography, German, history, mathematics and dual award science have been consistently far above the national average for boys; French and physics have been above the national average. At A level art, biology, design technology, economics, geography, history, mathematics, music and politics have been far above national averages and chemistry, English literature, classical civilisation and physics have been well above national averages.
- 4.3 In just over four-fifths of the lessons seen attainment was high or very high in relation to pupils' capability. They were particularly high on the occasions when pupils were able to work independently and were challenged to think creatively, and when undertaking practical work, as in science. Pupils' knowledge is very good throughout the school and they have a confident command of technical language, as in geography, and show very good use of mathematical syntax. Students are articulate, and both oral and literacy skills are of a high standard.
- 4.4 In lessons observed at Key Stage 3, and in the sixth form, the degree of progress was in some cases substantially less than the standard of attainment. For the most able there was sometimes insufficient opportunity for more rapid progress to be made. This was because the level of challenge presented to the pupils in these lessons was not demanding enough owing to an over-reliance on worksheets or the use of repetitive exercises from textbooks.
- 4.5 Weaker pupils, including those in need of learning support, are generally well catered for with academic clinics at lunchtimes and after school, as staff devote a substantial amount of time to these. Those pupils with special educational needs generally progress well, although they do not always receive the extra help they need in the classroom. Outside the classroom there are many opportunities for pupils to be extended, and a number have achieved considerable success in the various mathematical challenges and in their work for Arkwright scholarships.

Quality of Pupils' Learning, Attitudes and Behaviour

- 4.6 The school is a community to which its members are proud to belong.
- 4.7 The ethos of the school is clearly conducive to constructive relationships between pupils and with teachers and others at the school. Behaviour is very good and the very few examples of indiscipline noted were dealt with firmly and well.

- 4.8 On entry to the school clear standards for personal behaviour are set, which are well maintained. For example, a Year 7 assembly emphasised ‘friendship and respect’ and ‘charity’. The practice of asking older boys to look after Year 7 pupils on their journeys to and from school reinforces these high standards.
- 4.9 Learning and behaviour were very good in almost half the lessons observed and good or better in nearly 90% of lessons. Pupils are eager to learn and enjoy doing so. They are vocal and co-operative. They show interest and apply themselves to their work. They concentrate over long periods in class and ask questions that demonstrate their interest and their retention of knowledge from previous lessons. In activities pupils were well motivated and worked co-operatively with the teacher, concentrating on the task. Both in class and in other situations, pupils show respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. Concern at some aspects of pupil behaviour was expressed in a few parents’ questionnaires, but no evidence was found to support this during the inspection.
- 4.10 Some evidence was seen of collaborative work in lessons, but this was not widespread and the overall view was that the majority of lessons did not invite initiative. That the learning resource centre (library) is under-used by most departments for promoting research is an indication of this.

Attendance

- 4.11 Attendance levels and punctuality to lessons are very good, the few instances of unpunctuality being treated seriously and followed up. The registration system is well understood by the pupils and efficiently operated by the teaching and support staff. The attendance and admissions registers comply with statutory requirements.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for admission and attendance registers?

- 4.12 Yes.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

- 5.1 The overall quality of teaching is good. In three-quarters of lessons observed it was rated at least good, one-third being rated very good. Only two observed lessons were rated unsatisfactory. Teaching complies with the regulatory requirements, as does the school's teaching policy, which might usefully be expanded to include teaching strategies appropriate to the school.
- 5.2 The school has made significant advances in the quality of its teaching in recent years and is well placed to develop more opportunities for the pupils' independent learning. In most subjects the needs of all students (including SEN and EAL) are properly catered for, although in lessons observed in mathematics there was little evidence of differentiation, and in some geography lessons there was evidence that the pace of the lesson was dictated by the pupils' ability to complete worksheets.
- 5.3 The teaching staff are knowledgeable and have a secure, and in many cases excellent, understanding of their subject areas. They manage pupils very well in the majority of cases and relationships in the classroom are characteristically relaxed, cheerful and constructive. Good discipline is expected of the pupils and they are happy to comply.
- 5.4 There is evidence that pupils are challenged and extended academically, although this is not always the experience of the most able students.
- 5.5 Teachers' planning and organisation are always very good and sometimes exemplary. Tasks are appropriate and objectives clear to pupils. Teachers normally use time efficiently and set homework responsibly but do not always make best use of the 50-minute periods to allow pupils to participate in their own learning. There are many examples of very good practice evident in the school and it is recommended that consideration be given to a scheme of mutual inter-departmental observation so that best practice can be disseminated.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for teaching?

- 5.6 Yes.

Assessment and Recording

- 5.7 Systems for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress are generally thorough, and appropriate for the age of pupils, their particular needs and their development.
- 5.8 Most departments have well documented assessment policies and departmental mark schemes. The quality of the best marking is very good. Some departments provide constructive and often very full marking specifically tailored to the individual pupil's needs. The marking is frequent and carried out rigorously. At times, however, it is subjective and comparative rather than formative. In some departments the marking is accurate, but its frequency is variable. At the other end of the scale the marking in some departments is inconsistent, cursory and perfunctory. Comments are made, although they tend to focus on technical corrections, rather than the setting of individual targets to improve and develop pupils' conceptual understanding. Most staff keep mark books which are complete and up to date.
- 5.9 Internal examinations are appropriately timed and effective in measuring progress. Records of results are kept centrally to provide a full and useful resource for monitoring of attainment and progress, both for departments and for the pastoral system. Any changes in pupil

performance alert some departments to the need for extension work, or the revision of the curriculum and its delivery.

- 5.10 The school operates a comprehensive system of evaluating pupils at entry and through the school. The helpful value-added information from MidYIS (Middle Years Information System) is used effectively to monitor progress, to determine curriculum decisions and to plan future developments. It also enables the school to make a comparative analysis between year groups to compare their statistics against national baseline figures.
- 5.11 On entry to Year 7 all pupils are screened for their literacy ability, and those that show weakness in this area undergo further testing, and may be given support within the school on a withdrawal basis from the timetable or during lunchtime sessions. Pupils may also be identified by subject teachers, parents or feeder schools. The same screening procedure is followed and provision is decided after testing.
- 5.12 Grades and reports are written throughout the academic year and pupil/tutor discussion provides a useful system for self-assessment and target setting. The report schedule is clearly stated in the staff handbook. These grades and the full reports, sent to parents at the end of each term, give a clear account of both attainment and effort, and are treated seriously by the pupils. An effective system of monitoring initial progress for Years 7, 10 and 12 using ICT systems is in operation and is completed by departments by October half-term.
- 5.13 Central co-ordination of all assessment and recording data has been set in operation by the academic deputy. This system will become computerised using the latest ICT assessment manager software next academic year, which should allow for efficient access to appropriate information.

Curriculum

- 5.14 The school's curriculum is broadly based and balanced, contributing effectively to pupils' academic and personal development. The whole-school curriculum is further enhanced with a range of extra- and co-curricular activities. The curriculum provides appropriate experience of linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human, social, physical, aesthetic and creative areas of study. This information is available in an appropriate written curriculum policy.
- 5.15 In Year 7 all pupils follow a common curriculum. It is broad and well balanced, and includes drama, PSHE and French, which is the compulsory modern language to GCSE. In Years 8 and 9 a second language is introduced, with pupils selecting either German or Latin. The allocation of time to subjects in Years 7 to 9 is appropriate.
- 5.16 In Years 10 and 11 the curriculum is flexible to accommodate the aspirations of all pupils. Pupils are prepared for GCSEs in English language and English literature, mathematics, French and science, either as three separate subjects or as a dual award GCSE. In addition, short course GCSEs are taken in IT and religious studies. There is timetabled time provided for Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). Pupils have a free choice of option subjects; the timetable blocking is constructed on the basis of the pupils' choice, with the exception of drama, which is currently studied outside the timetable. The pupils have the opportunity to select three subjects from the option system if studying for the dual award science, or two option subjects if they wish to study the three separate sciences. There is timetabled provision in Year 11 for an intermediate tier mathematics set.
- 5.17 The sixth form curriculum is suitably broad, with the inclusion of economics, business studies and politics at A level. Pupils have a free choice of option subjects. Academic subjects have appropriate contact time in Years 12 and 13. However, opportunities for

academic curriculum enrichment are limited in the sixth form to an examined general studies course in Year 13. No formal arrangements exist for the consideration of personal, moral or philosophical issues within the sixth form curriculum. It is recommended that the opportunities for older pupils to discuss these issues within the formal curriculum be reviewed.

- 5.18 The curriculum is positively enriched by activities beyond the timetable, notably music, residential visits home and abroad, expeditions, foreign trips and sports tours.
- 5.19 There is some attempt to ensure continuity in the curriculum from junior to senior school, although this is variable across the departments.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the curriculum?

- 5.20 Yes.

