

INSPECTION REPORT

CHEAM HIGH SCHOOL

Cheam, Surrey

LEA area: London Borough of Sutton

Unique reference number: 103010

Headteacher: Ms R J Allott

Reporting inspector: Terence Parish
15465

Dates of inspection: 10th – 14th December 2001

Inspection number: 188473

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	11-19
Gender of pupils:	mixed
School address:	Chatsworth Road Cheam Surrey
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr R Satchell
Date of previous inspection:	13 th May 1996

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15465	Terry Parish	Registered inspector	Science support	Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What Should the school do to improve further?
8941	John Fletcher	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
21971	John Glennon	Team inspector	Religious Education English	
30648	Brian Skelton	Team inspector	English support Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	
31100	Geoff Hunter	Team inspector	Mathematics	
18967	Brenda Loydell	Team inspector	Mathematics support	
3735	Alan Webb	Team inspector	Science Physics post-16	
27407	Bill Stoneham	Team inspector	History Travel and tourism Leisure and tourism	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
20497	Vernon Williams	Team inspector	Geography History post –16	
18854	Malcolm McGregor	Team inspector	Information and Communication Technology (ICT) post –16	6 th form co-ordinator
20165	Alan Lemon	Team inspector	Art Provision for pupils with special educational needs	
18854	Tom Dodd	Team inspector	Design and technology	
27803	Joe Clark	Team inspector	ICT	
30128	Shirley Stanley	Team inspector	Music Equality of opportunity	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education
17404	Judith Tolley	Team inspector	Modern languages Spanish post-16	
2928	Bill Baxendale	Team inspector	German	

20999	Mark Evans	Team inspector	Business Psychology	
14446	Barry Simmons	Team inspector	Physical education	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
ANNEX: THE SIXTH FORM	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	15
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?	20
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?	23
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	26
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	28
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	29
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	32
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	34
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4	39
PART E: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM	66

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cheam High School is a much larger than average mixed comprehensive school with 1533 pupils on roll. It is predominantly white; around 110 pupils and students come from minority ethnic groups, almost a half of these are of mixed heritage, the rest are of Indian, Chinese, or Black Caribbean heritage. Very few pupils are currently at an early stage of learning English. The proportions of pupils with special educational needs or statements of need are typical for a school of this size. Around fifty-seven pupils are identified as having significant levels of need; a minority of these have emotional and behavioural difficulties and a few sensory or physical difficulties. The attainment of pupils when they start in Year 7 is broadly average. Girls tend to have better results in ability tests than boys. A selective system of education operates in the local authority; the range of ability of pupils on entry does not reflect that which might be expected in a fully comprehensive borough, there are fewer at the upper end of the range. The school is experiencing some difficulties in recruiting teachers, reflecting the national picture of teacher shortages. Mathematics is a significant recruitment problem; design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT) are others. Some departments, like English and science, have a high proportion of recently qualified teachers.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Cheam High School is a good school with some significant strengths. Pupils and students learn well, achieve as expected, and enjoy good relationships with their peers and with teachers. Standards of work are average. Teaching is good overall and many lessons are better. The many new teachers have settled in well. On balance, behaviour is good; it is often very good in lessons. Leadership and management are good; very thorough evaluation of how well departments perform is gradually increasing standards in many. The new headteacher demonstrates very good leadership and has started at a time when the school is ready to change the style of its work, from control and direction to partnership and choice. Of particular note is the provision for modern languages; this is outstanding, the best seen by very experienced inspectors. The value for money provided by the school is satisfactory.

What the school does well

- The standards of attainment, teaching and management in modern languages are all excellent.
- The teaching of music is very good in all years; the teaching of geography and of religious education in Years 10 and 11 is very good.
- The provision for physical education, dance and drama.
- Provision for the academic support of pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Extra-curricular activities are well catered for.

What could be improved

- The number of boys attaining 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE, particularly in, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, and history.
- Standards in information communication technology.
- Provision for statutory religious education in Years 10 and 11.
- Provision for careers education and work experience in Years 10 and 11.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 1996. Improvement since then has been good. The proportion of pupils attaining 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE has almost doubled. Teaching is significantly better. Computer provision is better though not good enough. Management is better organised.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 11 and sixth form students at the end of Year 13 based on average point scores in GCSE and A-level/AS-level examinations.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
GCSE examinations	B	B	C	C
A-levels/AS-levels	E	D	D	

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Year 9 test results in 2001 are above average in English and mathematics and average in science. This is reflected to an extent in the standards of work seen; science work is average, English and mathematics is above average. The trend in test results over three years is in line with the national trend of gradual improvement, though 2001 results, particularly in English, are better. GCSE results in 2001 were average overall, well above average for the proportion attaining 5 or more A*-G or 1 A* -G. The proportion of girls attaining 5 or more A*-C was in line with the girls' national average whilst the proportion of boys attaining similarly was below the boys' average. Whilst more able boys historically attending local grammar schools can explain this, to an extent, there is room for some improvement. Overall, GCSE results in 2001 were average compared to similar schools – comprehensive schools within a selective local education authority. The trend in GCSE results over the last three years has followed the national trend of gradual improvement.

The school's statutory targets for improvement at GCSE are appropriate and sufficiently challenging. They were not quite met in 2001.

Standards of work seen in most subjects are broadly average. Standards are above average in Year 9 and well above average in Year 11 in modern languages. They are above average in Year 11 in physical education and in religious education (for those pupils who take GCSE). Standards in geography are below average in Year 9 but average in Year 11. Standards in ICT are below average in Years 7-11.

Pupils achieve satisfactorily from Year 7 to the end of Year 11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The few pupils at an early stage of learning English have no specialist support and struggle a little; limited evidence indicates they do not achieve as well as they might. Otherwise, pupils from ethnic minorities are well monitored and achieve as well as their peers from other ethnic groups.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils generally like being in school and treat it well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well in lessons. They most often behave very well in the playground and corridors. However, a significant minority can misbehave and a small number are poorly behaved with a few teachers. This leads to a relatively high incidence of short-term exclusions, as the school does not tolerate poor behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are often very good and there is very little bullying, no sexism and no racism. However, pupils have few opportunities to show initiative or take responsibility in the running of the school and there is limited interaction with the community and local business.
Attendance	Attendance is about average. Holidays taken in school time affects it.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7 – 9	Years 10 – 11	Years 12 – 13
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching of English and mathematics is good in Years 7-11. Teaching of science is good in Years 7-9 and satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. There are no overwhelming strengths or significant weaknesses in teaching; school evaluation and development have made it consistently good overall and, for example, teachers' planning, expectations and methods are generally sound or better. A few teachers, mainly new, have some difficulty managing a few classes. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of ICT is variable with examples of good practice across a range of subject areas; there has been disappointment in the quality of recent New Opportunities Fund ICT training though in-house training is well received. Teaching in modern languages is excellent across all years; indeed it is exceptional. The excellence is due to several excellent teachers working very well together and being innovative in teaching strategies. This innovation and enthusiasm raises standards significantly and demonstrates what can be achieved. The teaching of music is very good in all years; great enthusiasm for the subject underpins this. The teaching of geography and of religious education is very good in Years 10 and 11; subject expertise is key in these areas. Teaching is good in most other subjects in all years. It is satisfactory in ICT in Years 7-9 and satisfactory in art and design in Years 10 and 11. Literacy is taught well overall and numeracy, outside mathematics, is satisfactorily taught. Numeracy, in mathematics, is good. The needs of almost all pupils are met; those with special educational needs have very good teaching provision, gifted and talented pupils have at least sound provision, rather better in physical education and modern languages. However, there are a very few pupils with English as an additional language who apparently cannot be provided with support assistants who speak their first language. As communication is obviously difficult, judgements about the effect of this are insecure. The quality of pupils' learning effectively matches the quality of teaching they receive. For example, gains in knowledge and understanding in modern languages is excellent, whereas they are insufficient in ICT lessons in Years 7-9. Acquisition of knowledge and skills in art in Years 7-9 is very good too.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. A good range of standard and vocational courses is offered. Provision for religious education does not meet statutory requirements in Years 10-13. Staffing problems means no food or textiles technology is taught. There is no work experience in Years 10 or 11 and careers education needs significant development.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good for pupils with learning difficulties. Less secure for pupils with behavioural problems as there is inadequate funding delegated for them.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There is no provision and some pupils need it. There are no support teachers able to speak the language of those pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good moral, social and cultural, satisfactory spiritual. Greater efforts could be made to give a moment for reflection at the beginning of the day. The diverse range of cultures represented in the school, albeit often by small numbers of pupils, should be better utilised to support learning.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good welfare provision, and academic progress is also well monitored. However, provision and procedures related to the personal development of pupils do not encourage them to take responsibility for contributing to the running of the school. The school has a good partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. Very good leadership by the headteacher; there is a clear aim of raising standards further. Performance management of teachers has been very well done and contributes to improvements in teaching.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory overall. Priorities for development are very appropriate. There are weaknesses in curriculum provision that need attention. There is a good and effective relationship between the chair and the school. An imbalance between the Governors' planning and oversight and the involvement of some in details makes managers' jobs more difficult.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good overall. Teaching is well evaluated. Departments are very well reviewed. The effect of both on pupils' achievements will take time.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Money is generally well spent and best value is pursued satisfactorily. However, financial resources are not apportioned appropriately to all years.

Staffing is currently unsatisfactory due to difficulties in recruitment. Accommodation for the main school is just satisfactory though it relies heavily on 'temporary' structures. Resources are inadequate; the number of computers is about half what should now be seen in a school this size.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teaching is good.• The school is well managed and led.• Children become mature and responsible.• Expectations are high.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Homework.• Information about pupils' progress.• How the school works with parents.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments. Homework did not appear to be an issue when books were scrutinised or pupils talked to. Progress reports are very good. Parents' meetings are well attended.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SIXTH FORM

The sixth form of this large comprehensive school has expanded considerably since the time of the previous inspection and with 293 students is larger than average. Attainment on entry is below average. It provides a good range of subjects at GCE A2 and AS level and also a broad range of vocational courses. Around two thirds of students, some from a diverse range of minority ethnic groups, continue from Year 11 in Cheam High into the sixth form. Cheam High sixth form competes with other local schools and colleges and is increasingly popular with students. Cheam High School's Tennis Scholarship Scheme attracts some students from considerable distances. About half of students leaving at the end of Year 13 go on to higher education courses.

HOW GOOD THE SIXTH FORM IS

The sixth form is good. Standards have improved overall since the previous inspection but remain slightly below the national average. Most students take pride in their school, their attitudes to work are good, and they learn effectively. Overall, they achieve satisfactorily, but a minority do not attend well enough and the standard of their work suffers. Teaching in the sixth form is good overall, very good in the sciences and in religious education, and is excellent in modern foreign languages. Cost effectiveness is good.

Strengths

- The range of courses and subjects offered.
- Teaching and learning in modern foreign languages.
- The take up of higher education places by language students.
- The Cheam High School's Tennis Scholarship Scheme.

What could be improved

- The opportunities for personal development and for students to take responsibility.
- Accommodation and resources to support independent study.
- The quality and range of advice about courses and career opportunities.
- Provision for statutory religious education.
- The attendance of some students.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan. Strengths and areas for improvement in individual subjects are identified in the sections on individual subjects in the full report.

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION IN INDIVIDUAL CURRICULUM AREAS

The table below shows overall judgements about the provision in the subjects and courses that were inspected in the sixth form. Judgements are based mainly on the quality of teaching and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects in the sixth form were inspected.

Curriculum area	Overall judgement about provision, with comment
Mathematics	Good. Teaching is good and students make satisfactory progress. Standards at A-level are a little below the national average.
Physics	Very good. Teaching is very good and students are enthusiastic learners.
Design and technology	Good. Students who complete courses achieve satisfactorily as a result of good teaching. Students' prior attainment is sometimes relatively low. Several different courses are offered.
Business	Satisfactory. Standards are in line with national averages and are improving. The curriculum is planned carefully. Teaching is satisfactory and often good and students learn well.
ICT	Good. Teaching is good across the broad range of courses offered. Well-planned lessons that challenge students help them make good progress. Assessment information could be used more regularly to inform and involve students more in evaluating their own learning.
Physical education	Good. Results at A-level are above average. Teaching is consistently good and students are very committed to their work.
Leisure and tourism/ Travel and tourism	Satisfactory. Good links have been established with the industry, but course completion rates need to be improved in leisure and tourism and students should be offered more opportunities for individual research work. Travel and tourism is a new course that has not yet been completed.
Art	Good. Teaching is good. Standards are in line with national averages.
Psychology	Good. A new subject at Cheam High, it is already popular with students. Standards are average and improving. Much of the teaching is very good and students learn with enthusiasm.
Religious studies	Unsatisfactory. Most students do not receive their entitlement to religious education in the sixth form. However those who follow the A-level course achieve satisfactorily. The very good teaching is responsible for the increase in numbers in Year 12.
History	Good. A-level results were well below the national average in 2001 whilst AS results were good. The quality of teaching, learning and management of the subject have improved and are now good.
English	Good. Standards are below average. Teaching is good, though progress is only satisfactory as students have relatively low levels of attainment when they start.
Spanish	Excellent. Standards in lessons are well above the national average with

	students exhibiting high levels of independence in the use of language as a result of excellent teaching.
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In other subjects work was sampled. In chemistry and biology, teaching is good. In geography, standards are close to average and teaching and learning are good; pupils achieve satisfactorily. In French and German, teaching is excellent and students achieve standards that are well above the national average. In art, the teaching of GNVQ lessons is variable; one lesson was unsatisfactory. In ICT, Intermediate GNVQ students make satisfactory progress though standards are below average.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Aspect	Comment
How well students are guided and supported	Assessment of academic work is good; students are clear about how well they are doing. Course and careers guidance needs significant development.
Effectiveness of the leadership and management of the sixth form	Leadership and management of the sixth form are good. Monitoring of academic performance and links between teachers and tutors are good. Attendance of students is insufficiently monitored and registration is too informal.

STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

What students like about the sixth form	What they feel could be improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are taught well. • The choice of courses the school provides • They enjoy being in the sixth form • Subject teachers give students good support with their learning. • They are helped to study independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of advice about future options. • The timetable arrangements for lessons. • The support and help if they have personal problems • The school could take more notice of their views

The inspection found that students are generally very positive about the sixth form and the opportunities it provides and inspectors were impressed by the smart appearance of the students. Most students enjoy the sixth form and would recommend it to other students. Inspection evidence supports the views of a significant proportion that think that there is a need for more constructive advice about what to do in the sixth form and about opportunities and careers beyond the sixth form. The facilities for independent study are good but the growing student numbers means facilities are under pressure and access is often difficult. The school has identified through its own recent evaluation that it could do more to guide and support its students and be more responsive to their needs and views.

COMPARING PROVISION IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Inspectors make judgements about provision in subjects and courses, and about leadership and management, in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. Excellent and very good are equivalent to the judgement "outstanding" in further education and sixth form college reports; poor and very poor are equivalent to "very weak".

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards in GCSE are judged against national standards, which include all secondary maintained schools, against similar schools, and against results predicted as likely when test results at the end of Year 9 are taken into account. This paragraph should be read in conjunction with the summary of the report where comments on, for example, Year 9 performance and trends in results are made. Literacy and numeracy are also commented on at the end of the paragraphs on English and mathematics.

2. In 2001, GCSE results for the proportion of pupils gaining five or more A*-C grades was close to the national average, boys' results being nearly seven per cent below the boys' average and girls' results average. The proportion gaining five or more A*-G grades was well above average with boys doing better than girls. More pupils than average gained at least one A*-G grade. These results reflect the broadly average attainment when pupils enter the school. The range of ability is wide, but is skewed towards the average and below because the school is situated in a local education authority with a large proportion of grammar schools, and independent selective school provision is close to the school. Until recently, more boys tended to take up the grammar school places than girls which accounts for relatively poor boys' performance in the higher grade band. Compared with similar schools, GCSE results are in line with expectations and represent satisfactory achievement between Year 7 and year 11. Compared to the attainment of the 2001 Year 11 cohort at the end of Year 9, GCSE results are good for grades A*-C, very good for grades A*-G. There is no obvious difference in the achievement of pupils from different ethnic groups.

3. In 2001 almost all pupils took English, mathematics, science, and a modern language and most took a design and technology course. English results were broadly average and boys and girls results reflected the national picture, girls doing better than boys. All but one pupil took English literature, a much higher proportion did than nationally and these did rather better than average, with girls doing better. Results in English have remained steady despite considerable changes in staffing. Good teaching is more evident in Years 7-9 where pupils achieve well; new teachers have not yet had time to influence GCSE results. Current English work in Years 7-9 is above average, pupils are well encouraged to read and speak though their writing is less confident. Standards of literacy are good. Mathematics GCSE results were also in line with national results and as expected based on pupils' prior attainment in 1999. It has been increasingly hard for the school to appoint both qualified and experienced teachers in mathematics and this is beginning to have an effect on standards. Nevertheless teaching is mostly good and staffing adequate at present and pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Standards of current work in mathematics are above average by the end of Year 9 and average in Year 11. Standards of numeracy are satisfactory. In science, the proportion of pupils attaining an A*-C grade was below average in 2001, particularly for boys, and this has been consistent for some years, though the gap is narrowing. There was also a trend of overall improvement in results until 2000. A high proportion of science teachers are also new, some in their first year of teaching, and current standards reflect a good job being done. ICT and after-school activities are well used to help pupils achieve better than they might without this additional support. Achievement overall is satisfactory. Standards of work across Years 7-9 in science are generally average.