Teaching and Non-teaching Staff

- 5.21 The teaching staff are a strength of the school; they are dedicated, well informed and fully committed to the interests of the pupils. Their attitude and interest in the pupils do much to foster the relaxed, supportive atmosphere in the school. There are 59 full-time teaching staff (50 men, 9 women) and 3 part-timers. The age profile is weighted towards the upper end, with one-third over 50 and only 6 in their twenties. The pupil:teacher ratio is 12:1 and the contact ratio is 72%. These are reasonable figures, balancing efficiency with costs.
- 5.22 There are 75.5 non-teaching staff, including medical staff, administrative staff, caterers, estate maintenance staff, porters, laboratory technicians and an ICT network manager. The support staff make a full and effective contribution to the efficient running of the school. They are helpful, courteous, pleased with their roles within the school and work loyally, with a high level of commitment.
- 5.23 Teachers are given sufficient non-contact time for marking and preparation of lessons, and many are granted additional time for administrative responsibilities, allowing the staff, for the most part, time to do their jobs effectively. The deployment of both the teaching and support staff is effective. Both sections of the staff work particularly well together and feel a strong sense of team spirit. They share a common purpose in enhancing the quality of education provided for the pupils.
- 5.24 A former appraisal scheme has been replaced by a detailed performance management scheme, which informs salary and embraces all members of the Foundation from the headmaster down. It includes observation of lessons and target setting, and, although still in the first run-through, it is expected to operate on a regular cycle.
- 5.25 The training budget was underspent last year and most of the courses attended were examination related. It is recommended that, as the new performance management scheme comes into its own, the training for professional development should follow on from targets set in the annual review.
- 5.26 The deputy headmaster runs a helpful staff induction programme, and the programme for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) follows Department for Education and Skills guidelines for completion of an induction year. The staff handbook gives good guidance to new members of staff.
- 5.27 CRB records are held for all teaching staff that have been employed since 2002 and certain other staff who have contact with pupils, for example, the security staff are checked. Checks

on medical fitness do not occur. Cleaners, gardeners, caterers and volunteers working at the school are not checked at all and some of these staff do have contact with pupils. The school must carry out CRB checks for these members of staff and carry out medical checks on all staff.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the suitability of proprietors and staff?

5.28 The school meets almost all of the regulatory requirements. In order to meet all the requirements, the school must:

- carry out medical checks on all members of staff
- carry out CRB checks on all members of staff having access to pupils.

Resources for Learning

5.29 The quality of resources for learning is very good. The books, equipment, reprographic materials and facilities needed to support teaching and learning are very good in quantity, quality and availability. This investment in resources for learning allows the school's curriculum to be fully and effectively supported.

5.30 Department budgets are good, allowing departments to maintain and enhance department resources. The budget allocation system works well and gives heads of department management responsibility. There are very good resources dedicated to sport, field trips and other visits which support these activities.

5.31 The school is very well equipped with ICT facilities, and a considerable amount of investment has been made over the past year, 90% of the resources being new or replacement equipment. 196 computers are available for teaching and learning; this figure is more than 50% above the average for schools of a comparable size. These computers are distributed in a variety of specialist ICT suites with others in departments, including a set of wireless laptops, used mainly in science. A number of rooms have been equipped with interactive whiteboards and there are plans to extend this provision further, which should help the school to better achieve its aim of increasing the use of ICT to support teaching and learning across the curriculum.

5.32 A campus-wide fibre optic network allows secure access for pupils and staff both to their work areas and to the internet, enhancing the opportunities for independent learning, teaching and study, although, as yet, only in limited use in a number of subjects. ICT facilities for teaching and administrative use are also very good and the whole system is supported by a network manager. It is intended to appoint an additional member of support staff in the near future to meet growing demand.

Libraries

5.33 The learning resource centre (library) is situated in the main school building and offers a supportive, although poorly lit, environment for users. It is open throughout school hours but boys with permission may stay much later. The ground floor is for general use and a mezzanine floor is used properly for quiet sixth form study. The central situation and use as a thoroughfare create problems of noise and security.

5.34 The centre has a stock of about 10,000 books and 269 videos computerised, and catalogued according to the School Dewey Decimal System and computerised. This level of stock meets recommended levels for adequate provision. There is a current budget of £3450. The centre

manager, a chartered librarian, would very much like to expand the stock but there is no room for development in the present situation. The school is well aware of the limitations and a new centre is planned for 2005.

- 5.35 Management of the centre is vigorous and imaginative, as demonstrated in the promotion of reading and in the evaluation, selection and disposal of stock. It is extensively visited by pupils, especially at lunch times, but it is used as a general work and activities area with up to 90 boys present at one time. Schemes to tempt these boys into reading include a very successful 'Quick Read' section. Learning resource centre and library induction classes are held and each individual receives extensive, and thoughtfully produced, 'Welcome' material. The centre manager also runs junior debating and highly successful quiz teams. Nevertheless, book issuing figures for pupils are low.
- 5.36 Most departmental libraries are well stocked and are good resources for learning; the mathematics library is shortly to be catalogued by the centre manager. However, liaison between departments and the centre manager is limited. There are close ties to English, an adjacent department; a research project is run by religious studies, and art makes some research use of the centre also. Otherwise, little interest is shown by departments in the resource beyond a general acknowledgement of its adequacy. In the light of opportunities offered by a new centre, both for individual study and the development of teaching strategies, senior managers should review the relationship of their departments with the centre.

Premises and Accommodation

- 5.37 The overall quality of the premises and accommodation is good. The buildings, accommodation and other facilities are adequate and appropriate for the numbers, abilities and ages of the pupils.
- 5.38 The main school buildings occupy an attractive site in a city environment. They consist of a range of architectural styles which have been arranged around three sides of a large yard, looking on to an open space occupied by three rugby pitches which are used by the junior school. The yard offers a focus for socialising and ad hoc ball games. The school site is restricted in size but is used efficiently and enables the curriculum to be delivered effectively.
- 5.39 Extensive and well maintained playing fields are in close proximity and provide an outstanding facility. The sports hall is a valuable resource for indoor use and is heavily used both within and outside the curriculum.
- 5.40 Much has been done to brighten corridors and public spaces. Imaginative schemes such as the atrium have made good use of existing space. Lockers have been provided. The classrooms generally allow the curriculum to be taught effectively. Most are of adequate size and are well lit.
- 5.41 The modern languages building is of a very good standard and is well-equipped. The English department is housed in cramped conditions, as is the academic teaching area for PE. The geography department has been refurbished to a good standard. An ambitious expansion of ICT provision has taken place. Sections of the music department are in need of refurbishment.
- 5.42 Provision of buildings for specialist subjects such as design and technology and art are generally good but the art department remains fragmented, and there is a lack of good provision for office space in design and technology. Laboratories are of a good size and allow practical work to be carried out in safety.

- 5.43 In the dining area, space is cramped. The ceilings are low and noise levels high. It is recommended that the senior management review the condition of this part of the building, which lacks graciousness and requires attention.
- 5.44 The provision of sixth form common rooms is inadequate. It is the intention of the school to embark on an extensive building programme in the near future. The plan provides for a sixth form centre, offices, a small 250-seat theatre and new classroom space for the English department. In addition, a new library and computer facility is planned which should assist in the enhancement of individual learning. There are further ambitious plans to use the space released as a consequence of the new building.
- 5.45 Numerous attractive displays of curricular material throughout the school supplement teaching as well as supporting the wider aspects of school activities. There is little evidence of litter on the premises. The issue of security with its attendant costs continues to be under review.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for premises and accommodation?

- 5.46 Yes.

Links with Parents and the Community

- 5.47 The school has developed highly effective links with pupils' parents. In advance of the inspection a questionnaire seeking parents' views about the school was sent out and the returns were analysed. Sixty-eight percent of the parents responded, and the levels of satisfaction with the school were very high.
- 5.48 Parents are provided with good information about the school at different stages of their children's school careers. They receive comprehensive booklets with details of GCSE and sixth form options, and an informative newsletter. The school magazine is of high quality, and contains a wide variety of material, including contributions by the pupils.
- 5.49 Information on pupils' work and progress is provided through grades, reports and parents' evenings. The tutor evenings for Years 7, 10, 12 and 13 are well supported and the pupils' homework diary provides an excellent means of communication between tutors and parents. The frequency of school reports is good, as is their quality, with clear and positive guidance to improve pupils' performance. The careers department also sends comprehensive documentation to parents, which keeps them informed of GCSE, AS, A2 developments and UCAS applications.
- 5.50 Many opportunities exist for parents to become involved with the life of the school, for example through attendance at plays and concerts, art and design technology exhibitions, and support of games fixtures. Involvement of parents is a high priority. Parental commitment is revealed by the number of supporting committees, which work tirelessly and give generously to the school.
- 5.51 The school handles parental concerns with due care and deals with complaints in accordance with the regulatory requirements.
- 5.52 Links with the community are numerous, extensive and mutually beneficial. Pupils visit local hospitals and schools on a regular basis to provide help and develop their own skills. The community service programme could, with benefit, be strengthened, particularly in the area of gauging pupils' reactions to the work they do. There are routine weekly collections on behalf of the school charities. These allow pupils to show awareness of others' needs. Impressive sums of money are consistently raised, allowing financial assistance for those

charitable organisations which seek to serve local needs. The Wakefield Samaritans, The Wakefield and District Hospice, and St George's Crypt, Leeds, have all benefited from the school's donations in recent years. The school's sporting facilities are used by a variety of societies and clubs throughout the year.

- 5.53 Music performed by pupils is provided at all kinds of prestigious events and the school has good connections with Wakefield Cathedral and Huddersfield Town Hall. These opportunities give valuable performance experiences and contribute strongly to pupils' personal development.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the provision of information?

- 5.54 Yes.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the manner in which complaints are to be handled?

- 5.55 Yes.

6. PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PASTORAL CARE

Pupils' Personal Development


- 6.1 The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Good opportunities exist within the curriculum for pupils to reflect on faith and to develop a sense of wonder. Religious studies deals with a wide range of rites and religious practices and the human needs that lie behind them, and, amongst other subjects, art, music, science and English all provide opportunities for reflection and wonder. There were occasions observed, however, when some of these opportunities for discussion and reflection were ignored, owing to a strict concentration on schemes of work. During the week, on Remembrance Day, a very moving and dignified service was held, and the atmosphere in full school assemblies is characterised by the same sense of dignity, conducive to quiet reflection.
- 6.2 Very good opportunities exist for moral development and reflection on moral issues. The PSHE programme includes specific items to consider the needs of others and reflect on ways of treating each other, talks by outside speakers and videos supporting the programme. Expectations of behaviour are explicit and strongly reinforced by the courtesy and civilised treatment shown by staff to the pupils. The weekly charity collection regularly reminds the pupils of the needs of others, and the prevailing atmosphere of easy tolerance promotes this.
- 6.3 Provision for cultural development is very good. There are very good opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own and others' cultural traditions in art, music, drama, English and foreign literature, DT, history, geography and foreign languages, and these are reinforced by a wide range of trips to theatres and museums, and by exchanges and tours abroad.
- 6.4 Very good opportunities exist for pupils' social development, initially in the very full and well planned programme of their induction into the school. This is reinforced by regular contact with parents in the early days and the residential programme at Buckden. Parents are particularly appreciative of this excellent programme. Responsibility for their own actions and for the school community is expected from all pupils and this is expressed in the PSHE programme and by opportunities to act as monitors, team captains and prefects, and to serve on the charity committee. Great encouragement is given to pupils to participate fully in the school's activities and to do so in a way that promotes the school's values and sense of community.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils?

- 6.5 Yes.

Pastoral Care, including Welfare and Health & Safety

- 6.6 The overall pastoral care is very good and makes an invaluable contribution to the life of the school.
- 6.7 At the heart is the support and guidance provided by form tutors who show great commitment to their pupils. Inspectors witnessed numerous examples of good practice in form period time at all age groups throughout the school. Parents were lavish in their praise and appreciation of the level of pastoral care offered to their sons.
- 6.8 Staff and pupils enjoy excellent relationships. These allow pupils to feel confident and


secure, and this was clearly in evidence in the interviews held with them. Prefects are

respected and play an important role in the ethos of the school. Instances of bullying are rare, and procedures set out clearly in the school's policy document on bullying ensure that staff can quickly address problems that do arise.

- 6.9 The induction programme, directed by the head of Year 7, begins the day of formal acceptance of a place and extends well into Year 7. It is an excellent programme of support. It includes close liaison with boys in Year 6 of the junior school and visits to all other pupils in their primary schools. Each new pupil receives a letter of welcome from an existing Year 7 pupil. This instils a sense of belonging to the community. Early in the Autumn Term all take part in a three-day residential stay at Buckden House. This develops team spirit and a sense of pride that remains with the boys throughout their school life.
- 6.10 The school is divided into four groups: Year 7, Years 8 and 9, Years 10 and 11 and the sixth form. Each group has its own pastoral head, who reports directly to the senior management team. They work as a closely knit team, sharing ideas and advice whilst providing good leadership to their colleagues and students. Their bright and well-resourced base is a hub of activity. Their work load is onerous and the senior management team should consider reducing their teaching load to allow them to develop further their pastoral and monitoring responsibilities.
- 6.11 Pupils' progress is closely monitored, principally through the excellent homework diary. This provides an important communication link between the home and school. The successful development of this diary has markedly improved the work ethic. Pastoral heads monitor them on a half termly basis and the centralized information is made available to heads of department who can use it as part of their departmental monitoring of standards in their own subject areas.
- 6.12 In the sixth form students sign an undertaking before embarking on their AS courses. This includes a commitment to continual self-evaluation of their progress. This, coupled with subject teacher monitoring, has made a significant contribution to the rising post-16 standards.
- 6.13 The school disciplinary policy places great emphasis on rewards. Pupils in Years 7-9 strive earnestly to accumulate positive comment awards from their subject teachers in the expectation of achieving termly bronze, silver, gold and platinum certificates. The recently appointed head of Year 10 and 11 intends to introduce a similar, but age appropriate, system into the GCSE years.
- 6.14 Careers guidance is very good. This is testified by the school's accreditation for careers and education guidance, initially awarded in 1999 and re-accredited for a further four years in 2002. The excellent departmental handbook sets out the provision across the school. The enthusiastic head of careers, with valuable support of a team of three colleagues, is responsible for its implementation and delivery. The department is housed in very good accommodation and is well situated at the heart of the school for convenient access for the pupils.
- 6.15 The allocated teaching time for careers in Years 9-11 provides students with a good base of knowledge on which to inform subject choice and likely career path. There are good links with external agencies, including the local careers service and the armed services.
- 6.16 Pupils are encouraged to take on work experience in the period immediately following their GCSE examinations. Every support is offered in finding an appropriate placement.
- 6.17 In the sixth form students are prepared for UCAS application and are offered a general teaching programme of support; for example a lesson was observed in which students

- received an insight into the development of the leadership skills, which involved teams in high level problem solving.
- 6.18 Over the past three years an average of 95% of upper sixth leavers have gone on to Higher Education, the vast majority of whom have gained places at their first choice.
- 6.19 Some parents and a number of pupils commented on the poor variety, quality and quantity of food available in the canteen. It is recommended that SMT review the catering arrangements as soon as possible.
- 6.20 PSHE is delivered in a variety of ways and at a variety of times. The personal and social programme is the responsibility of the heads of year. Delivery takes place in form tutor periods or assemblies, which may then be followed up by further discussion in tutor periods. The health programme is delivered in teaching time by departments and use is made of outside speakers covering a range of aspects. The programme is limited to Years 7 to 11. The course is well received by the pupils. It covers a very wide range of topics and is, in many areas, very well delivered. It would be strengthened if it were co-ordinated further under the direction of one member of staff, and if a full programme were developed for the sixth form.
- 6.21 Learning support is developing in a number of ways. A new member of staff has been appointed this year, and good systems are in place to identify pupils' needs. Support is given as part of school provision, and a list of pupils receiving such support has been circulated. There are signs that pupils are benefiting from this provision, which is developing. Staff have been given training but the awareness of pupils' needs within the class-room is limited, varying between departments. There is, however, strong support from senior management and heads of year, and the school is now well placed to ensure that appropriate support will be provided as the system develops further.
- 6.22 The school has a Health and Safety Committee which meets regularly and considers appropriate issues. It also has a written policy which fits within the framework of the Health & Safety Act 1974, and a written policy to deter bullying. The deputy head is the child protection officer and he has procedures to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children at the school; he has also attended appropriate courses and established links with the Wakefield social services department. The school should appoint a second child protection officer. Extensive guidelines are in place to ensure that pupils on activities outside the school follow procedures that identify risks. The trips procedures pay appropriate regard to the DfES relevant guidelines.
- 6.23 Good behaviour is promoted amongst the pupils through an extensive pastoral system; school staff are deployed to ensure the pupils are properly supervised, and the assistant head (pastoral) keeps a record of sanctions imposed upon students for serious disciplinary offences.
- 6.24 The school has a satisfactory level of fire safety, and the reports to the DfES and fire authority are in order. Risk assessments have been completed on all the school's premises. The majority of the departments in the school assess risk appropriately, although the DT department does not fulfil the requirement of storing chemicals in a steel cupboard. There are suitable First Aid at Work qualified staff.
- 6.25 Delivery vehicles drive onto the school playground at times when pupils and staff are around, and the school should review the policy of allowing vehicles onto the site during the day.

The school is working towards fulfilling its duties under the Special Education Needs and Disability Act. It fulfils its duties under the race and gender discrimination legislation and does not use corporal punishment.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils?

6.26 Yes.

7. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Governance and Management

- 7.1 The overall quality of governance and management is good. The governors and senior management have clear aims for the school and a good structure in place to ensure they are met. The governors have recently commissioned an audit of their way of operating. As a result they have re-structured their committees, and these now have clearly defined remits and reporting procedures. Very good arrangements are in place for governor training. They have access to the information that they need to make decisions and have produced a well considered development plan for the next five years. They have also a strategic plan, which covers all aspects of the school. The fact that Queen Elizabeth Grammar School is a part of the Foundation of Grammar Schools provides further controls and discipline in the governors' operations. Financial planning is good, and there are controls on expenditure in line with priorities.
- 7.2 The recently appointed headmaster has given the school a strong sense of direction, with clearly stated aims and high expectations. There is a sense of confidence in the school and of pride in its achievements. He is ably supported by the senior management team, who have well defined roles, and work hard to promote the school's positive ethos and its aims. The clear expectations and the strong sense of purpose are significant factors in the school's academic achievements, its pleasant atmosphere and in the overall pride in performance.
- 7.3 The heads of year have established a welcoming atmosphere in the school, where the pupils feel secure and happy, and where expectations for them are high. Management here is very strong. Management of academic departments is variable. The best practice is very good, but not all heads of department meet senior management expectations in running their departments, particularly in checking that policies are carried out. Examples of this include the checking required on marking and the quality of teaching.
- 7.4 Routine administration is carried out very efficiently and with great courtesy. Good communication is achieved by regular meetings. This operates well within the school and across the Foundation.
- 7.5 The school has a comprehensive complaints procedure, which is available to parents.