4. Standards in modern languages, French, Spanish, German, are well above average. The proportions of pupils attaining higher grades, A*, A and B, are high. Girls do better than boys but boys' results are at least in line with national averages. Pupils' achievements in

Years 9 and 11 are excellent because of the excellent quality of teaching and the significant number of outstanding teachers. Standards in ICT, related to National Curriculum requirements, are below average in all years. Almost all pupils can do basic tasks and use the Internet for research but not enough pupils have the confidence for the level of independent learning with computers commonly seen in many schools today. Pupils' achievement from when they start at the school to the beginning of Year 10 is, on balance, insufficient, but thereafter it improves. The reason for the differences in attainment in ICT, compared to modern languages, is the need for even more trained ICT teachers to teach ICT lessons. At present, insufficient qualified or knowledgeable teachers still adversely affect standards.

5. In art and design, girls achieve better than boys in Years 10 and 11 effectively because they work harder and this is reflected in better results at GCSE. Girls do better in history GCSE examinations too, though this time there is no apparent difference in the standards of work of girls and boys in books and classes. Absence affects standards in history, which, however, are at least average in all years despite the time available for lessons being below average in Years 7-9.

6. Design and technology is represented by a range of courses at GCSE and included food technology in 2001, though few pupils were entered for this. Overall, standards were in line with the national average but girls did much better than boys. Some courses, for example graphic products were more successful than resistant materials. Systems and control, which should be an option for the more able, had no A* or A grades and only two at B. Teachers indicated that pupils' failure to complete course work contributed to standards lower than might have been expected.

7. Though pupils' achievement is satisfactory in geography between Year 7 and Year 9, the standard of their work in Year 9 is below average. Insufficient time is spent in lessons practicing the skills that they learn or to do much enquiry based learning. The curriculum time they have is less than average. However, in Years 10 and 11, achievement in geography is good and standards average. Better teaching and learning, due to more open-ended work, contributes to this improvement. Standards in music are rapidly rising and pupils in Year 10 perform in line with national expectations. Very good management and teaching, coupled with providing sufficient time for lessons in 2001 compared to the inadequate amount provided in the years before, have led to this improvement. Standards in religious education in Years 7-9 are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are above average in Years 10 and 11 for those pupils who follow the GCSE course; these pupils achieve well.

8. Boys and girls achieve well in physical education and many reach standards above national expectations in lessons in Year 11. GCSE examination standards in 2001 do not quite reflect this as they were about average. Standards in dance lessons also often exceed national expectations and a group will be taking GCSE examinations in the near future.

9. Overall, pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs and those with statements of special educational needs are making good progress. The early identification of groups of pupils with low literacy skills and the very good support provided to remedy these, results in them making good progress in reading and writing. The additional lessons in literacy, and the very good extra-curricular literacy support, are aimed mainly at particular pupils in Years 7 and 8. These add up to very effective measures for pupils to consolidate their basic skills. In Year 7, pupils selected to work intensively on their reading and writing skills develop quickly the means to recognise, read and spell frequently used words. They alter the tense accurately and spell the singular and plurals of words correctly. Pupils develop knowledge about nouns, adjectives and prepositions, giving examples of each. Their good progress in reading and understanding the rules of language helps them

structure sentences and comprehend their meaning. Repeated reading test and the reviews of pupils' progress show that gaps in literacy are being closed, sometimes quite considerably. Their confidence and optimism grow significantly and as a result they soon start to get better value from all of their lessons. By the end of Year 11, most pupils with special educational needs pass a good number of GCSE examinations with A* - G grades.

Sixth form

10. Overall examination standards in the sixth form are below average though this is an improvement on previous years. Standards on entry to the sixth form have generally been below average due to a policy of allowing many students to start courses with moderate GCSE results. The results of students who left in 2001 were in line with expectation based on their earlier GCSE results, showing satisfactory achievement. Unsatisfactory attendance in at least some courses appears to reduce overall achievement though monitoring of this is insufficiently rigorous to confirm this hypothesis. Male students tend to do better than female students. The proportion of students who attain the higher A and B grades at GCE is well below average, reflecting the nature of the intake. However, results of rather more than half of the more popular or traditional subjects do contain a handful of these higher grades, indicating there are opportunities to do very well; these courses are pursued at depth with appropriate rigour. Relatively small numbers took each Advanced GNVQ qualification in 2001, except in information technology. Business did particularly well with three distinctions. Intermediate GNVQs were not particularly successful, half of the engineering candidates and almost half of those taking leisure and tourism, left without any qualifications.

11. An increasing number of students choose mathematics and/or science courses and results vary from year to year. In mathematics results were above average in 2000 and below in 2001. Achievement is generally in line with expectations and the standards of current work are broadly average. New induction arrangements, requiring new students to 'catch-up' prior to starting courses, appear to be helping to raise standards. Standards in examinations of science-related courses are also satisfactory when compared with the prior attainment of students when they began their courses, though below national averages. Tutorial work in small groups helps more able, faster, students progress well and dedicated accommodation supports all students as laboratory work can be left from lesson to lesson.

12. Three courses relate to engineering, design and manufacturing. Overall, too many students following the Intermediate GNVQ remained ungraded at the end of their courses in 2001 and some current students experience difficulties in coming to terms with the standard of the work expected. Few students carried courses forward from Year 12 to Year 13, many leaving for employment. Students' achievements, based on exam predictions, were satisfactory. Current work shows a wide range of standards but overall they are average.

13. Business is also taught at Advanced-level. Overall, standards are average, A-level results are in line with expectations and AVCE results in 2001 were good. Inconsistencies in teaching, marking and resources do not help standards to improve.

14. Information and communication technology is offered through three routes. GNVQ Intermediate was sampled and standards are below average. Six students make satisfactory progress in the European Computer Driving licence. AVCE information technology is the most popular course, it has a very good retention rate and students achieve well. Standards are better than expected but below average. Recent changes in staff have caused some difficulties but good quality, specialised teaching, is serving students well. There are too few computers and this is beginning to adversely affect students' progress.

15. Two other GNVQs are offered. Standards in leisure and tourism intermediate are below average; attendance is not good and completion of the course is also unsatisfactory. Health and social care was only sampled but standards were at least average and students were learning well.

16. A wide range of courses is offered within visual and performing arts and media. Most were only sampled. Standards in drama are above average, in media studies average, and in art and design GNVQ below average. Unsatisfactory attendance affects overall achievement in media studies. Standards in A-level art are better; examination results are average; this includes the proportion of students gaining higher A and B grades. Male students do better than female students. Several teachers with complementary specialisms help students to make good progress.

17. In the humanities area of the curriculum geography was sampled and standards of work were average. A-level results in history in 2001 were well below the national average and similar results have been attained for several years. Current students are doing better and standards of work are above average. Certainly contributing to this change of fortune is the positive effect of new leadership, new teaching and better-motivated students. A few students, in the past all females, have pursued religious studies, but the current cohort of twelve students includes four males. Standards are generally below average but achievement is satisfactory. Psychology is growing in popularity and has more students taking it than most other A-level courses. Unfortunately, the results last year were well below average. Current students appear to be doing better and achieving in line with expectations. Analysis of results was well used to help revise the curriculum and how it is taught and this has helped students to progress better.

18. English, languages and communication are represented by English literature, Spanish, French and German. The last two subjects were sampled. Standards of work in them are very high and examination results are now high because of excellent teaching. Standards in A-level Spanish GCE examinations were below average in 2001; the outcome of an appeal is still awaited. The standard of work seen is very high and students achieve very well. Standards at A-level in English literature are below average and achievement is in line with expectations. Standards of current work are average overall though there is a wide variation and some students in Year 13 have particularly low standards, revealed by poor performance in Year 12 examinations. This does not bode well for A-level results in 2002.

19. The few students with special educational needs in the sixth form achieve well, particularly as many have to overcome literacy difficulties. For example, a male student with Asperger's Syndrome passed six GCSE's and a female student, eight GCSE's.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

20. Pupils' attitudes to the school and to their learning are generally good and make a positive contribution to the standards achieved. Discussions with pupils show they are happy and proud to be at the school and that they are determined to enjoy and benefit from their time at Cheam High. They speak very positively about their learning and their enjoyment of the wide range of extra curricular activities that they become involved with. A group of first year pupils displayed their commitment to learning by revealing how they enjoyed and looked forward to the homework club. In most lessons pupils are keen to learn, show enthusiasm for their studies, work conscientiously and show pride in their achievements. In a few lessons, usually where the challenge and expectations are too low, pupils lose concentration, become disinterested in their work and make little progress.

21. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school at break times is good and contributes to an orderly environment that is conducive to learning. In around ninety-five per cent of lessons seen behaviour was satisfactory or better and in almost a third of lessons behaviour and attitudes were either very good or excellent. In a small minority of lessons, taught by supply, temporary or new teachers, some pupils disrupted learning with silly behaviour or by being discourteous. Around the school pupils behave well, show appropriate regard for the fabric of the building, and for health and safety, and interact with each other in a mature and friendly way. Exchanges between pupils and staff are generally courteous, civilised and often involve the positive use of humour. In discussions with inspectors pupils were happy to exchange views and opinions in a polite and mature way. Pastoral records show there are incidents of bullying but no examples of harassment or oppressive behaviour were seen during the inspection. The school is a safe and orderly environment in which pupils understand and respect the behaviour code. The reward systems are valued by all pupils and are a major incentive for younger pupils. Fixed term exclusions from the school are high and have increased since the last inspection. Many of the exclusions relate to pupils identified by the school as having emotional and behavioural difficulties. There are plans to create a special unit within the school to provide better for these pupils. Almost all exclusions were of white boys and girls, predominantly boys. No pupils from an ethnic minority group were permanently excluded but six black pupils from twenty-five (containing several ethnic groups) were temporarily excluded; this is a high proportion. The exclusion policy operated by the school is rigorous but fair.

22. Relationships between pupils and all adults in the school are good. The positive rapport between most pupils and their tutors and teachers effectively establishes a level of trust that enables pupils to discuss problems and seek advice on both personal and academic issues. Relationships between pupils are good and contribute positively to learning. In many lessons there are good examples of pupils working harmoniously in pairs or small groups; they share equipment happily, listen to others' views attentively, support each other appropriately and show due respect for others' views and feelings. Many pupils are very dependent on their teachers and tutors and only a minority are taking responsibility for planning and organising their own work and learning. When given the opportunity pupils willingly take responsibility for aspects of day-to-day school life but until the School Council is formed there is no formal opportunity for their views to be heard and for pupils to play a more active part in the organisation of the school. Pupils do meet and interact with pupils from other schools through sports and competitions of other kinds. However, the lack of work experience programmes and limited interaction with community organisations restricts pupils' social skill development and their understanding of the wider world beyond school.

23. Overall attendance at Cheam High is satisfactory and unauthorised absence is low. Levels of attendance decline as pupils get older. In Years 7, 8 and 9 attendance is good but in Years 10 and 11, last year, it was below ninety per cent and unsatisfactory. However, the current Year 10 has an attendance of over ninety per cent. The efforts of the school to improve attendance through award schemes, discouraging holidays in term time and constantly reminding pupils and parents of the importance of attendance, have to date had limited success in Years 10 and 11. The unsatisfactory attendance in the upper school, due in part to a small number of pupils who do not attend school regularly, is having a negative impact on the overall standards achieved. Punctuality to school and during the day is good.

Sixth Form

24. The majority of students show positive attitudes to the sixth form and high levels of interest in their work and learning. In the consultation questionnaire the majority of students indicated that they were enjoying the sixth form and their chosen courses. In all sixth form lessons, whether AS level, advanced level or vocational courses, the students present

engage enthusiastically in the tasks required and show a genuine desire to develop their understanding and knowledge. Students of modern languages take particular pleasure from their learning and display high levels of concentration and productivity at all times. Most students show positive and responsible attitudes to organising their unplanned study time and to participating in the non-timetabled activities provided to enrich the curriculum beyond their main areas of study, for example, first-aid and paired reading with Year 8.

25. Sixth form students enjoy good relationships with each other and with their teachers. In some subject areas, notably modern languages and science, there are good examples of students being happy to take responsibility for organising their activities and extending their work and research beyond that set. In many subjects students remain fairly dependent on the teachers, their contributions in lessons are responsive, not searching, and they do not take sufficient responsibility for their own learning. Students' understanding of the world of work and career opportunities is under-developed. In the consultation questionnaire more than half of students do not feel they are being well advised about future career and higher education options and more than a quarter are critical of the advice received before joining the sixth form, though most then say their choice of course suits them. Significant numbers of students are also unhappy with the range of enrichment available and do not feel that the school listens and responds sufficiently to their views. The school is planning to increase opportunities for students to take responsibility and participate within the school community, to extend links with other schools and colleges and to increase opportunities for interaction with other community and business organisations.

26. The recorded level of attendance in the sixth form is unsatisfactory. Actual attendance is believed to be higher than indicated as students arrive for lessons but not for the registration period, which is purely an administrative session. Taking account of students' lack of motivation to attend registration and the difficulties of accounting for tennis students and students with home study, actual attendance in many sixth form lessons is still low. The unsatisfactory attendance is having a negative impact on the overall standards achieved in the sixth form.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

27. Taking into account lessons seen and pupils' work scrutinised, teaching is good. Three-quarters of lessons seen were good or better and a third very good or excellent. Indeed around nine percent of lessons were excellent, though many of these were within one curriculum area, modern languages. Five lessons were unsatisfactory, and these were scattered across several subject areas. Literacy and numeracy are also commented on at the end of the paragraphs on English and mathematics.

28. There are no very significant weaknesses in the quality of teaching overall. Teachers' knowledge and understanding, their teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy, their planning, expectations, methods, management of pupils, use of time and resources, assessment and setting of homework, are all at least satisfactory and most often good. Pupils' learning in lessons reflects this and is also good overall. A small number of pupils in each year have behavioural problems and these pupils can adversely affect the productivity and pace of other pupils' working and cause management difficulties for a few teachers, most often new in post or to teaching. Little financial provision is made to support behavioural management and, though the school provides much advice and guidance, those few teachers still have difficulties. Pupils' acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding, appropriate to their work, is generally good. Pupils' acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding relating to ICT is more variable; there are too few teachers with sufficient ICT expertise teaching the Years 7-9 ICT course and the number of computers in the school is inadequate. Though many teachers may make use of ICT in parts of their lessons to help

teaching and learning, this supplements rather than replaces systematic learning about ICT. Most pupils are prepared to make an effort to learn, show interest and concentrate on their work. They make extraordinary efforts in modern languages in response to excellent teaching and innovative strategies used by teachers. Pupils' understanding of how well they are doing on a regular basis variable, depending upon the subject and the teacher. A very few pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English as a second language; they speak English poorly or have difficulty in understanding instructions or both. There is limited provision from the local education authority for these pupils, certainly no support teachers made available who speak their first languages. Consequently these pupils cannot always be taught effectively; as a result their learning is unsatisfactory. Other pupils do help when they can and one pupil with English language difficulties was seen making satisfactory progress in mathematics.

29. A very good literacy lesson in Year 7 was very well planned with twenty minutes computer-assisted learning, pacy questioning by the teacher and good on-going assessment. Children learnt well, spelt correctly, knew what nouns were and a few could define prepositions. A very good Year 8 English lesson for lower ability pupils was very well managed and controlled so pupils could get on with their work; procedures and rules were very clear and well understood, pupils behaved well. A lively teaching style allowed all pupils to participate and they achieved well. Learning support assistants were used effectively and intervened when necessary to help pupils with their writing. A very good mathematics lesson, for a Year 11 higher ability group, about straight-line graphs and velocity and acceleration, was very well planned. Activities began before all the class arrived, homework checked and problems to think about were on the board. A 'starter' task was used to set the scene and clarify words and concepts, well-structured exercises given out for the bulk of the lesson. This allowed the teacher to circulate and provide appropriate support or cajole pupils to do better. Learning was very good and standards above average. A very good Year 7 mathematics lesson allowed pupils to well use the computer language 'LOGO'. The teacher gave a very good, lively, presentation, which got pupils' interest and provided very good support thereafter. Pupils were also encouraged to support each other and learn from each other's mistakes. A pupil with English as an additional language but with very good English was well supported with explanations of any new technical words. A good Year 8 science lesson demonstrated excellent management and control of pupils by the teacher. A well directed practical about pulse rate was tackled sensibly and effectively by pupils, all of whom learnt well. Rapid questioning focused on individuals rather than being broadcast to the class and pupils knowledge and understanding of earlier work about respiration was brought to the fore and reinforced; however, marking in books was too cursory and instructions to complete work sometimes ignored by pupils and not followed up by the teacher. An unsatisfactory Year 10 science lesson about acids and alkalis was clearly planned and began with a good question and answer session. However, the poor behaviour of a few pupils ruined the learning of all. An inexperienced teacher could not contain this. The use of side benches to run practicals on accentuated the management problem and the organisation of practical resources was not good enough.