8. ACHIEVEMENT AND QUALITY IN SUBJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Achievement and Quality in Subjects: Senior School

English

- 8.1 Pupils achieve high standards in relation to their abilities. Results in public examinations at GCSE are far above the average for boys in maintained selective schools in English Language and above in English Literature. At A Level, English Literature is well above the national average and English Language is improving annually.
- 8.2 Attainment at all levels is never less than good and in half the lessons observed it was very good. Written work throughout the school is appropriately challenging and often executed in a manner designed to achieve top grades in public examinations.
- 8.3 Pupils' progress in lessons was always good or very good and gave a clear sense of their building effectively upon previous work. In particular, they demonstrated a strong grounding in language skills, whether it was Year 7 reinforcing grammar as they worked on Alan Garner's 'Elidor'; Year 9 pursuing a history of the language from 'Bede to email'; or Years 12 and 13 developing a sophisticated analysis of discourse and syntax.
- 8.4 Pupils showed a strong motivation and eagerness to succeed in all year groups. Classes were characterised by focus, concentration and a willingness to respond to intellectual challenge. In consequence, the quality of learning and behaviour is good. In all year groups a spirit of co-operative endeavour amongst pupils and a friendly interplay between teacher and pupil allowed for sustained exploration of the subject and augmented pleasure.
- 8.5 The quality of teaching is always good and in 80% of lessons observed it was very good, and occasionally verging on the outstanding. Planning was meticulous and the variety and pacing of lessons excellent. All pupils had a clear sense of the purpose of the lessons, which a range of highly talented teachers delivered with distinctive individual style and verve. A consciousness of the need to differentiate informed most teaching without inhibiting its drive, and all pupils, from the most able to the weakest, were catered for.
- 8.6 Marking is usually constructive, and often very full, specifically addressing the individual student's needs. Marking schemes and methods of recording varied somewhat and this does not sit easily with the policy of changing teachers in Years 7, 8 and 9. There is, however, a well-developed assessment policy shadowing that of the National Curriculum.
- 8.7 The department is well resourced and has a good book stock, although there is a need to refresh the range of class readers for Years 7 and 8.
- 8.8 Accommodation is in classrooms which are at best adequate, but all too often cramped, stuffy or chilly. The quality of work produced deserves a better context for its display and the promised transfer to a new situation in 2005 is likely to prove of great benefit.
- 8.9 The well-qualified staff (four women and two men) are led with care and sensitivity. Devolved responsibilities promote professional development, and individual interests are encouraged to flourish. The department is generally well managed but there is room for an even more collaborative approach and the sharing of ideas.
- 8.10 A feature of the department's A Level teaching is the successful co-teaching of English Language with Wakefield Girls' High School.

Mathematics

- 8.11 Pupils achieve high results overall in relation to their abilities. Standards attained in external examinations at all levels are high. In the GCSE examination of 2003 all but one pupil gained A* – C and rather more than two-thirds obtained grade A* or A. The average for the last three years has been three-fifths of pupils obtaining grade A* or A, well above the results for boys in maintained selective schools. Results at A Level are also strong. In 2003 87% of all grades were A or B, with just under half of these being grade A. These results are also well above the results for boys' schools. Numbers opting for further mathematics have been increasing and there are 15 in the current Year 12. In 2003 all seven candidates for further mathematics obtained a grade A.
- 8.12 Standards of attainment in the 12 lessons observed across each of the Key Stages were generally good in relation to the abilities of the pupils. Of particularly high standard are the mental arithmetic skills of the pupils, something on which the department places considerable emphasis. One Year 7 lesson began with a quick-fire mental session where pupils were required to think quickly and to which they responded with great enthusiasm. In a Year 9 lesson the more able pupils were quickly able to spot the rule for squaring brackets and then to apply this to more complicated situations.
- 8.13 Written work sampled was of a high standard and showed good use of mathematical syntax. The presentation of boys' work was rarely less than sound and in many cases very good. At sixth form level some boys' files were very well organised but others poorly so. All work seen showed good progress over time and, by the end of Year 11, there was a noticeable increase in the sophistication of language used and the completeness of solutions to mathematical problems.
- 8.14 In most lessons pupils made good progress. However, there was little evidence of differentiation for pupils receiving learning support, and most extension work seen consisted purely of setting more questions from the same exercise. Pupils were generally quick to recall work taught earlier and to apply it to new situations. The department should improve its recognition of the needs of all pupils within lessons.
- 8.15 The quality of learning and behaviour is very good overall. Pupils across the age range are highly motivated and co-operative, showing a very good relationship with their teachers. They respond well in discussion and question and answer sessions, and settle quickly to work in lessons, sustaining their concentration when working on their own. Outside of lessons pupils are encouraged to extend themselves by taking part in national mathematical challenges at all levels. The department is justifiably proud of its record in these competitions and Year 7 pupils show interest in the results of sixth formers in the senior competitions. The department also prepares pupils for Cambridge STEP and AEA examinations. Regular clinics are held each lunchtime to assist pupils who have fallen behind in, or encountered problems with, their work.
- 8.16 The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was generally good and never less than sound. Staff are well provided with modern facilities, but few examples were observed of use of resources beyond the textbooks; pupils are given few opportunities to develop more investigative or practical approaches to study. The department should consider widening the approach used in lessons to enable boys to develop further their independent study techniques.
- 8.17 Until very recently there has been no use of ICT within mathematics. An interactive whiteboard has now been installed in one of the mathematics classrooms and this will give

the department the opportunity to increase its use of ICT within the curriculum. Further training of members of staff will be required for this.

- 8.18 Homework is regularly set and marked, although there is no departmental policy on how this should be done and there is, therefore, inconsistency across the department. At sixth form level much of the written work seen included helpful comments from the teacher to explain errors which had been made and to inform the future learning of pupils. This was far less evident in Years 7 to 11. The department's marking policy is not in line with school policy, and practice is not monitored by the head of department. Teachers keep good records of assessments made and, in addition, the department uses half-term tests for all year groups.
- 8.19 The department is well accommodated in a suite of good-sized rooms with an extremely useful mathematics prep. room, which contributes to the strong sense of teamwork within the department. The rooms have a good variety of mathematical posters, as do the surrounding corridors; only a limited amount of pupils' work is on display. The department is well resourced with textbooks but there is a lack of certain other resources, for example specialist ICT software for use in mathematics.
- 8.20 The department is well led by a dedicated head of department who is on hand throughout most lunchtimes to offer assistance and advice to both pupils and colleagues. The departmental handbook is a useful aid for members of the department but it does have some omissions, for example on learning support, extending able pupils within lessons, the use of ICT within mathematics and a marking policy for the department. Departmental meetings are held every fortnight and also at the start of each term, although these are not used for professional development of staff or of their teaching skills.

Science

- 8.21 Science is taught as a separate subject discipline from the outset of Year 7. Each department has its own head responsible for his subject throughout the school. The head of chemistry is also head of science and meets with his two colleagues on a regular basis to discuss matters of mutual interest and to offer appropriate support.
- 8.22 The departments collaborate closely at GCSE where approximately three-fifths of each year group opt for the double award rather than triple science. Results at GCSE over the past three years have been consistently well above the national average in boys maintained selective schools. In 2003 the pass rate at A*-C was 100%, with just under two-thirds of the passes at A/A*.

Biology

- 8.23 The biology department consists of a team of dedicated teachers who are enthusiastic about their subject and who genuinely care about the progress and welfare of the pupils they teach.
- 8.24 Examination results have been consistently far above the average for boys in selective maintained schools over the last three years both at GCSE and at A level. Seventy percent of pupils achieved A*/A at GCSE in summer 2003, 67% achieved grades A/B at AS and 57% achieved A/B at A2.
- 8.25 From work observed in class and written work, pupils' attainment overall in biology is in line with their abilities and written work is of an appropriate standard for their age and ability. For example, a Year 7 class showed good knowledge of the structures and functions of the different parts of a cell, and a Year 10 class, having recently completed a study of the eye,

- showed good knowledge of the different senses and sense organs, and of different types of nerve cell. In a Year 12 practical lesson the class demonstrated good practical skills and clear understanding of the structure and function of lungs and gills.
- 8.26 Pupils' progress overall in biology is good in relation to their abilities. There is progression of knowledge, understanding and skills within lessons and there is a smooth and logical progression of subject topics throughout the courses. For example, in Year 7, over a number of lessons the pupils moved on from cell structure to relating structure to function of different types of cells, and then on to tissues and organs. In a Year 11 class on feeding and digestion the pupils moved from a study of teeth and digestive systems to the requirement of herbivores and carnivores. In the sixth form pupils had learnt about surface area and volume ratios, and were studying gas exchange and the surfaces of leaves, gills and lungs.
- 8.27 The pupils are well behaved, competent learners. They are eager to learn and enjoy doing so; their quality of learning in class is good. The pupils concentrate well throughout lessons, contribute openly to class discussion and ask questions that demonstrate their interest. Within lessons boys rarely engage in independent learning. Year 13 and Year 8 have regular trips out of school to enhance learning, and speakers are occasionally brought into school either to give a lecture for sixth form boys or as part of the thriving biology and science clubs that are ably run by the department. The department should consider running more educational trips out of school to enhance the learning and enrich the curriculum of the pupils.
- 8.28 Relationships amongst the pupils and with the class teacher are good. They show respect for each other, and there is an atmosphere of purpose and appropriate friendliness between pupils and staff.
- 8.29 The overall quality of the teaching is good. Teachers manage classes well and the teaching observed was at least sound, mostly good and occasionally very good. A variety of teaching methods are used. The lessons are well planned and usually make good use of time and resources. Questions are well posed in class and show differentiation. Other than by questioning, the challenge presented to the more able pupils is minimal during lesson time, and insufficient opportunities to work independently are given to the pupils to progress at their own pace.
- 8.30 Biology follows the standard science marking scheme of 0-10 as a scale of performance. There are regular end-of-topic tests and the marks from these and end-of-year exams are entered onto a central database, which is accessible to all staff. Marking of work is inconsistent and often restricted to checking of notes, numerical scores and, occasionally, a brief comment. The frequency and effectiveness of marking is not monitored or reviewed. All teachers keep records in their mark books and the head of department collects and collates the practical assessments.
- 8.31 Resources, especially the ICT provision and the way it is moving forward, both now and in future plans, are very good. Relationships with the library are sketchy, much of the independent learning that the pupils do being done on the school intranet and internet. The main prep. room is rather small for such a large department but otherwise the accommodation is good.
- 8.32 The biology department follows the science health and safety policy. Risk assessments for practicals do exist but there was no evidence that they were being used. The safety checks were being done in accordance with the policy document. The location of the gas turn off in laboratory B2 is inconvenient and consideration should be given to having it relocated.
- 8.33 The biology department enjoys a responsive, good leadership. The head of department manages his staff well and is creating an effective and enthusiastic team, which is ably

supported by the department technician. All documentation is well kept and departmental meetings are held regularly. It is recommended that thought be given to providing more opportunities for pupils to work independently and at their own pace, and that the frequency and effectiveness of marking be reviewed regularly.

Chemistry

- 8.34 Examination results over the past three years are well above those nationally for boys in maintained selective schools. At GCSE the level of A*-C grades is 99% and the percentage of A*/A has steadily increased to just below two-thirds of the entry. At A level the pass rate at A-E is 100% and there has been a rise in the percentage of A/B grades from to 84.2% in 2003.
- 8.35 Pupils generally achieve good standards in class relative to their abilities; standards are very good in lessons where practical work and oral discussion are prevalent, as seen in a Year 7 lesson on chemical changes and a Year 10 lesson on metal displacement reaction, but only sound when lessons are predominantly teacher led.
- 8.36 Pupils' progress in class was at least sound and in some cases good or very good. The pace of lessons was variable, with the best in Years 7-9 incorporating a range of activities stimulating the pupils' interest, and in a Year 12 lesson revising practical work. However, in other groups the pace was slow with an over-reliance on printed work sheets. Similar trends were evident in written work, where homework tasks were frequently over-structured, restricting opportunities for independent learning.
- 8.37 Marking was in accordance with the agreed departmental policy, but in some cases was both cursory and sporadic. Monitoring of marking is not undertaken on a regular basis.
- 8.38 The behaviour of the pupils in lessons was normally very good. The one incident of notable indiscipline in a Year 11 class was dealt with firmly and effectively with minimal disruption to the whole class. The relationships between the pupils themselves and the pupils and teachers were very good, with teachers consistently concerned for, and interested in, individual pupils.
- 8.39 The overall quality of teaching was good. The lessons observed were never less than sound, normally good and occasionally very good; for example a Year 7 class were given a sense of awe and wonder in performing and understanding their investigation into chemical changes. In the older year groups the teaching was more formal and specifically examination focused.
- 8.40 The pupils have a keen appetite for learning and relish opportunities to explore the subject. Such is their aptitude and commitment, the department should consider offering more opportunities, particularly in the sixth form, for pupils to take on more responsibility for their own learning.
- 8.41 There are five teachers in the department including the head of careers, who teaches half a normal timetable load. All are well qualified and experienced. They enjoy excellent support from a dedicated and hard working technician.
- 8.42 The head of chemistry leads the department well, although his time for this is limited. He takes full responsibility for the detailed schemes of work across the school, and for the excellent departmental handbook. He ensures the department is stocked with a wide range of quality resources for benefit of staff and pupils. These include an impressive bank of power point presentations for use at both GCSE and A level. He also has responsibilities as head of science and so bears a heavy work load.

- 8.43 He should consider delegating some responsibilities to other colleagues (for example the on-going revision of schemes of work), so as to free himself to take on a more active leadership role in monitoring and evaluating the overall performance of the science department. It is recommended also that regular monitoring of the marking should take place to ensure standards are maintained, and that consideration be given to introducing a variety of teaching styles, so as to fully engage the pupils and to allow more opportunities, particularly in the sixth form, for pupils to take more responsibility for their learning.

Physics

- 8.44 Pupils of all ages achieve good standards in relation to their abilities. GCSE and A-level results are well above the average for boys in selective maintained schools and have been for the last two years. In GCSE results last summer, just over half the grades were A/A* grades, and in the A-level results this summer half were A/B grades.
- 8.45 Pupils' attainment overall in physics is in line with their abilities. Written work seen showed that pupils can write fluently and showed competent powers of analysis. Good speaking and listening skills, as well as sound knowledge, were evident in a Year 7 lesson on energy resources and conservation. For the planning of a practical lesson in a Year 10 class the pupils' clear understanding of moments of force enabled them to proceed at pace. In a Year 12 lesson introducing the concepts of bandwidth and frequency spectra the new concepts provided challenges for all abilities, and the best could really show their paces.
- 8.46 Progress shown by written work is sound and in line with expectations. With the exception of one lesson observed, pupils' progress overall was at least sound, and sometimes good in relation to their abilities. Sustained progress both in lessons and over the term is clear. Theory acquired in previous lessons by a Year 8 class was seen being used in practical work in the next lesson, and this gave the pupils a sense of relevance and progression. A Year 10 class studying velocity through experiments with tickertape started unable to process the tape and proceeded through calculations on velocity to experimenting with the tape in different circumstances.
- 8.47 The standard of discipline expected is high, and pupils' behaviour observed was at least sound and often good or very good. The pupils generally co-operate with the teacher in a very good-humoured fashion. They are observant and questioning, concentrating well, and communicating ideas clearly to one another and to the teacher. They are not afraid to ask for help when they feel they need it. There is a strong sense of discipline and respect.
- 8.48 The quality of learning varies between very good and sound, and was observed only once to be unsatisfactory. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and show a sense of purpose. Much of the learning is teacher based with little opportunity in lessons for independent work. However, on the limited occasions offered to them the pupils showed that they can work well on their own. There are no educational trips to enrich the curriculum and learning of the pupils.
- 8.49 Overall teaching is sound, occasionally good and once it was unsatisfactory. Most lessons are well prepared and taught by knowledgeable teachers but lack excitement in that they are teacher centred. The pupils are told the facts or shown a demonstration rather than being allowed to work things out for themselves.
- 8.50 Marking of work is very sporadic, and bears little relation to the published science marking scheme. The head of department does not monitor marking within the department. Marks are recorded by teachers in their markbooks. There are topic tests throughout the year but the

results are not centrally recorded. Practical assessments are collated by the head of department.

- 8.51 The relationship with the library is minimal. Reference books can be borrowed from the sixth form borrowing section in the department, and the head of department directs pupils to look in the local library rather than use the school library.
- 8.52 There are four full-time staff within the department, one of whom is an unqualified teacher. The induction system for staff to the department is limited. There is one full-time laboratory technician who works during term-time only. The premises and resources for the physics department are excellent.
- 8.53 The physics department follows the science health and safety policy. Although there is a system for highlighting dangerous practicals, no risk assessments exist.
- 8.54 Management of the department is sound. The head of department is sensitive but not very active in certain areas. Lesson observation within the department does not occur regularly, nor does monitoring of marking; the laboratory technician has not been appraised since she started at the school almost three years ago. There is not enough support given by the head of department to the new member of the department and there is no formalised induction system to help less experienced members of staff who arrive new to the department.
- 8.55 It is recommended that marking within the department be regularly reviewed; that risk assessments for any risks associated with any part of the department be written down; that a formalised induction system be introduced; and that consideration be given to educational trips within the department to enhance the quality of pupils' learning.

Art

- 8.56 Art is a very strong, high profile subject within the school and the standards that pupils achieve are high in relation to age and ability.
- 8.57 GCSE results are considerably above the norm and well above the level achieved by boys in maintained selective schools. This is also true of AS/A2 levels. Pupils achieve a significantly large proportion of top grades in all three public examinations.
- 8.58 Pupils' attainment overall is high, and in some cases very high, in relation to their abilities. Exemplar material is visible everywhere in the department and around the school. Skill in manipulating materials, and making and applying judgements is good and is given priority. Studies and developed drawings underpin the work and encourage the process of evaluation. The work in Years 10 and 11 is characterised by rich and colourful outcomes. In Years 12 and 13 pupils work with a great deal of initiative and autonomy. By this stage they are well equipped to apply objective judgements to their work.
- 8.59 In relation to their abilities, pupils' progress overall in art is rapid. Very good progress, sustained over time, was evident in the development and support work on display.
- 8.60 In Years 7, 8 and 9, rapid progress is supported by an effective scheme of work which encourages best studio practice. The brisk pace of the GCSE course encompasses work tailored to suit pupils of different abilities. Progress in Years 12 and 13 is excellent. A formidable pace is maintained both in and out of the studio, and pupils use their time productively.
- 8.61 The overall quality of learning and behaviour is generally very good. There is evidence of much individual learning with good use of resource material often selected by the pupils

themselves. Pupils are prepared to enter into dialogue over their work, and are articulate and confident in discussion. Levels of concentration and motivation are good. Classes work well, individually and in groups. They respect and value the work in the department.

- 8.62 The teaching observed was mostly very good, some was excellent and none was less than satisfactory. Teaching largely meets the needs of the pupils. Supportive and very knowledgeable staff contribute helpfully to this. Very good planning helps to initiate high quality responses to need. Encouragement and reinforcement boost pupils' confidence and good work is regularly praised by staff. Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and give verbal comment, which helps to inform the subsequent direction of the work. Pupils understand the assessment system. In addition, teachers provide extra support in the form of clinics.
- 8.63 The department is very well led and managed, and this is reflected in the prominence of the subject within the school. The planning and development are very sound. Administration is highly efficient and communication good. The curriculum is varied. The use of ICT is limited, but this omission is being addressed. There is a lack of three-dimensional work and this area should be developed further. Printmaking is another fertile area for further consideration. The department is pupil centred, develops ability and creativity to a very high degree and is a strength of the school.