30. An excellent Year 8 French lesson was supported by excellent relationships in class and a very supportive and purposeful atmosphere. Clear rules of language use encouraged pupils to communicate in the language. An excellent use of games made pupils want to participate and they enjoyed their learning. Standards were well above average. A very good Year 10 tutor group, personal, health, and social education (PHSE) lesson, was supported by very well behaved, attentive pupils, good relationships with the teacher and good planning. Pupils were encouraged to make their own contributions to the work on global issues and valued the opportunity to do so. A satisfactory Year 11 health and social care lesson was supported by good subject knowledge and a well-planned sequence of opportunities but expectations were not high enough and work was not sufficiently challenging for the more

able pupils. Opportunities were missed to involve pupils in the work and this led to some difficulties in management; some pupils had to be told repeatedly to do the work.

31. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs whether they have a statement or not. Those pupils with a statement of special educational needs, who require it, have the support of a teaching assistant in particular lessons. Here, teachers and assistants plan the work for these pupils carefully and collaborate effectively ensuring learning is successful. The individual education plans for pupils who require them are distributed to all teachers and, generally, teachers know which pupils have special educational needs and what they are. This is reflected in much lesson planning and in reports written by subject teachers and assistants on pupils' progress towards their targets.

Sixth form

32. Teaching is good. Lessons are one hour long and sixty-seven were seen across the sixth form, most within the focus subjects that are reported on later. Twenty-nine lessons were good, twenty very good and seven excellent; all excellent lessons were in modern languages. There was one unsatisfactory lesson, within the art and design department. There are many subjects and courses in the sixth form and the quality of teaching varies from satisfactory to excellent. There are no student management problems for teachers. Although teachers' planning and expectations are generally good, some teaching is mundane and fails to stimulate students, as in some business lessons. Consequently, students are not consistent in the efforts that they make and some find it harder to transfer from GCSE work to advanced work under these circumstances; sufficient independent learning is not always fostered in all subjects. Students' productivity overall is also hampered by their absence from lessons; they miss work and too many do not continue their studies.

33. The pattern and style of teaching is not dissimilar pre and post 16. Consequently, what makes a very good lesson in Years 7-11 tends to make a very good lesson in Years 12 and 13. Generally much smaller classes in the sixth form permit a tutorial style of teaching. Science is particularly good at this. Teaching of English and mathematics is good in the sixth form whilst in science subjects it is very good. Teaching in all modern languages is excellent. Teaching in religious education is very good. Teaching in art, design and technology (related courses), geography, history, information technology, physical education and psychology is good. In business and in travel and tourism it is satisfactory.

34. In a very good Year 12 information technology lesson with fourteen students present, the teacher used challenging questions and examples to introduce work on mail merges. Resources were then well managed and practical skills demonstrated by splitting the class and tasks and then integrating them again. Students were more attentive in their smaller groups and had to participate more. Learning was very good. In a good Year 13 physical education lesson about personal exercise, with sixteen students present, a knowledgeable teacher used a good question and answer session to establish what students already knew and then to consolidate their understanding of physiology. Students were highly motivated, learnt well and particularly acquired better technical language. In a very good Year 12 history lesson with nine students present (four were on a German trip), the teacher used a brief role-play exercise and searching questions to expertly draw out from pupils their knowledge and understanding of the Poor Law. The lesson was very well planned, was well pulled together and culminated in applying students' new understanding to an examination question and source documents. Teaching and learning was inter-active, students progressed very well. A satisfactory business lesson with eleven students present was planned clearly and students knew what the assessment criteria were. The pace of the taught lesson did not vary and there was little variety in activities. Students responded in a rather passive way, with no great enthusiasm. However, there was very good one-to-one tutoring based on a previous

assignment and learning was satisfactory overall. In a very good Year 12 art lesson (expressive studies), related to Kadinsky, the teacher had high expectations, managed the lesson well and was not deflected from the lesson objectives by students who had forgotten presentations; other resources were provided. Students' work was monitored well and challenging questions used to move them on and consider their contributions. Work books showed very good progress and standards above average. In contrast a Year 12 art (GNVQ Intermediate) lesson with seven students present was unsatisfactory because expectations and pace were too low and GNVQ processes, such as evaluation, were not being used effectively enough. Consequently, learning was unsatisfactory.

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

35. The curriculum offers all pupils a satisfactory quality and range of learning opportunities, though there is inadequate provision of religious education for most pupils in Years 10 and 11. This problem was identified in the previous inspection report and still has not been satisfactorily resolved. Sufficient time is made available to meet the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus for religious education in Years 7- 9 but the statutory curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is not met and it is therefore unsatisfactory overall.

36. Curriculum arrangements in Years 7- 9 are satisfactory. An appropriate range of National Curriculum subjects is offered and this provision is enhanced by the availability of additional subjects such as drama and ICT. Improvements to the offered curriculum have been made since the last inspection. More time is now allocated to music and a greater number of pupils have access in Years 8 and 9 to a second modern foreign language. One remaining weakness is that the time allocated for design and technology is low compared to many other schools and the situation in this subject has not been helped by staff shortages.

37. In Years 10 and 11, the curriculum is satisfactory overall, offering a number of strengths but there are also some key weaknesses. All pupils follow the National Curriculum and the expectation is that most pupils will study for ten GCSEs. Most follow a double science option and many study two modern foreign languages. The provision of two business GCSE courses and a small selection of vocationally orientated subjects further enhance the curriculum. The latter have been successful in terms of the standards achieved and the range of options available helps pupils to plan for their career and educational pathways beyond the age of 16. Weaknesses in the curriculum are especially identifiable in careers education and guidance and work related learning. Difficulties in recruiting suitably qualified staff have also had an adverse affect. This is particularly so in design and technology, though a good range of design and technology courses is available at GCSE, the choice does not include food technology.

38. There are very good procedures in operation that quickly bring to attention those pupils who will require more support for learning. Teachers have good guidance on what to do when a pupil gives them cause for concern in lessons. In regard to new pupils, information is gathered at an early stage from primary schools, which begins a good planning process for meeting pupils' special educational needs. Tests carried out on all pupils' literacy skills also show up those who are too far behind in their reading and spelling. This is addressed effectively in a broad programme of well-planned literacy support, which includes additional lessons and extra-curricular activities. For instance, in the registration period at the start of each day, targeted pupils work in groups practising reading and spelling. There are several organised opportunities for reading and spelling provided by classroom assistants at lunchtimes. A structured spelling programme is used that teaches pupils good ways of spelling correctly. Pupils can also work independently using a computer based literacy scheme. After school, there is a homework club supported by staff. Extra-curricular activities

are subscribed to well by pupils with special educational needs and they clearly value the benefits gained from taking part in them.

39. The programme for careers education and guidance commences in Year 7 and forms part of the school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) provision. It is supplemented by outside speakers and individual careers interviews with trained careers advisors. A fundamental weakness of the programme is that pupils in Years 10 and 11 are not offered any structured opportunities to undertake work experience. The school does not have a strong relationship with its local Education and Business Partnership, nor does it enjoy strong relationships with its local business community. The school also expresses concerns about the cost implications of providing a work experience programme given its financial constraints. The result is that pupils are denied opportunities that are the norm in the majority of other schools. Structured opportunities to raise expectations through the use of role models, and to provide good quality advice about various pathways post-16, are lost. While the school is proud of its academic success, it is not acknowledging that an educational diet based exclusively on a diet of GCSE and GNVQ courses is not suitable for all pupils. Some have poor attendance and some become disaffected with the academic demands of GCSE. The school has not sufficiently investigated other possibilities and it has not forged any effective partnerships with local colleges due, in part, to financial constraints. Consequently, the curriculum in Years 10 and 11 does not adequately meet the needs of all pupils.

40. The school's PSHE programme is satisfactory. It is well planned and includes sex education and information about the use and misuse of drugs. Extra-curricular activities are very good, especially in sport, performing arts and educational visits. The school has a strong reputation for sport and fields competitive teams in many sports and maintains a Saturday morning fixture list. Good opportunities also exist for pupils of all ages to become involved in other activities such as music and drama and a number of subject specific clubs also thrive. Some provision is also made for talented pupils. This is strong in sports, especially tennis, a strength that was acknowledged in the previous inspection report. The planning for gifted pupils is less rigorous. The school's intake is skewed because of the existence of many local selective schools but the school does not plan in enough detail for the needs of gifted pupils.

Sixth form

41. Curriculum arrangements in the sixth form are satisfactory. A broad range of subjects is offered at AS and A2 level and these are supplemented by a wide range of vocational options at either Advanced or Intermediate level. The weakness in the curriculum is that timetabled enrichment opportunities are insufficient. Students do involve themselves in a range of extra-curricular activities, frequently involving sport, but also including music and drama. The Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme is also offered to gold level. What is offered is often at least good. For example, the European Driving Licence is available. This is an advanced ICT qualification that has European-wide recognition, but only six students are following the course. The statutory curriculum is unsatisfactory because the arrangements for statutory religious education post-16, an issue raised in the previous inspection report, still has not been satisfactorily addressed.

42. The school is committed to inclusiveness and this is shown by the flexible entrance requirements for post-16 courses. Students are offered a good choice in their subject options and this is widened in Year 13 as students can follow further AS level courses. The flexible use of entry qualifications enhances the level of choice. Paradoxically, however, this flexibility can be the source of later problems. Some students are recruited onto AS and A-level courses having achieved modestly at GCSE. They then find work at this higher level

challenging and struggle to achieve an acceptable standard. The comparative lack of alternative courses makes it difficult to offer such students other, more suitable, pathways.

43. The quality of careers education and guidance is not good enough. The school has not forged many partnerships with its local business community. As a result, the contribution of the community to the learning of individual students is unsatisfactory. Sixth formers have only limited opportunities to gain good quality work placements while in the sixth form. There is no co-ordinated programme designed to raise aspirations, or to offer quality experiences to all students. Some departments have established links with local businesses as part of their curriculum provision but there are no partnerships where school departments are working in association with local business and commerce. The careers education and guidance that is available tends to concentrate on preparing students for further and higher education though there are careers interviews. Facets of the programme are underdeveloped and the school does not address individual needs sufficiently.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education

44. The quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now good overall. The school has made good progress since the previous report.

45. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, although the school fails to comply with the requirements for a daily act of collective worship. The school has made efforts to resolve the issues brought to its attention through the previous report concerning the lack of an act of worship and the need to develop a more consistent approach to spiritual matters. Year 7 pupils take part in *circle time*, which gives pupils the opportunity to think about and reflect upon issues that concern them in every day life. There are assemblies every day for different year groups that occasionally give pupils time for thought and reflection. Across the curriculum there are good opportunities for spiritual development in some subjects, for example, in modern languages, religious education, music, geography, PHSE and history.

46. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral development based on respect and caring for the individual. Teachers provide pupils with good examples of hard work, care and consideration for others. The school has clear policies and effective strategies for anti-bullying and behavioural support, firmly established in a moral code. Most pupils know right from wrong and are aware of the consequences of their actions. Assemblies make an important contribution to the development of pupils' moral awareness. Pupils are given good opportunities to explore moral issues in a well-planned programme of PSHE and are challenged in a number of subjects about environmental issues and health related ethical issues. The school provides a positive focus for caring for others through fund raising for a wide range of charities.

47. The school's good provision for pupils' social development is reflected in pupils' relationships with one another and between them and their teachers. The learning support centre offers opportunities for those pupils who need it to reflect on and review their behaviour. The school provides a safe harmonious atmosphere for all its pupils and relationships in lessons and around the school are good. Pupils have been given the opportunity to fill in questionnaires about provision of arrangements at lunchtime and their attitudes towards attendance. Opportunities for social mixing are provided in most subject areas through group and pair work in lessons. There is also a range of lunchtime and after school activities that enhance the social development of pupils through opportunities to work as a group or team. Whilst there are quite a number of opportunities for pupils to take individual or small group responsibilities, for example training younger pupils in sport or

organising shows, there is currently no School Council; elections for this initiative are scheduled for March 2002.

48. Provision for the cultural development of pupils is good and opportunities have improved since the previous report. There are activities to enrich pupils' awareness and knowledge of the wider world. There are exchanges of pupils with those from other countries through modern languages. Cultural growth is fostered through various clubs and activities. Good quality wall displays make a significant contribution towards pupils' cultural awareness through images of multi-cultural aspects of life in Britain.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. The school's procedures for ensuring pupils' support and welfare are good, consistently followed by all staff and have a positive effect on the progress pupils make. The teaching and support staff know pupils very well and have their well-being uppermost in their minds at all times. Pupils' relationships with teachers and tutors are open and trusting. Pupils are happy, feel safe and secure and there is good evidence to show that most enjoy and benefit from the education provided at Cheam High. There is a designated person for child protection issues and clear associated procedures that meet statutory requirements. The school is vigilant and sensitive in exercising its responsibilities. The pastoral support team of form tutors, year co-ordinators and the learning support staff quickly identify any pupils experiencing difficulties and work effectively to agree and implement support programmes. The school meets well the statutory requirements of provision for those pupils with a statement of special educational need.

50. There are clear procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety and the school is conscientious in ensuring that health risks are quickly eliminated and that the buildings and site are safe for pupils. Formal risk assessments are done in relation to the buildings, activities in the school and in relation to outings and visits. There are regular evacuation practices and appropriate records of independent fire prevention and electrical equipment inspections. First aid supplies are available around the site and staff, approved to give first-aid, hold up-to-date accreditation. The school has clear procedures relating to medicines on site and to the recording of accidents and incidents. In lessons observed during the inspection very good care was taken to ensure pupils safety. Careful practice was observed in science, physical education and design and technology lessons. Staff and adults on site are vigilant in ensuring children follow safe procedures and practices.

51. The school has many good procedures in place for monitoring and promoting attendance but their impact has yet to be effective enough, particularly in Year 11. Registers are taken at the start of morning and afternoon proceedings and data is held on the central pastoral database. A third manual register taken at the end of the day ensures pupils do not leave during the afternoon. The pastoral team analyse patterns and monitor attendance by year group, by gender, by form group and by individual pupil. The school works hard to promote good attendance by constantly encouraging pupils and parents, by discouraging holidays in term time, by the award of certificates and public display of individual attendance performance. The school even quotes public examination results separately for pupils' with above and below ninety per cent attendance.

52. The pastoral database also includes extensive and detailed information relating to individual pupil behaviour. Comprehensive details of the reward schemes, which are highly valued by pupils particularly in the lower school, are maintained alongside details of all sanctions imposed. Whilst behaviour in the school is good overall it seems that the use of all sanctions, from detention through to exclusion, may be increasing. The database was not as complete in the first year of its operation so the position is unclear. Overall the school's

procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good.

53. The school has good systems for the frequent review, monitoring and support of pupils' personal development. The pastoral database provides detailed up-to-date information and there is a regular termly review to highlight where there are issues. Actions can include the pupils agreeing targets for personal skill development and can, if there are concerns, trigger the involvement of the learning support department, attendance at social skills sessions or the use of formally agreed behaviour, effort and attendance improvement plans. Pupils personal development is supported through aspects of the personal and social education programme, through outings and residential visits and by helping with or taking part in school functions and events but many opportunities are missed. Dance and gym clubs and sports events give opportunities for older pupils to teach and support the younger. Performing arts events such as 'stars in your eyes' and carol concerts give those so motivated opportunities to write and prepare drama or 'acts'. Open evenings give some pupils responsibilities to help out and others opportunities to present information about subjects to parents. However, there are limited opportunities to interact with community organisations. The lack of a work experience programme inhibits the preparation for life after school.

54. The arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment are good and result in a wealth of good quality information that enables individual and group progress to be measured. National test results, end of unit tests and termly assessments linked with consistent marking of work enable subject teachers to know accurately the level of attainment and the rate of progress. The twice-yearly academic tutorials ensure that progress is formally reviewed and that each pupil agrees new targets for development. Assessment data is used to move pupils between sets and sometimes between bands. The use of assessment data to inform lesson planning and teaching style varies by subject but is generally good. In modern languages and information and communications technology assessment procedures, the monitoring of academic progress and the use of assessment data are all very good.

55. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in learning opportunities. They are known well by teachers and by the team of special educational needs staff who inspire their confidence and urge them to succeed. The range of special needs in the school is widening and the school is firmly committed to succeeding with all of its pupils. For example, pupils with autistic spectrum disorders such as Asperger's Syndrome are being admitted and training has been given to teachers and others to help understand and deal with this condition. Similarly, pupils with complicated medical conditions have good access to facilities so that they can manage their conditions without unnecessarily interrupting their education. The school also welcomes students from an outside unit for post-16 students with moderate learning difficulties for lunchtime and for an after lunch art lesson.

56. Monitoring the academic performance and personal development of pupils with special educational needs is good. Their progress in literacy is monitored closely through frequent re-testing, which shows clearly how pupils are thriving and subsequent planning is well informed. The progress pupils make in relation to the targets in their individual education plans are tracked regularly based on information from tests, teachers and classroom assistants. Parents' comments are valued and included in this assessment. The academic tutor and classroom assistant meet with pupils individually to discuss their progress and to agree new targets.

57. Pupils whose special educational needs are associated with challenging behaviour are taught social skills by the special educational needs teacher that helps them build relationships and manage conflict in positive ways. In one excellent lesson the teacher very

skilfully and sensitively helped pupils understand good social skills. A variety of role-playing activities taught pupils the ways of interacting confidently and considerately. Pupils learned that their body language, the quality of their voice and eye contact mattered in their contact with others.

Sixth Form

58. As in the main school the assessment of academic progress is regular and supportive. Students are given accurate assessments of their work in terms of likely end of course achievement. Students on courses that involve on-going assessment are well aware of how they are doing and what the likely outcomes are. Teachers monitor students' progress carefully against agreed targets and intervene effectively on a one to one basis where difficulties arise. There is good evidence to show that students are told what they need to do to improve and what they need to do specifically to gain higher marks. The positive and trusting relationships between students and teachers encourages open discussion of problems or difficulties.

59. A significant number of students are felt that the advice they were given about courses before joining the sixth form could be improved although most expressed confidence in the suitability of their chosen courses. A majority are not happy with the quality of careers guidance for work and opportunities beyond the school. Appropriate information on careers and higher education courses is available for students to look at but there is a very limited contribution from external specialists, work experience is only available for those following vocational courses and there are limited links with colleges. The programme of careers guidance and preparation for life after school is currently insufficient to meet students' requirements.

60. The majority of students do feel that the transition from main school was made easy and that subject teachers give them good support with their learning. However a significant number of students indicated that the school does not listen and respond sufficiently to the views of sixth formers. Inspectors believe the imminent introduction of a School Council should provide the necessary forum to ensure that some students' views and opinions, at least, are debated and discussed formally.

61. The lack of formal personal and social education or tutor periods and the low level of attendance at registrations reduces student - tutor contact time and limits the opportunities to discuss difficulties and provide support though the tutorial interview times run separately to these times are seen as effective. The school is planning a review of the use of tutor registration time and to introduce new monitoring systems for attendance and personal development in order to improve the support and guidance available for students.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

62. Most parents who replied to the questionnaire are very supportive and hold positive views of the school. The good links that exist with parents contribute positively to pupils' learning and development. The large numbers of parents attending formal evenings and informal school functions demonstrates the level of support and interest in the school and in their children's education. Responses to the inspection questionnaire and at the consultation meeting clearly show that parents are happy with their children's progress, believe the school to be well led and managed and to have appropriately high expectations of its pupils. The concerns expressed by a few parents over homework and about the information provided on pupil progress are not supported by inspectors. Homework is set according to the timetable and effectively aims to consolidate classroom learning and to provide preparation opportunities for future lessons. Parents are made well aware of pupil progress through very

good quality reports, at formal evenings and by ensuring that parents are quickly informed of any difficulties.

63. The quality of information made available to parents about the school, its organisation and about pupil progress and development is very good. The school encourages individual parents to contact the school with any concerns or worries and regularly seeks the views, opinions and levels of satisfaction of the whole parent body through questionnaires. Pupils' school journals are effective vehicles for passing day-to-day messages between tutors and home, particularly in the lower school. The school's pastoral monitoring system ensures that parents are informed and involved quickly should any pupil be experiencing behaviour, attendance or academic learning difficulties. Some tutors and year co-ordinators ring home to report positive aspects of achievement and effort. The formal annual report very effectively summarises what pupils know, understand and can do, gives clear information on their level of achievement and highlights appropriate targets for improving performance. Overall the school has good and effective links with parents and is committed to improving further the partnership relationship through initiatives to encourage more involvement in pupils' learning and development both at school and at home.

Sixth Form

64. About half the sixth form, one hundred and sixty-six students, replied to the optional questionnaire. A high proportion thinks that the choice of subjects suits their aspirations and that the printed information provided was clear and helpful. They are supported well when settling in, are well taught and challenged, and helped to study independently. They say teachers are accessible if they need help and they enjoy the sixth form and would recommend it to others. However, a quarter does not think they get sufficient helpful and constructive advice or are sufficiently well informed about their progress, and almost a fifth say their work is not assessed well enough. The majority indicated that there is support and help with personal problems and that the school treats them as young adults, responding to their views. However, around a quarter of respondents indicated otherwise. Over half the responses say they are not well advised about future options.

65. Inspectors agree, fully or to an extent, with each of the results of the questionnaire analysis. Assessment is better than the questionnaire indicates, with generally good assessment and monitoring procedures, though there is some variability identified in subject paragraphs.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

66. Leadership and management are good. Improvements since the previous inspection are also good; at that time, senior leadership was, for example, apparently failing to marshal the contributions of other managers to provide a commonly shared sense of purpose for the school. The school now has such a sense and is confident in its ability to look critically at its own performance and to take steps to improve. Its monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching are very good, as is performance management.

67. A very good, new headteacher took up post at the start of the current inspection term and has begun to build strongly upon the foundations she was able to lay as deputy head, appointed to the school just before the previous inspection. Communications are very good within what could be a very difficult school to manage because of its piecemeal growth over the years. The impressive use of ICT is a prominent feature of this process. Substantial difficulties in the recruitment of suitable senior personnel and other teachers are, nonetheless, proving stumbling blocks to progress.

68. The new headteacher has now completed a senior leadership team that is better geared to the evaluation of performance, standards and the promotion of school policy. The new leadership team benefits from a blend of long experience in the school and of youth. It has numerous strengths, for example, in data collection and dissemination, self-evaluation and future planning for site development. Its overall effectiveness in its main focus, the evaluation of performance, is helped by the requirement to hold weekly monitoring sessions with subject and pastoral heads as well as others with whole-school responsibilities. Judicious allocation of responsibilities has given strength to a system that has the advantage of working to commonly agreed agendas. A weakness lies in the absence of uniform practice in the recording of debate and agreed targets for development arising from the timetabled sessions.

69. The school's provision and values go beyond its brief statement of aims that has the characteristics of a hurried response to external requirement some time ago. It is ripe for reconsideration of what the school should strive to be to meet its commitment to its own and the wider community. Questionnaire responses and the very positive working atmosphere in the school show it to fulfil the aspirations of parents well. A residual weakness is the school's unsatisfactory partnership with the wider community, for example weak careers education, the absence of work-experience for pupils, and the lack of alternative provision in Years 10 and 11 for some pupils. These weaknesses are appreciated by and are within the planning cycle of the headteacher.

70. The contribution of staff with management responsibilities is good overall. Middle management is good; it responds well to the school's now sophisticated systems for evaluating how well it is doing. Senior leadership's line management programme is complemented by departmental evaluations conducted by middle managers from checklists prepared by the headteacher, forming an effective basis for the school's good performance management scheme.

71. Conducted mainly by the senior leadership team, a biennial full inspection of selected departments or aspects of provision overarches the other means of ascertaining what needs to be done to improve. Teaching is very critically evaluated and reports are provided and used effectively as a basis for further dialogue. Appropriate targets for the improvement of performance are set from these evaluations. The governors also set suitable targets for the headteacher. The constituent parts of the monitoring programme contribute efficiently to a very good school development plan that ensures each priority is fully reflected in subject planning. Aware, for example, of the implications of the full participation in school life of pupils with behavioural difficulties, the headteacher is seeking additional funding for a defined behavioural need amongst some in Year 8. The effectiveness of the school's provision for all pupils is limited by its very tight budget. Basic skill improvement is prominent in school planning and a finalised policy on teaching and learning, including reference to literacy and numeracy, is ready for governor consideration.

72. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Operating through four relevant committees, the governors hold the school critically to account, tending sometimes to act as a managing rather than consultative group. They carry out their statutory functions satisfactorily in all respects, other than the provision of religious education for all in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form, and in the non-provision of textiles or food in design and technology for Years 7 to 9. Otherwise they play a satisfactory part in shaping the school's direction.

73. The school's commitment to improvement and its capacity to succeed are good. Staff development is satisfactory and, following the alterations to the ways management works, is improving. There are many relevant facets to professional improvement in the school. For

example, focus groups meet to provide suggestions for improving teaching and learning and all professional development is now certificated, forming a portfolio that is built into performance management. The rewriting of a staff development policy has been allocated to a new assistant headteacher. Keen to build up the staff's general sense of mutual support and belonging, she is effectively pulling the strands together. Helping in the school's quest for IIP (Investors in People) status, the school intends also to give released time to heads of subject so they may carry out a full evaluation and feedback programme themselves to complement the school's own mini inspection programme.

74. Financial resources are spent appropriately and the limited number of specific grants, for example, for special educational needs are well spent. The sixth form, through student numbers, brings in more money than it costs to run. There is a need for additional income, for example, the new sixth form block, due next year, will need equipping appropriately. There are currently insufficient trained teachers in areas such as ICT and mathematics due to difficulties in recruitment that reflect a national situation. New teachers are, however, attracted to the school and receive very good induction and support. The school is a good place to train. Modern languages are so extraordinarily good that inspectors considered that all new language teachers should be made aware of the methods used.

75. There are too few computers, about half as many as average, and this does adversely affect pupils' standards in ICT and their access to machines and associated equipment in some subject areas. The learning resource centre is relatively new, well organised and well used at lunchtimes, the 'book and biscuit' lunchtime seen during the inspection was very popular. Sixth form students also heavily use it. Indeed it is already too small for the size of school. Other accommodation is mixed; it is just satisfactory and relies heavily on 'temporary' structures. Totally inadequate huts were replaced by these structures during the time the school was grant maintained. Unfortunately the school has been saddled with a long-term debt to pay for these very necessary buildings. The cost for each pupil at the school is more than average though this does not take into account any additional costs incurred for being relatively close to London. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

76. The leadership and management of special educational needs is very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator promotes effectively the interests of pupils with special educational needs and maintains a shared sense of purpose within the special educational needs team and throughout the school. There are good links with the school's senior managers and the governors, which serve to keep special educational needs provision a priority among the school's aims. Equally, meetings with departmental and pastoral leaders ensure these key managers are kept involved and aware of pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator is able to devote the necessary time to managing provision and this is manifest in a well-organised administration.

77. The teachers and classroom support assistants are well qualified and experienced in meeting the range of special educational needs of pupils. All the classroom assistants have a qualification in supporting learning and some are actively pursuing higher accreditation. They are very effective in supporting pupils by working alongside teachers and using their initiative to promote learning. They are also committed, confident and skilled in leading literacy activities, which succeed in helping pupils make good progress.

Sixth form

78. The new head of sixth form was appointed at the start of the current school year and together with a team of two assistants already has a clear view on the strengths and areas for improvement in the sixth form. The head of sixth form is also a member of the senior management team and this has further strengthened the decision making process. There is an effective tutorial system that monitors students' academic progress, sets targets and ensures an exchange of information between subject and form tutors. Leadership and management together with the governing body make increasing use of performance and other data to evaluate the effectiveness of the sixth form and identify priorities for improvements. The vision of how the curriculum, particularly the personal and social education programme, might be developed is not yet sufficiently adventurous to challenge and meet the needs of an increasingly astute generation of students.

Resources

79. Science students find the dedicated sixth form laboratory very useful and good resources both within the science department and the learning resource centre accentuate it. In design and technology subjects there is an appropriate range of textbooks and materials but computer assisted design and manufacturing equipment, usually a feature of advanced studies, is under utilised and may be inadequate. There is little dedicated software or audiovisual material to support business courses, which does not help teaching to be more inspiring. ICT resources are heavily under pressure in the whole school and students studying ICT do not always have access to the best equipment in all lessons or in private study time. The Cheam High School tennis scholarship scheme makes excellent use of local resources to offer performance-level tennis alongside academic studies. ICT resources are also in short supply in art and are mainly used for research, not for developing students' work. There is, however, a rather under-used, well-equipped photographic studio. In other courses inspected resources appear to be satisfactory. The growing number of books in the learning resource centre and the usefulness of Internet links were often commented on by students.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

80. To raise standards and to further improve the quality of education pupils receive at Cheam High the governors and school should:

- (1) Identify more clearly able pupils, particularly boys, at an early stage and rigorously monitor their progress. Strategies adopted in more successful departments should be adapted and emulated in others.

(paragraphs 1,2,4,5,6,97,109,120,147)

- (2) Aim to recruit more specialist ICT teachers and ensure teachers that teach ICT are adequately trained and supported. Increase the numbers of computers and the amount of peripheral equipment available in the school as soon as possible.

(paragraphs 28,75,158)

- (3) Take action to ensure the requirements for statutory religious education are better met for all pupils in Years 10 and 11.

(paragraphs 35, 72,196)

- (4) Reconsider the decision to stop work experience in Years 10 and 11 and move towards re-instating it as soon as possible. In addition, review and improve the provision for careers advice and guidance.

(paragraphs 22,37,38)

Sixth form

- 1) Ensure all students have regular access to a wider range of non-academic activities and that they have more opportunities to take responsibility and use their initiative.

(paragraphs 25,41)

- 2) Improve accommodation and resources to support independent study by providing more space and better access to computers.

(paragraph 79)

- 3) Improve the quality and range of advice about courses and career opportunities by linking careers advice in Year 11 with that in the sixth form and provides more comprehensive advice that enables students to be better informed about the suitability of course choices.

(paragraphs 25,43,59, 64, 65)

- 4) Improve provision for statutory religious education by establishing a regular framework through which national requirements for all students are met.

(paragraphs 41, 72, 278)

- 5) Improve the overall attendance of students through more rigorous action, starting with effective daily registration and closer monitoring of attendance in lessons.

(paragraphs 25, 61)

In addition to the main areas for improvement above the school and governors should also consider the following areas for development.

- The range of materials used in design and technology. (paragraphs 72, 134)
- Provision for the few pupils at an early stage of learning English. (paragraph 28)
- Opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities and work with less supervision. (paragraphs 53, 22)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	Years 7 – 11	142
	Sixth form	67
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils		209

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Years 7– 11							
Number	13	36	59	29	5	0	0
Percentage	9	25	42	20	3	0	0
Sixth form							
Number	7	20	29	10	1	0	0
Percentage	10	30	43	15	2	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting the percentages for the sixth form as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	1240	293
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	40	Xx

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	30	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	302	18

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	78

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	36

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	91.2
National comparative data	91.3

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.9
National comparative data	1.1

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 (Year 9)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	2001	115	122	237

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	79	84	76
	Girls	105	94	80
	Total	184	178	156
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	78 (63)	76 (66)	66(60)
	National	64 (63)	66 (65)	66 (59)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	29 (28)	45 (42)	32 (30)
	National	31 (28)	43 (42)	34 (30)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	73	69	71
	Girls	88	78	71
	Total	161	147	142
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	69 (65)	62 (66)	61 (60)
	National	65 (64)	68 (66)	64 (62)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	35 (31)	34 (39)	28 (29)
	National	31(31)	42 (39)	33 (29)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	110	122	232

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	40	104	106
	Girls	65	119	121
	Total	105	223	227
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	47 (52)	96 (95)	98 (97)
	National	48 (47)	91 (91)	96 (96)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	40.1 (41.2)
	National	39(38.4)

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

Vocational qualifications		Number	% success rate
Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	56	41
	National		Na

Attainment at the end of the sixth form (Year 13)

Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 on roll in January of the latest reporting year who were entered for GCE A-level or AS-level examinations	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	36	54	90

Average A/AS points score per candidate	For candidates entered for 2 or more A-levels or equivalent			For candidates entered for fewer than 2 A-levels or equivalent		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
School	12.3	15.3	14.2(14.7)	4.7	3.2	4.0 (4.0)
National	19.2	19.8	19.5(18.2)	3.1	3.4	3.2(2.7)

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

Vocational qualifications		Number	% success rate
Number in their final year of studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	53	55
	National		na

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	10
Black – African heritage	8
Black – other	7
Indian	19
Pakistani	4
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	10
White	1423
Any other minority ethnic group	49

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	2	0
Black – African heritage	2	0
Black – other	5	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	64	4
Other minority ethnic groups	9	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7– Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	83.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18

Education support staff: Y7– Y13

Total number of education support staff	20
Total aggregate hours worked per week	643.25

Deployment of teachers: Y7– Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	73.2
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Average teaching group size: Y7– Y13

Key Stage 3	25.3
Key Stage 4	22.4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	00/01
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	£
Total income	4096939
Total expenditure	4100137
Expenditure per pupil	2810
Balance brought forward from previous year	61019
Balance carried forward to next year	57821

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	34.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	32

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	6
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	1500
Number of questionnaires returned	210

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	31	58	8	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	25	60	6	1	8
Behaviour in the school is good.	20	64	7	1	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	63	14	5	1
The teaching is good.	18	66	4	1	10
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	16	51	19	5	8
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	35	56	5	1	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	47	50	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	17	55	17	3	8
The school is well led and managed.	24	62	2	0	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	27	63	4	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	52	5	1	6

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

ENGLISH

81. Overall, the quality of provision is **good**.

Strengths

- Pupils make good progress and attain above average standards.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The department is well-led

Areas for improvement

- The proportion of boys attaining A*-C grades in English literature could be higher.
- In Years 10 and 11 standards of writing are lower than those of speaking and reading.