Classics

Latin

- 8.64 Overall, pupils generally achieve good standards in relation to their abilities. Results in public examinations at GCSE level over the last three years have been either in line with or below expectations in relation to the pupils' abilities. At A level over the same period, one candidate obtained a Grade A, and the other was awarded a Grade E.
- 8.65 At all stages up to and including Year 11, pupils demonstrate good ability to cope with the linguistic and intellectual demands of the subject. Their written work is carefully organized, shows attention to detail and is well presented.
- 8.66 Pupils' progress overall is good in relation to their abilities. As they progress towards the GCSE, they acquire a larger grammatical base and learn to manipulate more complex structures confidently and more accurately. They also steadily acquire broader vocabularies.
- 8.67 The behaviour and attitude of the pupils are of a generally high order. They are able to sustain their concentration over the duration of a full lesson, and there was evidence in the lessons observed of perseverance and of determination to improve. They are alert and willing to answer questions. They not only dutifully take down dictated notes, as they were required to do in one particularly challenging but productive lesson on Virgil's *Aeneid*, but they also, on occasions, make notes of their own.
- 8.68 The quality of the teaching is at least sound, sometimes very good. The style is, at times, somewhat formal and directive, but at others the approach is quite relaxed. The lessons are usually well structured, but they tend to be too teacher-centred, which adversely affects the level of pupil participation. Teachers mark pupils' work efficiently, though the comments are often rather brief. There was some evidence of co-ordination of the two teachers' marking schemes. The teachers are always enthusiastic and supportive, and their relationships with the pupils are appropriate.

- 8.69 The department's resources are adequate, and some use is made of ICT. The main classics room is spacious, and provides a pleasant working environment.
- 8.70 The department is currently staffed by one well-qualified classicist, assisted by another teacher, whose principal affiliation is to another department. The head of department provides a detailed, comprehensive scheme of work and ensures that the department has the appropriate resources. He liaises effectively as necessary with his colleague. It is recommended that the department review its teaching methods, with a view to enabling the pupils to contribute more frequently and more fully.

Greek

- 8.71 Greek has recently been introduced as an online course leading to a GCSE qualification. The head of classics provides teaching support twice a week.

Design & Technology

- 8.72 Attainment is very high at all levels. Pupils achieve very good standards in relation to their abilities. In 2003 at GCSE, all candidates gained A*-C passes, with rather more than two-thirds gaining A*/A. Similarly, at A2 level, rather more than two-thirds of candidates gained A/B grades and all students passed. All these results are well above the average for boys in maintained selective schools. Continued success in the Arkwright Scholarship scheme is a highlight.
- 8.73 Attainment is high in Years 7-9, where pupils produce a range of work in the foundation course which is well beyond that expected for their age and ability. Pupils show ability to discriminate and evaluate. The ability to design and make is clearly evident, and pupils demonstrate command of the principles of research and development. This process is expanded in Years 10 and 11 with much good work at GCSE. At AS/A2 level pupils engage successfully with the course, display innovation and show a willingness to pursue exciting outcomes. Maturity of approach is a key element of success.
- 8.74 Progress within the department is rapid. Pace increases after Years 7-9 where the accumulation of appropriate skills is assimilated and knowledge of the subject and its context increases. By Years 10 and 11, an injection of urgency takes place and the work becomes more informed by its maturity. It is produced in greater quantity. Pupils work within their capabilities but are encouraged to strive for ever better solutions. At AS and A2 this trend continues. Demands become more internalised and trigger ideas. Lunchtime clinics enable extension work to take place.
- 8.75 Learning and behaviour are very good at each stage. Individual learning skills are developed in response to the clear aims and objectives set by the teachers. Pupils see the value of good conduct in the department. They respect and value their own work and that of others. Work is stored appropriately and the busy department is invariably left in a clean and tidy condition.
- 8.76 Overall teaching was good, and often very good. A Year 11 project lesson involving the use of mechanisms was lively and exciting. The teaching meets the needs of pupils successfully, and support and help are always at hand. Relationships of staff with pupils, and between pupils are good and conducive to good learning. Meticulous planning and preparation by staff underpins pupil achievement and progress. The development of teaching materials and strategies, increasingly internally generated by staff, is a strength of the department, and contributes positively to the stimulating environment.
- 8.77 The department is ably assisted by an experienced technician. A tradition of using ICT is central to the involvement, preparation and execution of a great deal of work within the

department and this continues apace. An interactive white board is in use. ICT equipment, which includes computer-aided design and manufacture and desktop programmes, is in constant use and there is insufficient provision.

- 8.78 The new display area is a welcome addition where the work of pupils is celebrated. Extension of display areas within the school would further raise the subject profile.
- 8.79 Design technology is very ably led and managed. A strong ethos, clear departmental aims and appropriate policies are all in place. Communication is rapid to both staff and pupils. Regular monitoring of teaching and learning takes place. Development planning and longer-term strategies are comprehensive and documentation is thorough. Health and Safety requirements are met, with the exception of storage of flammable materials which are not in a lockable metal cupboard. The office space available is small and cramped, which adversely affects the department's efficiency. The department has a justifiably high profile and is valued within the school.

Geography

- 8.80 Pupils' achieve good standards in relation to their abilities at all levels. Results in public examinations at both GCSE and A level are far above the average for boys in maintained selected schools. In 2003, 96% of the cohort achieved an A* or A grade at GCSE and at A level 83% achieved A and B grades.
- 8.81 Pupils' attainment in geography is good in relation to their abilities. In lessons observed pupils used geographical terminology effectively, detailed case study knowledge and excellent presentation skills throughout their written work, especially in their maps and diagrams. The GCSE and A level classes were focussed on examination techniques as well as geographical concepts and factual knowledge. Year 7 pupils demonstrated excellent conceptual understanding to examine relational direction when using the Ordnance Survey's 'Discover York' interactive CD Rom, whilst Year 8 pupils examined viewpoints other than their own in deciding, and fully justifying, a suitable three-day break for their teacher.
- 8.82 Pupils' progress overall in geography is satisfactory in relation to their abilities, although there is varied awareness within the department of which pupils receive learning support. Progress in lessons observed was varied with the most significant progress made in the Year 8 classes where pupils were observed using and developing information from a variety of resources on Spain to justify an argument. Progress was least obvious in the classes dominated by worksheets and in GCSE lessons, where opportunities to develop fully pupils' knowledge and understanding were not taken.
- 8.83 Learning and behaviour are good in the majority of lessons. The pupils are compliant, well motivated, and generally co-operative. They are happy to contribute orally, and to listen to, and develop, ideas from peers, as exemplified by a constructive question and answer session in a Year 9 lesson on volcanoes. Generally, an atmosphere of academic involvement is evident, although some GCSE pupils were significantly uninvolved in two lessons observed.
- 8.84 The quality of teaching is generally good, reliable, thorough and well informed. All lessons are planned and prepared well with centralised resources. Lesson content and structure is obvious to pupils. There is a dependence on oral instruction and worksheets; as a result the pace of lessons is at times pedestrian. The very good Year 10 lesson on the industrial regions of Brazil provided a model of good practice where the clear variety in pace and tasks enhanced learning. The relationship between staff and pupils is varied, sometimes timid at other times robust. Throughout the department there is a genuine concern for the pupils' academic welfare.

- 8.85 Marking is done regularly and recorded accurately. Criteria for awarding marks are made clear to the pupils who have copies of the department's detailed mark scheme. The department uses the school's system of 'good' comments and lunchtime clinics effectively to improve the quality of learning. The quality of marking in the external examination classes is detailed and helpful, and based accurately on the examination body mark schemes. Reports are thorough and positive.
- 8.86 The department is very well resourced. There is scope to enhance the department's teaching with the proposed provision of a class set of laptops and an interactive whiteboard. Very good use is made of display work throughout. The comprehensive programme of fieldwork is valued highly, with effective use of opportunities within the local area, along with residential work at A level. The department has been very successful in the Geographical Association's Worldwide Quiz, coming 2nd nationally in 2001 and 7th in 2003.
- 8.87 The department is led by an experienced head of department who provides good leadership and management and has a good working relationship with his colleagues. They are very appreciative of his organisational skills and tireless provision of resources. There is a clear programme of induction and there has been good use of in-service training. Departmental documentation is very good, giving clear guidance as well as a development plan for the department. The department meets formally once a fortnight with an agenda and minutes, and, by the nature of their open door policy, members are in regular and frequent contact.

History

- 8.88 Pupils, achievements in history are very good in relation to their age and their abilities at every stage. The results gained in GCSE examinations in the last three years have been well above the national average for maintained selective schools, particularly in the proportion of pupils gaining A* and A. Results in the A-level examinations have also consistently exceeded the national averages for selective schools, especially in the proportion of pupils gaining grades A and B.
- 8.89 Work observed in class was analytical, detailed, and mostly thoughtful, showing attainment at least consistent with the age of the pupils. This high level of attainment becomes more apparent as the years go on and is reflected in the written work provided for inspection.
- 8.90 Progress in knowledge and conceptual understanding is pronounced at every level, though there was limited evidence of investigatory skills. In pupils' files in Years 10 to 13, essays are of very high standard and pupils' views are perceptive, based on detailed knowledge. Care is taken to integrate all pupils into the multi-ability sets. Pupils have special needs respected and all take a full part in lessons. Lessons are designed to be constructive and they clearly bring pupils on.
- 8.91 The success of the department owes much to the engagement of the pupils. Lessons are very academic in character, yet the pupils maintained concentration in almost every instance in the lessons observed. A characteristic of the department is the long brainstorming session in the investigation of sources. Careful questions elicit thoughtful answers, but pupils question independently and clearly signal their engagement with the process.
- 8.92 Rigorous teaching delivers high examination achievement. The lessons observed were planned in detail and teaching was of good and often very good standard. A lesson with Year 12 analysing Balfour's 1906 election address was well used to open out in detail the whole political landscape of the election. An exploration of the character of Charles II with Year 9 showed good practice in the use of the time available to move pupils through several different activities. Tired children in a late afternoon session in Year 7 were treated with understanding, the emollient manner of the teacher avoiding potential difficulties and moving

the lesson on effectively. Pupils are managed genially but firmly. Teachers generally showed an easy command of their subject and great skill in making detail interesting. They ask a great deal of their pupils, both in terms of academic rigour and in concentration. However, the limited use of pupil-centred approach means that they do not identify the strengths and weaknesses or challenge pupils sufficiently in these diverse classes. The present technique covers up weaknesses.