82. Results in the end of Year 9 tests in 2001 were well above the national average. This showed a significant improvement over results for the previous three years, which had been declining slightly although remaining close to the national average. Girls achieve better results than boys by a little more than in most schools. The proportion of pupils attaining grades A* to C in GCSE English in 2001 was close to the national average but in the previous year results were better than average. Girls achieved better than boys by about the same amount as is true nationally. In GCSE English literature in 2001 the proportion of pupils achieving grades A* to C was slightly higher than the national average. This is a good result as the proportion of pupils entered was higher than in most schools. Results showed a small improvement on the previous year. Results were better for girls than boys by a greater margin than in English language.

83. In work seen during the inspection standards in all years were above the national average. In Years 7-9 pupils' speaking skills are generally at the expected standard and sometimes better. They make good progress because teachers ensure that there is plenty of opportunity for discussion in class although in some lessons pupils do not take full advantage of it. Year 7 pupils gave clear explanations of what they thought about two short stories they had read. A Year 9 class of high attainers spoke intelligently about Macbeth's feelings. Reading standards vary but overall are average. The lowest attaining readers have basic phonetic skills and make good progress with a structured spelling scheme. Most pupils read competently. They have detailed recall of books and plays they have read and form sensible opinions about characters in them. The lowest attaining pupils write sufficiently well to make their meaning understood although they make many basic errors such as confusing "knew" and "new". They check spellings in their dictionaries and generally write in fairly clear sentences although their control is often unsure. On the other hand, high attainers produce well crafted work with very good spelling and grammar.

84. In Years 10 and 11, standards of speaking are above average. A Year 10 class of middle ability had a good discussion about a poem by Carol Ann Duffy in which they came up with many ideas and possible interpretations. Vocabulary in some cases rich; pupils in classroom discussion used "bilingual", "insinuate" and "metaphorical" correctly. Pupils at this stage have good reading skills. They read effectively from GCSE texts. High attainers confidently identified and explained Ted Hughes's use of figurative language. Standards of writing, however, are not as good as those of speaking or reading. Although some pupils

write very competently, even middle attainers are unsure in their sentence control and are prone to mis-spellings such as “tounge” (sic).

85. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Nearly all achieve at least a grade F in GCSE English. Teachers provide them with work at a suitable level of difficulty. Learning support assistants provide good quality help when they are available. Pupils also benefit from the structured spelling and the paired reading programmes. In the only lesson in which a pupil for whom English is an additional language was seen, his progress was unsatisfactory. The teacher provided him with a work sheet suited to his needs but he really required full-time adult support.

86. The quality of teaching is good and pupils learn well. The teaching is under-pinned by the good subject knowledge of teachers, whether they are teaching basic spelling patterns in Year 7 or leading a Year 11 class through issues raised by “A View from the Bridge”. Successful teaching follows from very good lesson planning. All teachers follow the departmental system of having lesson objectives ready on the board before pupils enter. They then explain objectives clearly to pupils. At the end of the lesson the teacher again refers to the objectives to check that they have been met. However, teachers often do not involve pupils enough in this procedure, thus missing an opportunity to assess how successful learning has been.

87. Lessons are sufficiently challenging so that pupils make good progress. For example, in a lesson with a middle-attaining group in Year 9 the teacher ensured that pupils knew the difference between co-ordinating and contrasting conjunctions. In lessons on literature teachers are at pains to draw out pupils’ own interpretations, thus requiring them to use high-level reading skills. Year 11 pupils increased their understanding of “An Inspector Calls” because the teacher demanded close reading and re-reading of the text to improve their skills in drawing inferences. Pupils also learn well because teachers are skilful in their questioning techniques. Year 8 pupils read a short story and were then required to answer questions asking them to form opinions. They had to answer, “Did you expect the story to turn out this way? What was different?” rather than simply provide factual answers. In oral work questions were framed so that the pupil had to produce a fairly extended response, for example, “What do you think?”

88. Teachers’ management of pupils is very good and is based on good relationships. At the start of one lesson the teacher greeted each pupil by name. The pupils liked this and appeared genuinely pleased to be there. Teachers regularly encourage pupils and are quick to praise good work. In return pupils behave very well. Mostly they are keen to volunteer answers in class but occasionally higher attaining pupils are rather passive.

89. Teachers take advantage of having their computer room, shared with modern languages, next to the department. A lesson was seen in which Year 10 pupils used computers to identify Ted Hughes’s use of imagery in “The Tractor”. Pupils showed competent ICT skills as well as being able to show they understood the effect of the figurative language used by the poet. In this lesson the teacher circulated round the room assessing pupils’ progress, as teachers throughout the department do when the opportunity is presented. Homework is set regularly according to the homework timetable and effectively extends learning. For example, Year 11 pupils had to research socialism and capitalism in order to increase their understanding of “An Inspector Calls”.

90. The department is well led and managed by the acting head of department who has been in post for a term. The department documentation and the schemes of work are of high quality. This is very important in a large department with a high ratio of teachers new to the school and plays an invaluable part in ensuring high standards. The development plan

identifies suitable priorities and there are appropriate plans for achieving the objectives. Examination results are analysed extensively and actions taken to meet shortcomings. For example, there is a clear and viable plan for raising the achievement of boys. The head of department keeps aware of the work of the department by a programme of lesson observation. A sound programme of extra-curricular activities effectively supplements learning.

91. Improvement since the previous inspection is good. Pupils are now making better progress and are achieving higher standards because teaching has improved. Resources are better and computers are used much more extensively.

Literacy

92. Standards of literacy throughout the school are good. In most subjects teachers are aware of the need to concentrate on literacy. In most classrooms, for example, key words are displayed. Teachers insist on pupils using the correct technical vocabulary for their subject. For example, in physical education teachers expect pupils to use the correct names for muscle groups. In history, in particular, there is a very strong concentration on vocabulary with pupils correctly using words such as “democracy”, “subjugation” and “co-existence”. In many subjects pupils have to do fairly extensive written work. In religious education they frequently have to explain their own view on matters that are open to argument. In science younger pupils have to put together their own research projects. There are examples of their writing an account of the digestive system from the perspective of a bacon sandwich. In an excellent history lesson pupils traced attitudes to the First World War through a study of the poetry of the time. The school is developing a policy to improve standards of literacy and this is already beginning to prove effective but work remains to be done to ensure that the best practice extends to all subjects.

Drama

93. The proportion of pupils gaining grades A* to C in the 2000 GCSE in drama was well above the national average. On limited evidence teaching is good and pupils learn well. Teachers give clear guidance and intervene well in group work so that pupils make good progress in performance technique. The good use of focused praise inspires pupils' confidence. Pupils also respond well to being treated as mature young people. Their attainment is above expectations. When performing they put much thought into character, situation, motive and response to events. They show a good range of skills both in performance and evaluation. However, poor attendance is an issue that affects standards. The leadership and management of the department are very good and the department plays a major part in the cultural life of the school, both with its own performances and with its programme of theatre visits.

MATHEMATICS

94. Overall, the quality of provision is **good**.

Strengths

- Most teaching is good.
- Pupil attitudes and behaviour are good.
- The department is well led.

Areas for improvement

- Boys' attainment at GCSE, particularly at A*-C grades.
- Teaching and learning methods are not always sufficiently matched to the individual pupils' needs.
- The national numeracy strategy has not yet had sufficient effect on the structure of lessons in Years 9-11.

95. Pupils in Years 7-9 are achieving well. The mathematics department has faced substantial challenges because it has proved difficult to appoint qualified teachers. Nevertheless, results in the National Curriculum tests for fourteen year olds in 2001 were above the national average, and in line with those obtained by pupils from similar schools. Over the years between 1996 and 2001 results were broadly in line with national averages and improving more quickly. Mathematics results are similar to English results and better than those in science for 2001. Boys performed less well than girls in previous years and similarly in 2001.

96. Up to the age of 14 pupils' mathematical skills show good improvement. Attainment is average when pupils join the school at the age of 11. It improves over the first three years to become above average. The work of higher attaining pupils in Year 9 showed that many are capable of obtaining grades six or seven in the National Curriculum tests at the end of this academic year. They handle algebraic manipulation well and have good knowledge of multiplication tables up to twelve. Most have a good grasp of place value for decimal fractions and some use, for example, a quarter as an approximation to 0.23 to check answers to mental arithmetic questions. Middle attaining pupils produce good work on mapping diagrams and functions. They are stronger at topics involving handling data than with mathematical investigations. The work of lower attaining pupils is relatively strong with almost all capable of achieving at National Curriculum levels four to five. They have made good progress since Year 7 developing the capacity to use letters for numbers in constructing and using formulae. Most can multiply using decimal numbers. Numerical work across Years 7-9 is above average, reflecting a greater emphasis on numeracy work in earlier years.

97. GCSE results in 2001 were broadly in line with national results and show satisfactory improvement for the pupils from their results in national tests two years earlier. Mathematics results at GCSE are in line with those for other subjects in the school and boys' results compare unfavorably with girls'.

98. The standard of work for pupils aged over fourteen as seen during the inspection is similar to that attained nationally. Almost all pupils in higher ability sets are on course for the highest grades at GCSE. Higher attaining pupils' work is above average. They have a good understanding of inequalities and regions, direct and inverse proportion, loci. Algebra, including simplifying algebraic fractions, is well done. Some do not use the formula to solve quadratic equations under test conditions and are unsure with iteration. Middle attainers show a sound grasp of sequences including expressing the n th term of a sequence algebraically.

They can manipulate equations and functions, and are competent with the trigonometry of the right-angled triangle. They display some weakness with more advanced number work such as calculating with numbers in standard form. For example, $1/1000$ is given as 1000^{-1} , rather than 10^{-3} . Multiplication and division of decimal numbers of any size is reasonably secure. Lower attaining pupils have reasonable arithmetic under test conditions. They can, for example, evaluate the approximate cost of 4m 15 cm of chain at cost of £2.98 per metre as £12, and can identify a part of a machine from its part number on a diagram.

99. Pupils make good progress in Years 7-9 and satisfactory progress in Years 10 and 11. Attainment on entry to the school is average compared with national standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in Years 7-9 and satisfactory progress in Years 10 and 11, in line with their peers. There was relatively little extra provision in class by learning support assistants seen during the inspection but where it was seen it was very effective. Very few pupils with English as an additional language were seen during the inspection. Gifted pupils are catered for by setting arrangements and by the use of additional teaching materials. A series of lunch time extension lessons for top set Year 11 pupils provides opportunities for more advanced study. Apart from this, there is no special programme for the gifted.

100. Teaching is good. Most teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject material and use the information they gain from marking the pupils work well to inform what they do in lessons. Organisation is good and pupils are well managed so that little lesson time is wasted. One lesson, in Years 7-9, was seen in which the teaching and learning were unsatisfactory. A non-specialist in mathematics taught this; the teacher did not make the objectives for the lesson sufficiently clear to the pupils so that they were not fully aware of what was required of them. The pupils had the opportunity to practise converting from one unit of measure to another, litres to centilitres, millimetres to metres and so on. The work was not, however, related to real life. The pupils could not, for instance, demonstrate understanding of just how much 1 kg weighs. Although some progress was made, the pace of the lesson was too slow and too little ground was covered. In general, setting arrangements are effective in providing work at different levels for pupils of varying ability. Nevertheless within the ability sets there is still a need to provide variety of work to challenge the more able and to meet the needs of those who find the work more difficult.

101. Overall, the pupils' behaviour in and attitudes to their lessons are good. In all except two of the lessons seen pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work were satisfactory or better. In the majority of cases pupils concentrated hard while listening, tried hard at written and graphical work and behaved well. This good behaviour stemmed in large part from pupils responding well to the good and very good teaching. Even in one of the lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory pupils worked hard. In two lessons, however, in one of which the teacher did not establish sufficient control, there were instances of a small number of pupils who were less ready to do their best and in some cases inclined to try to disrupt the work of others.

102. Departmental leadership is good. The head of department enjoys the confidence and respect of a team of teachers, which is now for the first time in almost three years almost fully up to strength. He is hard working and a good teacher of mathematics so that he is able to lead from the front. Teachers' work is well supported by regular classroom observation and by close monitoring of marking and record keeping. Very good provision is made for postgraduate student teachers studying for their initial teaching qualification. This is supported by the very high opinion held of the contribution to the students' training by the students themselves, and by the colleges from which they come.

103. Accommodation is barely satisfactory. Some of the rooms are close together but are rather small. The room that houses the computer network is particularly cramped. There are insufficient rooms dedicated to mathematics to enable each teacher to teach in their own room. Well-presented display, including work done by pupils, decorates the walls and enhances the atmosphere for learning.

104. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. All areas of concern have been addressed. Teaching is better now that the department is almost fully staffed with mathematics specialists. National test results for fourteen year olds are now above national averages rather than below; GCSE results are broadly in line with national figures whereas previously they were below.

Numeracy

105. Numerical skills are in line with national expectations. Pupils demonstrate good use of these skills in their work across the curriculum to enable them to progress. In design and technology, measuring and weighing skills are effective and pupils show that they can apply spatial ideas through drawing in two and three dimensions. In science, pupils show good skills drawing block, line, best-fit graphs, manipulating formulae and balancing equations.

106. The teaching of numeracy in subjects other than mathematics is satisfactory. There are examples of good work in science investigative work and in class where they analyse data to find averages of sets of results and draw lines of best fit. In information and communication technology pupils learn to use mathematical ideas and concepts. In music, Year 11 pupils use twentieth century scalic patterns in their compositions and Year 8 pupils use sequences. A whole school numeracy policy is in place and an audit of each department's use of numeracy has been completed. This work is, however, fairly recently completed. Many departments have not, as yet, produced departmental policies or thought through how best to contribute to developing pupils' numerical skills through their own schemes of work.

SCIENCE

107. Overall, the quality of provision is **good**.

Strengths

- Teachers' knowledge and commitment,
- High quality relationships between pupils and teachers,
- The level of ICT provision and its integration into teaching,
- A comprehensive assessment and monitoring system,

Areas for improvement

- The proportion of A*-C grades at GCSE, particularly by boys'.
- The amount of non-teaching support for low-attaining pupils and those with English as a second language is sometimes insufficient.
- More detailed, written comment on how pupils can improve their written work is needed.
- Greater rigour in following-up incomplete or sub-standard work.

108. Pupils' attainment when they start in Year 7 is in line with national expectations. By the end of Year 9, results in tests are in line with expectations for all schools nationally and for schools of a similar nature. The 2001 results are an improvement on 2000, and the trend has been one of steady improvement over recent years. At this stage there is little difference in attainment between boys and girls.

109. In the dual award examination at GCSE, a higher proportion of pupils get grades A* - G than nationally; all students entered obtained a grade in 2001. However, the proportion of A* - C grades is less than the national. Until 2000, there was a trend of improving results, but this was not maintained this year. Over the last few years, girls have consistently gained more A* - C grades than boys and this was again the case in 2001, but the gap between them is slowly closing. There is no difference between boys and girls in the A* - G grade range. Some 30 lower-attaining pupils sat the single award examination. Results were below average, with little difference between boys and girls. Entry for this examination has now been discontinued and in the foreseeable future, all pupils will attempt the dual award examination.

110. In the work seen across all five years, there is little difference in the standards of work of boys and girls. They match each other in written, oral and practical work. The majority of written work from Year 7 onwards is well presented, with neat handwriting and a variety of ways of presenting information. In Year 7, practical work begins somewhat tentatively until pupils become used to unfamiliar apparatus, but confidence soon grows and by the end of the year they carry out simple experiments safely and competently. By Year 9 they begin to combine the four strands required for an investigation of the style called for in GCSE, and they attempt entire investigations. Any fresh approach to a topic raises pupils' interest and motivation, and a Year 9 group of low-attaining pupils illustrated this. They were investigating the effects of friction using simulations in the science computer room and became deeply involved in the activity, producing work of a higher standard than might otherwise have been expected. They also demonstrated good ICT skills, and flair in designing and producing reports of what they had done. The standard of work of many groups at this stage of Year 9 is generally in line with, or slightly above the national expectation, and while that of low-attaining groups is below this level, it nevertheless matches the department's expectation of the group. Progress through the various topics of the first three years is therefore satisfactory.

111. The standards of work of pupils in Years 10 and 11 follow a similar pattern. Many groups achieve or exceed the national expectation, especially over the time-span of a single lesson, while groups of low-attaining pupils fail to reach this standard and make slower progress. This is often due to inadequate recall of what has been done before. A personal interest in a topic often produces unexpectedly higher attainment and faster progress, as shown by a Year 11 group of low-attaining pupils studying inheritance. When comparing height, weight, eye-colour etc, in order to determine which factors are inherited and which may be determined by upbringing, pupils were enthusiastic, deeply involved and full of questions. They made greater progress and achieved a better understanding than was anticipated. In these years leading up to GCSE, written work continues to be of a good standard; diagrams and graphs improve and scientific vocabulary widens. Only two limited examples of investigational work were seen, but scrutiny of the sample of scripts submitted to the examination board this summer shows that pupils of all levels of attainment have learned how to plan an investigation, to predict a likely outcome based on scientific reasoning, and how to carry out the practical work and evaluate it afterwards. When faced with a totally unfamiliar topic to investigate, they showed considerable ingenuity in devising strategies to find out what they needed to know. Some of the final reports also showed considerable ICT skills.

112. In all five years, pupils with special educational needs match their peers in oral and practical work. When they have appropriate non-teaching support, their written work also often matches their classmates', but without this support the quality and completeness of their written record is less satisfactory. Such support was only seen once during the week, and several other classes were observed where similar support was needed to enable low-attaining pupils to improve their attainment and progress, but it was not available.

113. Progress through years 10 and 11 is generally satisfactory, although varying in degree depending on the attainment level of the class. However, in some groups it is held back by the poor behavior of a noisy minority of pupils. In some low-attaining groups, attainment in lessons is better than that shown in tests and examinations, and this is attributed to poor long-term recall and ineffective personal revision, despite the advice that is given on how to revise.

114. Teaching is good, and results in good learning. Teachers are committed, know their subjects well and are enthusiastic. Interesting and enjoyable lessons are the result. Teachers also display considerable patience and empathy with low-attaining pupils, enabling them to make steady, if slower, progress. Lessons are well planned, use a variety of activities and vary in pace from topic to topic and group to group. Laboratories are large and resources good, so that teachers can include plenty of practical activities with pupils working in pairs or threes. The computer-equipped laboratory enables whole-class participation in a wide range of ICT techniques, and there is a time-tabled programme to ensure that all pupils experience these activities. Longer-established teachers know their classes well and can support and encourage pupils whenever necessary, as well as dealing with potentially disruptive behavior at an early stage. More recently appointed teachers are becoming aware of the small minority of pupils who lack self-control and are likely to cause disruption by calling out and chatting while working. In general the offenders are girls. Teachers are firm but fair in their management of pupil behavior, and in most groups, good relations between teacher and pupils maintain a well-mannered atmosphere in which question and answer pass freely in both directions and pupils are not inhibited in asking for help. This atmosphere also helps shy and unsure pupils to become more involved and to gain in confidence. Pupils are therefore learning in supportive and caring surroundings that extend to the after-school science club, revision classes, 'catch-up' sessions and other activities after lessons. Homework is accepted as a necessary part of learning and is relevant and achievable. An uncommon initiative is the exchange of scientific information with a school in France, via the Internet, and conducted in French. Good teaching is underpinned by good technical support and the technician team maintains a high quality service in an unobtrusive manner.

115. Most pupils expect to enjoy their science lessons and are well motivated, well mannered and interested. They look forward to practical work, behave sensibly in the laboratories and conform to whatever safety measures are required. They willingly take responsibility for their work, from collecting the apparatus to returning it and writing an account afterwards. In small groups, co-operation is good and mutual help is often seen. A newly arrived boy with little English was seen working with two classmates with the aid of a large dictionary. He was involved by them in the practical work, helped over terminology and as a result, had a good grasp of what had been done and a sensible account of it written in basic English.

116. The department is well led and managed. There is a strong team spirit and a collective commitment to obtaining the best possible results for each pupil. The laboratories, stairs, landings and corridors are enlivened with displays of posters, pupils' work and aids to learning. Schemes of work now include new ideas from recent initiatives in teaching literacy, and longer established projects such as individual research themes based around the Learning Resource Centre are popular and are displayed on the walls. Increased time was

made available for coursework last year, raising the standard of coursework, particularly for boys, and examination marks improved as a result. This also enabled staff to ensure that all pupils had completed the minimum amount of coursework required for an examination grade to be achieved. Other than manipulation of simple quantities in experiments, and simple calculations in notebooks, no examples of mathematical processes were seen.

117. All significant issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed. The standard of teaching has improved, examination results have improved at GCSE and in Year 9 national tests, ICT facilities have been developed considerably and potential over-crowding in a growing school has been pre-empted by the conversion of classrooms into two additional laboratories which came into use this autumn. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

ART AND DESIGN

118. Overall, the quality of provision is **satisfactory**

Strengths

- The teaching provided by the newer members of the department.
- The curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 9.
- The use made of sketchbooks by many pupils.

Areas for improvement

- The achievement of boys.
- The expectations set for lower attaining pupils following a vocational art curriculum.
- The use of information and communication technology in art.

119. Overall, by the end of Year 9, standards in art and design are average in the work seen during the inspection. In 2001, based on the teachers' assessments, standards were below average. These showed boys well below average and girls just about average. However, the effects of improving the curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 9 and increasingly better teaching has raised expectations and standards overall.

120. By the end of Year 11, standards are average. In 2001, GCSE results for grade C and above were average. Girls' results were average and boys were below this by a slightly wider margin than that between girls and boys nationally. While GCSE results in 2001 were better than in the previous two years, there is, as yet, no clear trend in pupils' performance. Overall, results for grade G and above were above average.

121. In the work seen during the inspection, pupils are achieving well overall by the end of Year 9. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving as well as others. In Year 7, higher attaining pupils name major artists and write descriptions of their work, noticing, for example, the importance of tone in Picasso's cubist paintings. Lower attaining pupils recognise a painting is by Van Gogh. They make light and dark shades with paint and use these to represent the effect of light and shadow. Higher attaining pupils achieve good standards in drawing and designing by creating very large scale images of small objects in the style of Claes Oldenburg and drawing self-portraits using contrasting tone for dramatic effect. Pupils confidently evaluate each other's work. They develop good ideas for a print by investigating well the organic forms used by Antoni Gaudi in his Barcelona buildings but achieve less in making prints because they lack a sound technique. Most pupils understand the function of sketchbooks in developing their work and produce in them a rich body of experimental and research ideas. Some lower attaining Year 9 pupils are not preparing work with enough investigation and imagination. The vocational emphasis in their curriculum could

be planned much better and the teacher's expectations of what they can achieve could be much higher.

122. In the work seen during the inspection in Years 10 and 11, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Overall, girls are achieving more than boys because they are more productive in researching and experimenting in the preparatory stages of work, which results in higher standards. Their sketchbooks are often thoroughly well developed. In Year 10, higher attaining pupils achieve well, producing strong abstract compositions based on shape, colour and form by drawing on ideas from cubist paintings and their own sketches. Pupils with special educational needs are as involved as others although a boy in Year 10 who does not speak English got no additional support and could not achieve as much as others. In Year 11, pupils research and prepare studies reasonably well, although drawing in sketchbooks is often below average. Many have difficulty in moving securely from their initial investigations in sketchbooks to refining ideas for final pieces of work. Lower attaining pupils in Year 11 struggle to lift their ideas to reasonable levels of sophistication. They achieve less well than others because they lack sufficient knowledge and understanding of the basic elements of art and design, which they need to stimulate their imaginations and develop their ideas.

123. Pupils' attitudes in lessons are good overall. They respond well to effective teaching, which stimulates their interest and enjoyment of art. They treat their work seriously and make good efforts to achieve high standards. At times in Years 10 and 11 when teaching is not sufficiently challenging pupils' motivation is low and they do not strive earnestly to produce their best work. Behaviour is generally good. Pupils are mature in how they share opinions about each other's work. They are helpful and collaborate well, for example when Year 10 pupils worked together on making sculptures.

124. Teaching and learning are good in Years 7-9 and satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. The newest members of the department have emerged successfully from their newly qualified status and are effective teachers. They add their good knowledge of art and high expectations, which is resulting in higher standards for the groups they teach. Overall, lesson planning is effective and benefits in particular from a more focused curriculum in Years 7 to 9. This succeeds in consolidating, at an early stage, pupils' knowledge and skills in the formal elements of art. Pupils talk or write about artists as well as their own and others' work. They develop a good vocabulary of art terms and the major facts and ideas behind recent major art movements such as Post-Impressionism and abstract art. The same focus is emerging in GCSE work where pupils are being challenged to study in greater depth. In the best lessons, learning objectives are made very clear to pupils. Writing them on the board and talking them through assists lower attaining pupils understand the aims of activities. A good demonstration of colour mixing helped Year 7 pupils learn to mix light and dark shades and use these to show form. Clear objectives also assist teachers in gauging effectively the progress of pupils. Teachers' comments in sketchbooks are especially helpful in saying to pupils what does and does not succeed. Lesson activities are open and varied, allowing many good opportunities for pupils to experiment, gain knowledge and skills using a wide range of materials and processes.

125. In one Year 9 lesson involving lower attaining pupils the pace of work was slow and pupils' motivation was quite low. This was the result of lesson aims being vague and not attuned well to pupils' needs. Consequently, activities were unchallenging; pupils all copied from the same resource sheet illustrating Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics. They were not given the opportunity or pressed to widen their investigations or to think hard about creative ways for using the hieroglyphic forms in designs.

126. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The refining of the curriculum for Years 7 to 9 and the development of good assessment procedures lays the ground for

raising standards and this is becoming evident in pupils' work. While monitoring takes place through observing teaching and analysis of pupils' performance, the amount of evaluation is not sufficient to help the department grasp what it needs to do to improve its provision and raise standards.

127. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Standards have improved slightly by the end of Year 9 and good progress has been maintained. GCSE results are not as good at the present time. The quality of teaching is the same although there is a reasonable improvement in the expertise of the art and design teachers and the art and design rooms are now suited more to their purpose. There has been no improvement in developing the use of ICT.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

128. Overall, the quality of provision is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- The quality of teaching is good
- The behaviour and their attitude towards work is good.
- Assessment procedures are good.

Areas for improvement

- The achievement of boys
- The quality of graphics in Years7-9
- Provision for ICT

129. GCSE examination results in 2001 were in line with national results. Graphics and systems and control did better than resistant materials. Girls do much better than boys. Pupils with special educational needs are clearly identified by teachers and, where appropriate, provided with learning support. Overall these pupils make satisfactory progress.

130. Attainment by the end of Year 9 is average. Pupils in Years 7- 9 are introduced to design and technology through a series of focused tasks and design assignments. They build up a considerable bank of skills both in planning and manufacture. Folders provide positive evidence of a range of work including an emphasis on health and safety, assessment, and research and development. The quality of graphics and presentation is below average. Pupils rely on graphics to enable them to generate and develop their ideas effectively. Pupils' manufacturing skills are better than their graphical skills and there is evidence of attractive product design. However, there is insufficient emphasis on quality of finish. Teachers have introduced an important strategy to improve literacy and this is producing improvements in written work. Pupils gain much from an assessment scheme, integral to the design assignment and through which pupils must evaluate the quality of their work and their own performance.

131. In Years 10 and 11 work is more focused and pupils may opt for a GCSE course from graphics, resistant materials and systems and control. The achievement of pupils by the end of Year 11 is satisfactory. The different courses make different demands on pupils but all use a similar framework and build on the work of the previous stage. Assignments are more open-ended and pupils are expected to inject a personal dimension into problem solving. Teachers introduce pupils to a number of minor design assignments leading up to a major coursework project. Design folders are well presented and the quality of graphics is at least satisfactory. There is evidence of the increased use of ICT skills and techniques to

underpin research and development and to improve the visual impact of pupils' work. Practical skills are generally well developed and pupils enjoy the manufacturing element. The quality of design products is good and the choice and development often reflects pupil interests and priorities. Assessment criteria are made clear and pupils are aware of how they can improve the quality of their work. Unfortunately, there are a number of pupils who neglect to complete their coursework and this reduces their examination grades. Teachers provide useful feedback on progress and introduce opportunities for extra study.

132. Overall the quality of teaching is good and there are examples of very good teaching. Teachers work hard, they organise resources effectively and they manage lessons well. Teachers are well supported by an experienced and competent technician. Teachers have expertise in the areas in which they teach and good use is made of materials and display. Teachers use assessment to conduct a positive dialogue with the pupil. Homework is used effectively and a selection of challenging tasks is introduced. The best lessons seen had pace, expectation, structure and purpose and in these situations the pupils responded very positively and successfully.

133. Pupils behave well and have good attitudes. Teachers emphasise health and safety issues and pupils observe the codes of conduct in specialist rooms and workshops. Most use equipment and machinery confidently and effectively. Pupils collaborate easily when working in pairs and groups using the opportunities provided for them to develop personal and social skills. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and the atmosphere created for learning is encouraging and positive.

134. Provision for design and technology is unsatisfactory because the design and technology curriculum offers neither food technology nor textiles technology. This makes it much narrower than in most schools and very difficult to meet statutory requirements in Years 7-9. Not all pupils follow a design and technology course in Years 10 and 11; it is expected that most pupils should. The absence both of food technology and textiles technology may encourage some pupils, generally girls, to take a GNVQ in health and social care that is offered.

135. An enthusiastic and able teacher leads the department. The management system is effective and colleagues have delegated responsibility for key areas of work. A high priority is the further development of aspects of ICT, particularly in computer assisted design and manufacturing. Improvements have been made since the last inspection in standards of attainment, the quality of the assessment scheme and in pupil use of the design process. Documentation is full and detailed and schemes of work appropriate.

GEOGRAPHY

136. Overall, the quality of provision is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Standards of work have recently improved significantly.
- Teaching is good and often very good.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers and their peers are good
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and contribute significantly to the standard of learning.

Areas for Improvement.

- There is insufficient fieldwork.
- Learning needs to be more enquiry based and involve pupils more.
- Higher attainers are not provided for well enough.
- Pupils need to be more involved in the assessment of their work.

trend of improvement is significantly greater than the national trend. The proportion of pupils attaining the highest grades is below the national average most years. This is partly due to the lower than average number of high attainers in the school. Boys normally perform as well as girls do, so that against the national picture their performance is relatively better than that of girls.

138. Standards of work are below the national average by the end of Year 9. Pupil achievement in relation to standards at entry in Year 7 is satisfactory at the end of Year 9. Reason for progress not being better include some aspects of teaching, described below, and the time available for lessons is less than average, which makes teachers' planning more difficult. By the end of Year 9 pupils have a sound grounding in geographical skills. Map work is satisfactory but pupils do not sufficiently practice the accurate presentation and analyses of statistical data graphically. Knowledge of location is good except for low attainers where it is less secure. Pupils of all attainment levels have an inadequate understanding of spatial patterns. Higher attainers do not have sufficient challenge overall and in particular in developing higher levels of skills in their work. Average attainers progress satisfactorily but do not make up lost ground, as the pace of their work in Year 7 and 8 is limited. Low attainers are deterred from making more progress by literacy problems. Pupils with special educational needs, when provided with learning assistants' support, do well.

139. Standards of work at the end of Year 11 are broadly in line with the national average and for some pupils it is well above this. Achievement of most pupils over Years 10 and 11 is good and for some very good when related to the standards of their work at the end of Year 9. This is due to very good teaching and pupils' work rate being higher and interest and involvement being greater. This good and sometimes impressive progress results from the greater scope and challenge provided by more open-ended assignments and the greater emphases on enquiry skills and case studies. By the end of Year 11, higher attaining pupils produce very detailed, thorough work. They are able to describe and explain a range of physical and human processes well and show good understanding of quite complex input, process and output linkages. Average attaining pupils are able to describe the processes satisfactorily but do not always fully understand the linkages involved. Low attainers have a sound basic knowledge of some processes but understanding is often insecure. The best individual GCSE project work based on fieldwork is of high quality and most pupils produce work appropriate to their attainment levels.

140. Pupils' attitudes to learning are mostly positive and many display a real interest in their work. Most are attentive, work conscientiously and many show real pride in the presentation of their work. Pupils' behaviour is usually very good and sometimes excellent. Pupils generally form very good relationships with their teachers and trust them and a real rapport is evident in classes in Year 10 and 11. Pupils relate well to each other when working in groups and relationships across ethnic groups are harmonious. Oral responses to teachers' questioning varies considerably but in many classes is not sufficiently developed.

141. Teaching is always at least good and four out of ten lessons were very good. It is generally good in Years 7 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11. This is due to staff qualified in the subject, with considerable skills and talent, undertaking all the teaching. Teachers are committed, caring and supportive of pupils within their charge. Classroom management and control is usually very good and built on very good and effective relationships with pupils. This provides a very good base for learning in lessons. Lessons have brisk pace and appropriate expectations. Lessons are well planned and built on a secure knowledge foundation. There is not enough stress on developing understanding. Some lessons, although of good quality, are too teacher led with insufficient opportunities for pupils to investigate for themselves. The best learning occurs in lessons that have a variety of practical activities that require pupils to involve themselves in their own learning. Where there is good dialogue between the teacher

and pupils that extends the pupils' knowledge there is a greater understanding of the topic taught. This was well illustrated in a Year 9 lesson where ICT skills were used to demonstrate to the class the main features learnt the previous lesson, namely that a variety of factors can affect a country's level of development. In the lesson pupils investigated whether there is any link between the infant mortality of a country and the level of urbanisation of that country. Using ICT skills very competently, pupils opened a new spreadsheet for seventeen different countries and produced a scatter graph plotting infant mortality against the percentage of urban development and the line of best fit. From this they described and explained very well the pattern that appeared for the developed and developing countries studied. Many went on to identify the negative correlation that emerged and added a text box to explain their findings. The teacher's interventions throughout the lesson were apt and skilful and significantly supported the very good learning which occurred. The level of pupils' understanding was impressive. Similarly, when visual aids such as video extracts, maps, diagrams, and graphs are used, especially when projected on to the master screen, learning is noticeably better. This was evident in a Year 10 lesson assessing the features of a storm hydrograph through a series of well-considered questions. With the use of prompt cards pupils were required to explain the statements and categorise them under physical and human processes that cause flooding. Pupils' contributions were very well consolidated on the board to ensure all pupils learnt appropriately. The flooding of the Mississippi was excellently placed in geographical context on a projected master map that was used, with the atlas, to secure a clear understanding of why and where the river floods. An extract from a video on the 1993 flooding of the Mississippi further reinforced learning. The teacher's presentation was lively, enthusiastic and interesting. This is a feature of almost all lessons observed.