- 8.93 Marking is generally accurate and related to the level of the pupils or the examination at which they are aimed. Methods vary, especially in Years 12 and 13, but follow the department policy of marking towards the examination levels. While spelling and grammar are generally good, inaccuracies are rarely corrected. Essay or source work is thoroughly marked, often with helpful comment and annotation. Examination mark plans are used, where available.
- 8.94 Four well-qualified staff teach history in a suite of adequately equipped, specialist rooms which are shared with Politics. They contain a comprehensive library of books for both subjects. The department is led gently, yet intellectually rigorously in a way that is appreciated by the rest of the team. Management is a little ad hoc, without many formal meetings or an observation schedule, but staff development is taken seriously and a definite departmental ethos is successfully created.

Modern Foreign Languages

- 8.95 By Year 9, the levels of attainment achieved by pupils are good or high in relation to their abilities. In public examinations, over a period of three years, the results obtained at GCSE level in both French and German were well above average for boys in maintained selective schools. Results at A level over this period were variable in French and average in German. Most pupils show good or very good language skills as they progress through the school. They take pride in their written work, which is generally well organized and neatly presented.
- 8.96 The rate of progress of the pupils in relation to their abilities is good. French is begun in Year 7, and the pupils quickly gain a sound knowledge base on which they build successfully in the ensuing years up to GCSE. All pupils progress to reach higher tier standard in the GCSE. Pupils who take up German in Year 8 progress at a similar rate through to Year 11. In the sixth form, pronunciation, accuracy and fluency improve steadily, as a wider vocabulary and a broader range of grammatical structures are acquired.
- 8.97 The pupils show a willingness to learn, to participate and to use their knowledge. Most are well-behaved, engaged and attentive. They sustain their concentration over a full lesson and co-operate readily with the staff. They also demonstrate well-developed study skills. There is an overall impression of a very positive working environment based on mutual respect and support.
- 8.98 The quality of teaching in both languages and at all stages is good, sometimes very good. Lessons are almost always carefully planned and conducted at a brisk pace. The target language is used routinely in almost all lessons, though English is the preferred means of communication for the explanation of grammar points. Most lessons contain an appropriate balance of speaking, listening reading and writing. A wide range of teaching strategies is deployed. In two of the lessons observed, there was some particularly effective use of visual aids. Although the pupils are encouraged to answer questions, the teacher is, at times, over-prominent, which prevents the pupils from being fully involved. This tendency was noted in a significant number of the lessons observed, particularly in Year 13.
- 8.99 All pupils are given a very firm grounding in grammar. The department also attaches great importance to the acquisition of a broad vocabulary, and progress in this area is carefully and

effectively monitored by means of regular written tests. Marking procedures usually follow school and departmental guidelines, though comments are not helpful enough, especially in Years 8-11.

- 8.100 The department is housed in a pleasant, modern and spacious suite of rooms. The range and quality of the resources are exceptionally good, and enhance the quality of teaching and learning. ICT is well integrated into the schemes of work, and good use is made of the extensive computer facilities by all the year-groups. Examples of pupils' work are widely displayed within the department. The attractive accommodation and the large variety of resources contribute significantly to the teaching and learning processes.
- 8.101 The department is well led and efficiently managed by a man of vast experience. All the teachers are well qualified, committed and enthusiastic. The full-time staff are supported by two native speakers. The schemes of work are clear, detailed and carefully co-ordinated across the two languages. Although he himself oversees the delivery of both French and German, the head of department encourages members of his team to take on responsibilities, such as the running of the exchanges and the setting of internal exams. There is a strong sense of common purpose within the department as a whole.
- 8.102 There are two well established and popular exchanges, which enhance the teaching of the two languages and provide an enriching experience for the participants. There are, however, currently no clubs or societies, and it suggested that the department seek ways of filling this gap in its provision. It is recommended that the department adjust its methods to provide the pupils with more opportunities to participate actively in lessons.

Music

- 8.103 Standards of attainment generally in public examinations are very good. The GCSE and A Level results are well above those obtained by boys in selective maintained schools. A high proportion of pupils achieve A*/A at GCSE level, and at A Level pupils consistently achieve grades A/B. This provides excellent preparation for those wishing to read music at university or conservatoire.
- 8.104 Standards of attainment in Years 7-11, and in the sixth form in performing, composing, listening and appraising are well above the average for pupils' ages and abilities. In Years 7 and 8, pupils display a good understanding of key elements such as rhythm, instrumentation, structure, melody, harmony, tonality and word setting. They produce compositions of high musical quality, with accurate and expressive performances of their work. In Year 9, pupils display an even greater understanding of technical vocabulary and use their critical imagination when composing and performing. In Years 10 and 11 and the sixth form, pupils handle musical technology well and produce sophisticated compositions using advanced techniques.
- 8.105 Pupils make good academic progress from Year 7 where they develop good listening, appraising and elementary composition skills. Through to Years 10, 11 and sixth form they progress to an excellent understanding of advanced compositional techniques. Pupils have the capacity to reflect on, and analyse, their performance and compositions, and collaborate with their peers within the performing ensemble, constantly devising new strategies which will encourage and enhance improvement. In the very best lessons, the well-structured tasks enabled very rapid progress to be made.
- 8.106 Pupils' attitudes to work and learning are very good. They are competent learners, highly motivated and capable of independent work. A positive friendly relationship exists between pupils and teachers, and pupils are supportive of one another in class music ensembles.

- 8.107 The quality of the teaching observed was generally good across all years, with some that was very good. Teaching was always appropriate to the age of the pupils and to each transitional stage, contributing very effectively to pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers plan well, have clear learning objectives, choose appropriate learning activities and treat pupils with patience, respect and appropriate firmness. One Year 7 lesson set about creating a class ensemble composed of musicians of every ability, which rehearsed, played and recorded an improvisation/composition based on some of the features of *Danse Macabre*, by Saint-Saens. The teaching encourages pupils to use their initiative and musical imagination, and build on the musical attainment which they have developed inside and outside school. The team teaching policy at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 composition ensures that pupils reflect on, and evaluate, their performances and compositions to a high level. Good guidance on examination techniques and coursework submissions helps pupils to prepare effectively for external examinations.
- 8.108 The marking of pupils' work is regular and helpful, sometimes with extensive comments, which enable pupils to enrich learning and make progress. There is an effective marking policy at Key Stage 3 focusing on composition and performance, but it is not detailed enough to help the pupils' progress. GCSE and A Level marking is determined by examination specification requirements.
- 8.109 The quality of extra-curricular music making is very good, and standards of instrumental music are particularly high. The senior swing band and senior brass group are outstandingly good, and engage in challenging repertoire. They perform on a regular basis, with concerts in the school and outside, and tours abroad.
- 8.110 Two full-time, well qualified, enthusiastic teachers share the teaching from Years 7 to 13. Their musical skills greatly complement one another, and allow for an exciting delivery of all aspects of the curriculum. The school also employs fifteen visiting music teachers, who make a significant contribution to the quality of musical education of the pupils.
- 8.111 The music department has relatively good accommodation, but certain areas need refurbishment. There are sufficient practice rooms, but their geographical location hinders departmental efficiency. There is a good stock of choral and orchestral music, and CDs, and audio equipment is good. Television, video and excellent ICT facilities are available and enhance the quality of lessons. The existing recording room is well utilised at GCSE and A Level. The school library has an adequate collection of standard academic text books aimed at senior pupils.
- 8.112 The music department is effectively managed and well led. Departmental and Foundation meetings are regular and formal, and the departmental handbook and schemes of work are detailed and very clear. Routine administration associated with visiting music teachers is improving.

Physical Education

- 8.113 PE is an examinable subject, with GCSE, AS and A2 options available. National comparisons of statistics of public examinations are not meaningful, given the small numbers involved to date. The levels of attainment at AS/A2 are satisfactory when related to the other A level subjects of the candidates. The examination classes' work was of a very good standard at Year 10, and of a satisfactory standard in the sixth form. There have been recent alterations in teachers' responsibilities designed to improve the academic PE results.
- 8.114 The standard achieved in mixed ability PE lessons observed in Year 7 rugby, Years 8, 9 and 10 basketball and Years 10 and 11 badminton was good. In PE lessons and games lessons the

pupils displayed knowledge, skills and understanding in a variety of games, at least equal and often superior to the National Curriculum standards for these age groups.