142. Learning is invariably very good when the aims of the lesson are precisely focused on what pupils know, understand and can do and this is shared with the class and tested for effectiveness at the end of the lesson. However, at times, learning suffers when teachers do not take sufficient time to thoroughly place the lesson in the context of previous study so that pupils of all attainment levels make appropriate linkages. Insufficient use is made in Years 7 to 9 of local Ordnance Survey maps and local examples that are within pupils' experience, rather than theoretical models. World map displays might help pupils develop a better understanding of spatial patterns. There is currently insufficient investigative and independent enquiry work and inadequate opportunities for pupils to develop personal skills such as thinking skills. Tasks and materials need to be matched more directly to the learning needs of high attaining pupils in Years 7 to 9. Standards of literacy are satisfactory but it is a serious hindrance to the progress of most low attainers in Years 7 and 8. Key words are very well used and writing frames occasionally used but opportunities for reading aloud in lessons are missed. Standards of numeracy are satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning observed using ICT applications was of a very good standard.

143. Fieldwork is inadequate in Years 7 to 9 both within and outside the local area. ICT has been well developed since the last inspection and a sound course of ICT applications linked to curriculum themes exist in Years 7 to 9.

144. Leadership of the subject is good and the day-to-day management is efficient and effective. Documentation is sound and schemes of work are being systematically up-dated. The assessment policy is good but does not involve pupils sufficiently in the evaluation of their own learning and in identifying agreed targets for improvement. Teachers work very well as a team but the distance between the specialist subject rooms restricts opportunities for professional dialogue. Most classrooms are too small for large classes and particularly so for independent resource based learning. Good quality wall displays, including pupils' work provide a colourful and effective learning environment. Learning resources are good overall.

145. There has been good progress since the last inspection, with the improvement in standards of work in external examinations particularly significant. The head of department and teachers have the capacity to improve standards further. Overall this is a good department with many very good features.

HISTORY

146. Overall, the quality of provision is **good**.

Strengths

- Good quality teaching is helping all pupils to learn.
- The staff work well as a team and have very good subject knowledge.
- The department has produced a good development plan designed to secure further improvements in standards.

Areas for Improvement

- The development of numeracy.
- The development of ICT.
- The involvement of girls in classes containing mostly boys.

147. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2001 indicated standards above the national average overall, though girls' results were far better than boys'. GCSE results in 2001 were not as good as in 2000. Overall, the proportion of pupils attaining A* to C grades was below average but the proportion attaining grades A* to G was above average. All pupils attained at least a G grade. For grades A* to C girls did better than boys, with girls gaining above average results and boys gaining below average results. The results in 2001 for some students were adversely affected by staffing problems. The school's analysis of the results shows that most pupils did better at GCSE than was predicted based on their standards at the start of the course in Year 10.

148. Standards of work in Years 7 - 9 are overall in line with national expectations, but with a good number of both boys and girls attaining standards in their work that are above, or even well above, average. For those whose standards are less high, the main impediment is that their literacy skills are less strong and that they are not confident writers. Teachers are aware of this issue and appropriate strategies are being employed to raise literacy standards, for example the requirement for pupils to write more. In Years 10 and 11, pupils' work is at least average; some are working at well above this level. Pupils who are less confident in their written work again show lower standards. In all years there is also an issue relating to attendance. A hard core of pupils do not attend school with sufficient regularity and this is adversely affecting the standards of results in history. In lessons and in work seen, there is no discernible difference in the standards being recorded by boys and girls. All pupils are making good progress in their knowledge and understanding of history, with higher attainers developing very good analytical skills. Other pupils frequently show good oral skills but their written work indicates that their analytical skills are less well developed. Such pupils can give factual written answers but cannot explain why things happened, or offer alternative views. Though no support was seen in any lessons visited, pupils who have special educational needs are also making good progress in their work.

149. The quality of teaching is good. All lessons seen were at least satisfactory and, in some cases, teaching was better than this, rising to an excellent standard in one lesson. Such good quality teaching is having a good effect on learning. Most pupils enjoy their history lessons and they learn well. Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of what is being taught and, in the best lessons, are prepared to challenge their pupils' understanding.

Lessons are planned well, homework is used well to extend learning and the emphasis placed on fostering literacy skills is helping to extend the learning of all pupils. For example, in a Year 9 lesson on the First World War, war poetry was used in a most effective way to highlight the views of the British troops. Pupils were able to explain why soldiers wrote poems identifying feelings such as pride, patriotism, loneliness and boredom.

150. They could also highlight how the poems reflected changing views and opinions as the War progressed. Such innovative teaching stimulated learning by grabbing pupils' imagination, as well as making a significant contribution to the development of literacy. Very good teaching was seen in a Year 11 lesson on the USA foreign policy following World War 2. Pupils were able to identify many strands of this policy and made links with the USA's eventual involvement in the Vietnam War. On some other occasions the effectiveness of teaching declined, especially when the lessons became too teacher centred. In such cases, the pace slowed and the pupils became less involved in the lesson. Teachers place much emphasis on developing pupils' literacy skills and this is helping to raise standards, but insufficient emphasis is placed on developing numeracy and ICT skills. All teachers are successful in ensuring that pupils with special educational needs are fully involved with lessons and, as a result, such pupils learn well. However, in some lessons, girls are outnumbered by boys and girls are not always as fully involved in the lessons.

151. Leadership and management are good. Though the head of department is a long-serving member of staff, he has only been in his present post for two years. In this time a clear vision for the future has been developed, a very good development plan has been written and there has been some staff turnover. Staffing is now more settled and a good team spirit has been created. The improvement since the last inspection has been good. Key issues identified at that stage, such as a lack of suitable textbooks, have been addressed. Good quality of teaching has been at least maintained and assessment procedures have improved. More emphasis is now also placed on monitoring the quality of teaching and this too is helping to improve standards. The department has developed well since the previous inspection and is providing a good quality of education.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

152. Overall, the quality of provision is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour.
- Leadership and management.
- Assessment of pupils' progress and attainment.

Areas for improvement

- Standards of work.
- Pupils' learning and progress.
- Staffing and resources.

153. GCSE results for summer 2001 in ICT were below the national average when compared to all schools. As in previous years, girls did slightly better than boys but the gap is narrowing. Both boys and girls did slightly better in ICT than in their other subjects. GCSE results at Grades A*-C have declined each year from 1998, when they were well above the national average, to 2000 when they were below. 2001 results showed a tiny improvement on 2000.

154. Pupils' standard of work in Year 9 is below average. Although almost all pupils can log onto the network and access a word-processing or database application, good quality pieces of work, even by the highest attaining pupils, are not so evident. As a result of recruitment problems the school has experienced, for example, having to employ a temporary teacher, too much work has sometimes been written rather than computer based. Pupils can use word processing and publishing packages to input and edit text, incorporating words and pictures. They can input data onto a spreadsheet and many can use the information to generate graphs and do so in mathematics and science. Internet skills are average. Pupils can use the Internet to research the web, using the major search engines to find and download information. When using computers most pupils are well motivated to learn but have less technical confidence and have not developed the independent learning skills expected of pupils of this age. Some pupils have a very limited understanding of the use of ICT to measure variables and to solve problems by building models, though work in science, mathematics and geography does promote these skills. Their knowledge and understanding of how to use ICT to control events is weaker. On balance, pupils do not achieve well enough between the beginning of Year 11 and the end of Year 9.

155. In work seen during the inspection pupils in Year 11 are achieving below average standards. Even at this late stage of learning, some pupils are not yet able to work independently though others produce quality pieces of coursework in a number of subjects which show that they can use computers on their own. Pupils have access to the computer rooms most lunchtimes and after school and use these opportunities to continue their work. The learning resource centre is also well used by some pupils during out of lesson hours. Pupils taking the GCSE examination can communicate, retrieve and analyse information efficiently and reliably. Some can investigate patterns and relationships and apply real-world applications of ICT to solve problems but many need much support to do these. Given their attainment at the end of Year 9 this represents satisfactory achievement.

156. Pupils with special educational needs make insufficient progress and are underachieving in Years 7-9. One of the main reasons for this is that the course materials fail to take into account their particular needs; for example, they are given the same worksheets as the highest attaining pupils.

157. Pupils' enjoy their work and behaviour is generally good. They listen carefully to instructions and work well together when sharing a computer. They come to lessons willing to work and co-operate with their teachers. Computers and other equipment are used sensibly and responsibly.

158. Teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 7-9 and at least good in Years 10 and 11. Teaching by the two established members of the department is never less than good and is often very good. Very good subject knowledge is a common feature of this teaching and an important factor in motivating and encouraging pupils. Concepts are explained clearly, although the provision of a large screen linked to a computer would make demonstrations of applications more readily understood by special educational needs pupils. Assessment procedures are very good. Work is assessed at the end of each project or module of work when pupils are informed of the level they have reached and are involved in self-evaluation exercises. However, targets for further improvement are not set. Relationships with pupils

are good which gives pupils the confidence to ask questions and risk mistakes. Non-specialist teaching in Years 7-9 can result in not inspiring, challenging or enthusing pupils even though relationships between teachers and pupils are generally positive. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen, classroom management and organisation was weak and unsatisfactory behaviour by a minority of pupils remained unchallenged, which disrupted the learning of the rest of the group.

159. Pupils' learning throughout all years is not as good as the teaching and is unsatisfactory over time due to the lack of full-time specialist teachers and the lack of resources. Even where the teaching is good or very good, because pupils have to share a computer, individual learning gains are not as good as they could be.

160. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Although the head of department has only been in post since September he has already sat in on a number of ICT lessons and identified weaknesses in teaching which, through in-service training, he is planning to help teachers to overcome. Aply assisted by the systems manager, he provides good support and advice to the unqualified and temporary teachers within the department. GCSE results are carefully analysed to check on the relative performance of boys and girls. As a result of this analysis new GCSE syllabuses have been introduced.

161. The number of computers available to pupils is poor when compared with the national average. The school has about half the number of computers as other schools of similar size. This is holding back pupils' progress and achievement and inhibiting their learning, particularly in GCSE classes where pupils have to share a computer and are unable to work on their own, developing the independent learning skills essential for courses beyond GCSE. There are no inter-active whiteboards in classrooms and no large screens linked to a computer. Explanations and demonstrations of new applications are often via worksheets, which are particularly unhelpful to the weakest pupils. Despite these limitations, the curriculum does provided discrete ICT lessons and opportunities to use computers in other subjects are quite broad.

162. Since the previous inspection progress has been satisfactory. All departments now have an ICT policy, technical support is now available, there is better use of ICT in all areas of the curriculum and provision for special educational needs pupils has improved. Still to be achieved are opportunities for pupils to become independent learners, and the provision of more computers.

163. Opportunities for pupils to use ICT in other curriculum areas are satisfactory overall. They are very good in English, science and mathematics. In English pupils use word-processing and desk-top publishing to present work; they use the Internet and CD-ROMs for research. In mathematics pupils use Logo, databases and spreadsheets. In science pupils use spreadsheets and databases to produce graphs and transfer data-logging results to computer programmes. Other areas, such as geography, religious education and modern foreign languages make good use of ICT to support learning. In geography pupils use both CD-ROMs and websites for research. For example, in Year 9 they research weather patterns, enter the results on a database, and produce graphs and charts. Modern foreign language pupils studying German use the Internet to access the website of the Goethe Institute and download information for research. Opportunities in design technology and history are limited to pupils in Years 7 to 9. In music and art opportunities to use ICT are unsatisfactory due to a lack of ICT resources. In music this inhibits pupils' capability to orchestrate, compose and arrange music. In art, although pupils have access to a digital camera, they have no software to use with it.

MODERN LANGUAGES

164. Overall, the quality of provision is **excellent**.

Strengths:

- Overall standards achieved in all three languages are well above average.
- Pupils' confidence and independence in the languages being learned.
- The excellent achievement of lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs.
- The outstanding quality of teaching and learning
- Management of the subject is excellent.
- Pupils' enthusiasm for their learning.

Areas for development:

- There are no significant areas for development.

165. Standards achieved in French, Spanish and German GCSE examinations in 2000 are well above national averages and the achievement of all pupils is very good in relation to their prior attainment. GCSE results in 2001 show there has been a significant improvement in the proportion of candidates achieving grades A*-C in French, Spanish and German. The proportion of candidates achieving grades A*-C is well above national averages for all languages and the school enters a much higher proportion of its pupils for examination than is the case nationally. Girls do better than boys but boys achieve in line with national averages.

166. Pupils achieve better in all three languages than in other subjects. They have excellent relationships with their teachers and this, coupled with the teachers' very high expectations and the exclusive use of the languages being learned in lessons results in pupils being confident linguists with a high level of independence in using the languages. The standard of work seen in lessons is well above average and pupils make excellent progress increasing their range of vocabulary and structures and their skill in manipulating the languages to meet their own needs. Pupils with special educational needs make excellent progress and achieve above average standards in speaking and listening.

167. By the end of Year 9 pupils achieve high standards. This represents excellent progress in relation to their prior attainment. In Year 7 in French and in Year 8 in Spanish pupils who have only been studying the languages for a few weeks participate fully in class oral activities in the language being learned. They predict the objectives of the lesson, recount what they have already learned and share their views with others. They write for a variety of purposes including letters, short accounts and posters. Writing is usually accurate and although there are some errors it mirrors the high standards achieved in speaking and listening. All pupils have a very good understanding of the way the languages work, they are able to identify and correct mistakes in grammar and spelling and give reasons in the language being learned. Despite their limited range of vocabulary and structures in the early stages of learning the languages they display a high level of fluency and independence in applying patterns they have learned. They have a very good understanding of the languages spoken at normal speed and are able to respond to questions and the views of others with a high degree of spontaneity and confidence.

168. German is offered as a second language option in Year 8 to those progressing well in French. Very few drop out at the end of Year 9. By the end of Year 11 the pupils reach high standards because the consistently excellent teaching follows very closely the languages department's established excellent practice, which promotes learning through great enjoyment found in competition in class, mime, music and verse.

169. A scrutiny of German written work produced by pupils in Year 9 shows above average standards in accuracy and sophistication, clearly indicating well above average achievement from when they began. In Years 10 and 11, achievement is excellent and the pupils reach well above average standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Pupils in Year 10 already have a very good understanding of complex requests and rapid comments made by the teacher and of demanding language heard on cassettes. They respond very well, with generally good pronunciation: although they make some errors they are clearly willing to learn from their mistakes. They read fluently from texts. Their writing has occasional errors of tense or sentence formation, but is above average. By Year 11 remarkable progress shows as, for example, the pupils make up very good conversations on their personal ambitions when on holiday; they read fluently aloud, have excellent levels of understanding and write accordingly, reflecting their well above average standards. The pupils know how the language works and this helps them towards excellent achievement.

170. By the end of Year 11 all pupils in all three languages increase their range of vocabulary and structures, are able to transfer language from one topic to another, increase their ability to manipulate the languages to communicate their ideas with more accuracy and develop all four skills. Throughout all years pupils' listening and speaking skills are of a very high standard; they respond promptly and appropriately to the extensive and exclusive use of Spanish, German and French in lessons. Pronunciation and intonation are usually very good due to their extensive exposure to excellent role models and the very high expectations of their teachers. Pupils with special educational needs make excellent progress, as do gifted and talented pupils.

171. The quality of teaching and learning is excellent overall in all three languages. All lessons observed were good or better, more than nine out of every ten lessons were very good or excellent and more than three quarters seen were excellent. Examples of excellent teaching and learning were seen at all stages and in all three languages. The teaching and learning in Spanish and German are consistently excellent. There is a high degree of consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across the department. Teaching and learning are characterised by high levels of participation and concentration by all pupils, are innovative, very effective and result in pupils displaying a high level of enjoyment and regularly experiencing success.