- 8.115 Progress in PE and games lessons is good. Pupils with different abilities and backgrounds are willing to improve their technical knowledge through teacher-led question and answer, and from reciprocal teaching, which allows for differentiation. Good examples of this were observed in badminton, invasion games and examined GCSE.
- 8.116 Pupils are well motivated, positive and courteous, and have a good relationship with their peer group and teachers. They competed and co-operated well in all of the lessons observed.
- 8.117 The teaching observed in games, PE and academic PE was at least sound and usually good or very good. Lessons are well planned, utilising a variety of activities to motivate individuals and groups. All the pupils observed made good progress, owing to the variety of teaching methods utilised. The rotation and option systems operated in games ensure pupils receive breadth, depth, variety and appropriate differentiation in their games curriculum. The activities programme in the school supplements this provision. Books are regularly marked in line with the school policy, and recording is sound.
- 8.118 Pupils experience a programme in PE, games and activities where they are able to develop their interests and self-esteem. At Key Stages 3 and 4 there is a good balance of skills and activities, including a health programme as part of the pupils' PSHE curriculum. Years 10 and 11 receive only one period on alternate weeks, and this is insufficient. In addition, there is no provision for swimming in the Key Stage 3 programme.
- 8.119 The department consists of 3.5 PE teachers who are well qualified, and over 20 other staff who assist with games. The department is led and managed clearly and firmly, with consultation and good communication. The departmental handbook is well compiled and sets out appropriate procedures that are followed. The new member to the department is benefiting from induction policies developed by the head of PE and director of sports. The present PE staff have attended suitable courses to continue their development of academic PE. Funds are available to assist staff to develop their refereeing and coaching. The department is very well equipped and resourced. The school field with its pavilion and the sports hall are excellent facilities. The co-ordination between the head of PE and director of sport is very good.

Short Subject Reports

Short subject reports contain concise evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning and of provision in the school.

Drama

- 8.120 Two lessons were observed (Years 7 and 8) along with 30 minutes' attendance at extra-curricular GCSE drama and a Year 10 Assembly.
- 8.121 The quality of teaching is very good and verged upon the outstanding in one of the two lessons observed. Both teachers observed had an excellent rapport with the pupils and had carefully planned lessons of activity and evaluation which promoted the ready assimilation of a range of dramatic and rhetorical skills. The attitude of the pupils remained positive throughout, and their commitment to, and enjoyment of, the subject were very evident.
- 8.122 Despite its cramped accommodation, drama enhances the intellectual and aesthetic life of the school under the dynamic and purposeful leadership of the head of drama. It is taught

alongside English to all boys in Years 7, 8 and 9 within a well-conceived framework and is formally assessed.

- 8.123 GCSE drama is being piloted as a one-year (Year 10) course and this might usefully be considered as a subject for future integration into the curriculum.
- 8.124 Drama is likely to flourish when the new theatre is built, and the introduction of AS theatre studies should also be considered.
- 8.125 In the wider life of the school, drama is evident in year assemblies and in the junior and senior drama clubs. It is a major source of Foundation collaboration with the Girls' High School, particularly in the co-production of two major plays or musicals annually. Performances in local theatres also take place.

ICT

- 8.126 Two Key Stage 3 lessons were observed and a range of pupils' work folders was scrutinised.
- 8.127 All pupils study ICT in Years 7 to 11, where they take a short course GCSE. The teaching of ICT has many good features. Nine non-specialists teach the subject and they are led by an ICT co-ordinator who provides them with a considerable amount of support and resources to use. The department meets on a regular basis, and a helpful departmental handbook provides guidance.
- 8.128 Pupils respond well and are co-operative, both with their teachers and with each other. Generally their concentration is good although, on occasion, some do not remain involved for the whole lesson. The Key Stage 3 course has recently been redesigned and the new structure is well received by both pupils and staff. The course relies on the use of published worksheets, supplemented by extra sheets produced within the department to extend those pupils with better ICT skills.
- 8.129 Pupils' work folders indicate a good understanding of the topics covered, although in some cases their contents are a little disorganised. Homework is marked efficiently and, particularly at Key Stage 4, is annotated with helpful comments to inform future learning.
- 8.130 The ICT facilities in the department are extensive with good technical support; pupils also have good access to facilities elsewhere. There is good and increasing liaison between the senior and junior schools.

Politics

- 8.131 Five lessons were observed, together with a range of materials on display and work in pupils' folders.
- 8.132 Overall teaching was good in the lessons observed: it was never less than sound, and nearly a third of the lessons were very good. Teachers know their subject well, and plan and manage lessons effectively. They make good use of time and resources. The recreation of Prime Minister's Question Time in the classroom was very effective in challenging pupils of different abilities and in showing the shortcomings of the process, an example of good pupil-centred teaching. Teachers ask good questions to develop pupils' understanding and encourage them to think for themselves, stimulating brisk progress in most lessons.
- 8.133 Pupils respond enthusiastically to the teaching. They think carefully about the answers to questions and respond in a knowledgeable and detailed manner, which may be a factor in their achieving the excellent examination results at A Level. The inclusion of Girls' High

School pupils in lessons is an advantage and their co-operation is on an equal basis. The Junior Politics Society is a popular and stimulating academic activity.

- 8.134 The subject is effectively covered by a suitably detailed scheme of work, aimed at examination success. Pupils are well provided with textbooks and other materials, although they lack Internet access within the department. Visits to conferences and external speakers in school should be encouraged.

Religious Studies

- 8.135 Five lessons were observed and pupils' work from all stages in the school was scrutinised. A full discussion took place with the head of department.
- 8.136 Religious Studies is taught throughout the school. It is compulsory for all boys to the age of 16, and in Years 10 and 11 they have a choice between a full course or a short course to GCSE. AS and A2 provision is also made in the sixth form, this being shared with the Girls' High School. The subject is well resourced and enjoys good accommodation for teaching and administration.
- 8.137 The teaching in lessons observed was at least sound and at times good. For the examination years it was exclusively examination orientated. The planning is very thorough and the material is covered meticulously, the teaching being mainly teacher-led. Some limited pupil involvement was observed, but consideration should be given to providing more opportunities for pupils to discuss and respond to the material, to offer their views and to work independently or in groups.
- 8.138 The pupils take their work seriously and apply themselves to the tasks set. They concentrate well, at times for long periods when they are simply listening and taking notes. Their written work was at least sound and the best was excellent, which indicated that they were well capable of doing more on their own.
- 8.139 The department is well managed. The schemes of work are thorough and expectations are clear. The head of department provides good opportunities for staff to discuss the schemes and suggest amendments, and with more scope given to the pupils, the department is well placed to move forward.

Achievement and Quality in Activities

- 8.140 The activities programme is a strength of the school. Pupils take full advantage of the large number of activities on offer, which constitute a very good extra-curricular programme. There is a good balance between physical, aesthetic and recreational activities. All the activities observed were well supported, behaviour was good and a high standard of attainment was achieved.
- 8.141 Sport is a major part of the activities programme. An excellent standard is achieved in a wide range of sports, including rugby, cricket, hockey, basketball and tennis. County honours in these games have been regularly won and the school has had a good level of international honours.
- 8.142 Sports activities go beyond team games and include athletics, cross country, fencing, judo and a wide range of outward bound activities. The sports activities programme is well organised and managed with over 20 motivated, committed, and well-qualified staff. Attendance at these activities is registered for Years 7 to 11 but not for the sixth form, and this practice should be reviewed.

- 8.143 Over 200 students are involved in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. In the summer two gold groups completed their expedition on Dartmoor. Silver and bronze groups complete assessed expeditions in Yorkshire. Expedition training is organised at Windermere in the Lake District.
- 8.144 During the last academic year trips were organised for pastoral and recreational groups, which included Years 7 and 8 team building at Buckden House, visits to Germany and Prague and a fishing trip to Shropshire. In addition there were field trips, cultural and subject related trips, ski trips, sports tours and foreign language exchanges.
- 8.145 Musical activities prosper to a very good standard, with four groups appearing in London's Southbank Centre. The Swing Foundation were very successful: they were voted best school big band in London and one of their members was awarded a prestigious jazz scholarship. Following this success they toured Barcelona. Orchestras, choirs, bands, ensemble groups of all kinds and for all ages flourish, and opportunities for performing encourage high standards.
- 8.146 The school charities committee raised over £6,000 last year for a wide variety of worthy causes. Contact with parents and Former Pupils is maintained through the Parents' Association, Friends of QEGS, the QEGS Sports Association and Old Savilians.
- 8.147 Pupils are committed, enthusiastic and well motivated. The parents confirmed the importance of this programme for their children and were very appreciative of the range and variety on offer, and of the high standards achieved.

9. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 9.1 The inspection was carried out from November 10 to 14, 2003. All subjects of the curriculum were inspected and all members of the teaching staff were observed teaching. However, the size of the team did not permit all subjects to be reported on in full. The following subjects do not have full reports in Section 8: drama, ICT, politics and religious studies. The inspectors visited 121 lessons, examined extensive samples of work by pupils of different abilities in each year and held formal and informal discussions with pupils. They attended 4 assemblies and 20 registration sessions. They observed a very wide range of extra-curricular and sporting activities. They held 81 discussions with teaching and non-teaching staff at various levels in the school. They analysed the responses of 475 parents to a questionnaire distributed in advance of the inspection. They examined a wide range of documentation made available by the school.
- 9.2 A bursar from another school joined the RI on the preliminary visit as part of the ISBA pilot scheme, spending the day with the Bursar's department. The principal findings have been included in the relevant sections of this report.

List of Inspectors

Mr A Silcock	Reporting Inspector. Retired Headmaster, HMC School
Mr R Batchelor	Director of Studies, HMC School
Mr C Cleugh	Headmaster, HMC School
Mr C Davy	Director of Subject, HMC School
Mr D Gorrie	Retired Deputy Head, HMC School
Miss P Message	Director of Studies, HMC School
Mr J Parsonage	Head of Department, HMC School
Mr M Richards	Director of Music, HMC School
Mr A Scadding	Head of Department, HMC School
Mr A Watson	Second in Department, HMC School
Mr J Wood	Deputy Head, HMC School