172. Teachers' subject knowledge is excellent and they use this very effectively to plan lessons so that pupils build rapidly and very effectively on previous learning. Lessons follow a routine where pupils recap what they have learned and then predict what they are going to learn next and this routine takes place in the language being studied. Gapped sentences and half obscured sentences on overhead transparencies are used to excellent effect to give pupils clues and their guessing results in very effective consolidation of previously learned language and structure. Opportunities are taken to develop their writing skills because they are often required to identify and correct errors on the board and give grammatical explanations for their corrections. Lessons are conducted entirely in the language being learned and pupils are expected to speak in that language unless they ask permission to speak in English. Games and competition are the basis of the majority of activities. Pupils respond enthusiastically to this entering into competition both against each other in teams or against the teacher. They are keen to participate and take very active roles in lessons, scoring points, acting as quizmasters and evaluating their own and others' performance. Each time pupils speak in the language they are awarded points for their team. Boys in particular respond very enthusiastically and take an equal part in all activities. New language is presented very clearly and activities present a high level of challenge to all pupils. Teachers constantly assess how well pupils are learning and adapt the lesson to ensure all pupils understand and make appropriate progress. Songs and gestures are used very effectively to

enable pupils to memorise new language and new patterns in the language and pupils' learning is supported by key words and phrases on display so that all pupils are able to succeed in oral tasks. For example pupils were able to remember the rules in French for forming the past tense because they had sung about it. Excellent relationships and very high expectations of the teachers result in very positive attitudes and a challenging yet very supportive atmosphere in lessons; pupils listen very attentively, are very keen to contribute and are not afraid of making mistakes. Lessons are conducted at a very brisk pace, pupils are excited by the activities and levels of concentration and interest are very high.

173. The excellent teaching and learning in German arise from the teacher's first-rate knowledge and understanding not only of German, but also of the craft of teaching. The pace of learning is always brisk; concentration full and movement from one stage of a lesson to the next is seamless. Pupils work equally well as members of the full class, individually, in pairs or groups. They have great confidence presenting their work to others and receiving constructive criticism from them on how it could be improved and what score it deserves to be added to the team's tally for the lesson. Learning is couched deeply in German culture with imaginative contributions from a German speaking assistant promoting cultural and social development. Teaching makes an excellent contribution to basic skill development in literacy and through the wide use of ICT, for example the Internet, which provides answers, competitive learning exercises and helps in devising work. The use of music, for example, rap composed by the pupils, is very effective in helping them to memorise conditional tense formations effectively. Deserved praise builds motivation.

174. The modern languages department makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; for example, teaching strategies employed lead to pupils' belief in themselves as competent linguists. Teachers' high expectations and excellent relationships result in high levels of motivation and a concern to do well. Frequent opportunities for pupils to work together as a class and in small groups as well as taking the lead in activities such as welcoming others into the classroom in the language develop their social skills. Pupils' awareness of the differences and similarities in the culture of the countries where the languages are spoken is developed as an integral part of the course and is enhanced by their contact with native speakers.

175. Since the last report excellent progress has been made. The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly as have the standards achieved by pupils by the end of Year 11. Management of the department is excellent; issues raised in the last report have been successfully addressed, the department regularly evaluates its own performance against exacting standards and is constantly refining teaching and learning strategies. Assessment procedures are very good and information gained is used very well to evaluate learning and teaching strategies and to inform planning. Marking is regular and provides pupils with clear guidance about how to improve their work. Teachers are committed to improving standards and the teamwork in the department is excellent and has led to a very high level of consistency across all three languages. The banding arrangements in Years 7 to 9 restricts pupils' access to the study of a second modern language and since banding is not based on pupils' linguistic performance could disadvantage able linguists in the next stage of education. Accommodation is used to excellent effect to support and reinforce learning. However, although the resources available to the department are used very effectively, there are insufficient textbooks and ICT provision does not meet best practice for modern languages, for example using interactive whiteboards, and subject specific software is inadequate.

MUSIC

176. Overall, the quality of provision is **good**.

Strengths

- The very good quality of teaching leading to the rapid rise in standards.
- The very good behaviour and attitudes of pupils.

Areas for further development

- To increase the provision for pupils to receive instrumental tuition including singing.
- To monitor teaching and learning of the subject.
- To raise pupils' awareness in Years 7 to 9 of national expectations and set individual targets for improvement.

177. The majority of pupils enter the school at the age of 11 with limited knowledge of the elements of music and lack experience in playing musical instruments. Teacher assessments of 14 year-old-pupils in 2001 indicated that most were below national expectations. Standards in work and lessons show that there has been an improvement in the reasonably short time since those tests and that they are now overall in line with those expected nationally. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs often achieve well, especially when shaping ideas for compositions. Results of GCSE examinations are below average. In 2000 there were twenty-five entries. One third of pupils gained A* - C grades and all pupils gained A* - G. These pupils had received the recommended amount of curriculum time in Year 8 but not in Years 7 and 9. In 2001, there were thirty-three entries. Fifteen per cent of pupils gained A* - C grades and all pupils gained A* - G. These pupils had received well below the recommended curriculum time in Years 7 to 9. There were no A* or A grade passes in either years. Results of the two entrants in the 2001 A-level examinations exceeded expectations. One pupil gained grade C and one gained grade D. At present there is no provision for A-level music in Years 12 and 13.

178. Pupils in Year 9 have gained a satisfactory range of musical skills, with most attaining Level 4 and above. A small minority of pupils are working at higher levels in composition and ensemble performances. Most of these pupils are supported in their learning by instrumental tuition, although the provision for this is very low, as are opportunities to play and sing in extra curricular activities. In one Year 7 trumpet lesson seen, the pupil made very good progress improving rhythmic and performance skills. Pupils do not have equal access to ICT in the department, as there is only one computer. This limits their opportunities to build up skills in music technology. However, the department emphasises the numerous opportunities available in the music industry by displaying information and planning for a careers in music evening. More able pupils can write notation, most pupils can write about the music heard. Work develops through structured use of keyboards and classroom instruments, devising tunes and improvisation in a methodical way showing an awareness of structure and key.

179. In work and in lessons seen, pupils in Years 10 and 11 are attaining standards that are overall average but are making very good progress due to the quality of the teaching. Standards in two Year 11 lessons seen were above average in pupils' knowledge and understanding of bitonality, serialism and their place in twentieth century music. Year 10 pupils have listened to a wide variety of dance music. Year 10 and 11 compositions show a good range of style. Less able pupils often exceed expectations using ICT for composing and arranging music. In work listened to, more able pupils had used various combinations of instruments: styles of composition included bitonal and seventh chord. In all years, pupils have a reasonable understanding of ethnic music. They study blues, work songs, jazz and dance music from around the world and the British Isles.

180. The quality of teaching is very good overall in all years. Learning is good overall in Years 7 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11. Key features of teaching are teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject and the excellent management of pupils. As a result most pupils listen well and concentrate on completing tasks. Teachers' planning enables all pupils including those with special educational needs to work effectively at their own level. Further development of pupils' literacy and numeracy and communication skills is planned for in all lessons. There is good use of subject vocabulary. In one Year 7 lesson seen pupils counted the syllables and practised saying *chromatic*. In the same lesson, confident teaching, combined with the effective use of question and answer, resulted in pupils composing and performing on their own, in groups and as a whole class. All lessons end with a review of the work covered, the setting of appropriate homework and a brief introduction to the next lesson. Teaching at all ages is making a positive contribution to the personal development of pupils and they are encouraged to appreciate the wonder of music and how it can be used to portray emotions.

181. The department is well managed. The newly appointed head of department has begun revising schemes of work. On-going assessment is thorough. The department has yet to raise pupils' awareness of national expectations and set academic targets for individuals. The department is supported by a small group of instrumental teachers.

182. The department has made good progress since the previous report and the recent appointment of the new head of department. The improved quality of teaching in all years has had a positive effect on pupils' attitudes and standards of work in Years 7 to 9. The provision for ICT in the department, however, remains inadequate.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

183. Overall, the quality of provision is **very good**.

Strengths

- Strong leadership of the department.
- Good quality teaching.
- A wide range of extra curricular activities.

Areas for improvement

- Ensure teachers give pupils the opportunity to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their work.
- Extend target setting to pupils in years 7-9.

184. Pupils start school with varying levels of physical education skills, some below those expected nationally. During Years 7- 9 they respond very positively to good teaching, make good progress and by the time they are 14 years old most pupils are attaining levels that are in line with national expectations, with a significant number doing even better. This good progress is maintained during Years 10 and 11 and by the time they are 16 years old most pupils, particularly those in the examination groups, are reaching levels that are better than national expectations. These judgements are in line with teachers' assessments. In July 2001 an impressive number of pupils completed the GCSE course in the subject and all of them attained grades within the range A*-G. The proportion of pupils gaining A*-C grades was just below the national average and compared favourably with pupils' results in other subjects. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

185. Pupils start at school with only a limited experience in dance. They quickly respond to well-planned lessons and by the end of Year 9 most pupils are able to take responsibility for developing a story line, choreographing it, and then performing it with fluency and control. In spite of the poor facilities for gymnastics, body management skills develop well with most pupils able to demonstrate good patterns of movement and increasingly competent abilities to link them together into complex sequences. In games activities most pupils demonstrate good levels of skills, show good ball control, and are aware of simple defence and attack strategies. Some pupils sometimes find it difficult to apply these skills when the element of competition is introduced. The school uses the nearby swimming pool and employs a professional coach to aid teachers in the lessons which results in pupils attaining a high standard of swimming. There are only a very few pupils who cannot swim twenty metres, and most pupils can confidently demonstrate a good range of ability in a variety of swimming strokes. Good personal survival skills and life saving skills are also displayed. Some pupils are able to evaluate their own and others' performances, and to make perceptive comments on how they can be improved, but others are given too little opportunity by their teachers to develop this aspect.

186. By the time pupils are 16 years old most of them, particularly those in the examination groups, are producing work that is better than that usually seen by pupils of this age. Pupils have the skills and the knowledge to undertake a range of activities. They can play and know the rules of a number of games and some confidently act as officials for their games. In health and fitness lessons pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of fitness principles and practices and many are able to devise their own fitness programmes. Dance is not a compulsory subject in Years 10 and 11 but pupils now have the opportunity to take a GCSE in the subject. An enthusiastic group of pupils have taken up this offer. They have responded very positively to the enthusiastic teacher and their attainment is at least in line with national expectations, with a significant number demonstrating they can compose and perform accurately and expressively at levels better than national expectations. Pupils in GCSE physical education examination groups are developing an understanding and competence in both the theoretical and practical aspects of the activity and are producing course work folders that are detailed and well presented.

187. Pupils with special education needs are well integrated and are given much support by both teachers and other pupils and reach very satisfactory levels of attainment. There is no evidence of pupils with special education needs being disadvantaged by the curriculum that is on offer. Talented pupils are encouraged to extend their skills both in school, and with outside clubs.

188. School teams take part in many inter-school competitions and matches and gain much success. For the last six years the school has been one of the leading schools for tennis in the country. In 1998 the Lawn Tennis Association awarded the school the tennis school of the year award. Many pupils have represented Surrey in a range of activities, and some have gone on to gain national honours.

189. In spite of a big turn-over of staff the good standard of teaching noted at the time of the last inspection has been continued. All lessons observed were judged to be at least satisfactory, with most being good or very good and a few excellent. Teaching has a clear purpose derived from well-devised and coherent schemes of work. Lessons are well planned and objectives shared with pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge, deliver lessons with pace, and make good use of a variety of tasks and opportunities to challenge all pupils. The management of the pupils, through the use of establishing routines and the high expectations of the teachers, is a strength of the department. Pupils respond very positively to the good quality teaching. Almost all of them are highly motivated, work hard and co-

operate well with each other and their teachers. Their enjoyment of their lessons is very evident.

190. Many teachers, including non-specialists, give very freely of their time to provide a wide range of extra curricular activities, which are very well supported by large and enthusiastic groups of pupils. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, skiing holidays in Italy, and water sports activities in the south of France. Teachers are also involved with holiday clubs for basketball, dance and soccer.

191. Strong leadership, clear direction and a positive ethos characterise the management of the subject. There is a comprehensive and high quality documentation that aids the delivery of the subject. The department has a wealth of information about pupils' attainment and attitudes and this is being used to influence curriculum planning and to set targets for pupils in Years 10 and 11. This target setting now needs to be extended to all pupils in the school. The poor on-site outdoor accommodation is compensated for by the extensive use of the playing field at Raynes Park, the Cheam Leisure Centre and the Sutton Junior Tennis Centre. In July 1998 the school was awarded the Sportsmark, which is a national recognition of high quality provision for physical education and sport. Good quality displays of the department's activities effectively stimulate interest in the subject. Teachers work well together, support each other, and show a very strong commitment to pupils.

192. Since the last inspection improvement has been very good. The standard of attainment of pupils in Years 10 and 11 has improved and they are now achieving levels that are better than national expectations. There has been a review of the way the curriculum is taught and organised. The time allocated for the units of work has been lengthened, and an extra member of staff has been appointed. This has resulted in a broader and more balanced curriculum being offered. In September 2001 the department introduced the opportunity for pupils to be able to take GCSE in dance. Assessment and recording procedures have been improved. All assessment records are now kept electronically and are readily accessible

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

193. Overall, the quality of provision is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- Pupils on the GCSE course achieve well and reach above-average standards.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- The department is very well led and managed.

Areas for improvement

- In Years 10 and 11 most pupils do not receive their statutory right to religious education.
- The department does not make full use of available statistical data.

194. Standards of work in Years 7 - 9 are average overall and meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. In Years 10 and 11 most pupils do not receive their legal entitlement to religious education. Those who follow the GCSE course achieve well and reach standards that are above average. In 2001 the proportion of pupils achieving grades A* to C was well above the national average. This was an improvement on the previous three years when results were at the national average. Although many more girls than boys follow the GCSE course, there is not much difference in the results of girls and boys.

195. Pupils in Years 7 - 9 have an average knowledge and understanding of religion when compared to the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. They understand that early man felt a spiritual need for some kind of Supreme Being and that this led to primitive forms of worship. They know the main facts about Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism. They understand different theories about whether God exists and how the universe was formed. Pupils are encouraged to form their own opinions about what they learn and apply them to their own lives. Higher attaining pupils understand that there can be conflicting interpretations of the Bible and the Qur'an. They explain clearly the distinction between culture and religion.

196. The only pupils in Years 10 and 11 who study religious education are those who choose to follow the GCSE course. As at the time of the previous inspection, the majority do not receive their legal entitlement. In GCSE work seen during the inspection standards were above the national average. This is not as high as the 2001 results, which were well above average, but the attainment of pupils on entry to the course varies from year to year. In fact, pupils are achieving well. They show good, detailed understanding of Judaism including features such as Jewish beliefs and worship, the synagogue, the covenant, sacred writings and the holocaust. They study these features in depth. For example, they do not simply know the rules about kosher food but they understand the reasons why Jews observe the law so strictly. They also understand Christian approaches to personal, social and world issues such as racism, sexism, euthanasia, contraception and suicide. Teachers make it plain that there is not a simple "right" answer to many of these issues. They encourage pupils to make their own decisions based on moral principles. For example, in a Year 11 lesson on abortion the teacher began by giving a factual account of the development of the foetus and explained that people have different views about when life begins. She then gave the pupils very interesting case studies of her own design to study in pairs. The pupils quickly realised that reaching moral decisions could often be a most complex matter.

197. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in Years 7 to 9. The few pupils with special educational needs on the GCSE course make good progress. They benefit from being given work that is tailored to their needs. For example, in Year 9, in order to write a scientific account of the creation they were given headings for guidance on what they should include. Teachers are aware of their needs and give them extra attention. The department makes a good contribution to pupils' literacy. Writing standards are average. Pupils have plenty of practice in writing, particularly when examining their own viewpoint on religious issues. Standards of speaking are above average. Pupils make good oral contributions in lessons and take advantage of the many opportunities for discussion.

198. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good and pupils learn very well. Teaching and learning are slightly better in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7 to 9. Most religious education lessons are taught by subject specialists whose very good knowledge and enthusiasm provide the foundation for successful learning. The knowledge of non-specialists is good. Lesson planning is very good. Teachers tell pupils the aims of the lesson at the outset, they focus strictly on the aims during the lesson, and at the end pupils summarise what they have learned. Thus pupils leave the lesson fully aware of what progress they have made. Pupils are challenged to work to the best of their ability. Because of the fast pace at which most lessons are conducted, pupils cover more than the average amount of material. Above all, teachers expect them to use the information gained in a lesson to form a personal view. For example, in a Year 8 lesson on the role of women in Islam, pupils began by reading about the topic from a textbook. This was followed by class discussion in which the teacher checked how much pupils had understood by asking about important and relevant details such as why men and women go to the mosque at different times. The pupils were then given questions in which they had to form their own opinions.

199. Pupils learn very well because they nearly all have good attitudes to learning. All but a very few behave well, listen attentively, co-operate very well in group discussions, and take care with the presentation of their written work. Teachers have very good management skills based on good relationships with pupils. They conduct lessons at a fast pace. Consequently classrooms are happy and busy places. Teaching is less successful when a few younger pupils arrive at a lesson with unsatisfactory attitudes. When these are combined with a teacher whose management skills are not entirely secure, learning for the whole group is no more than satisfactory. Pupils concentrate well in class, often assisted by having to perform a number of different tasks so that they maintain their interest. In a Year 9 lesson on near death experiences pupils began by revision of the previous lesson in a rapid question and answer session. They then moved into groups where they read various accounts of such experiences. From those accounts they prepared flip charts on which they wrote their own conclusions. Finally the groups made oral presentations while the others listened attentively. Teachers also add to the interest of lessons by using imaginative resources, often produced by themselves specifically to suit the objectives of the lesson. In addition the department books times for classes to use computers, although computer use is not seen as an integral part of the syllabus. Written work is always marked with some comments being helpful in showing pupils how to improve. However, best practice is not always observed. Homework is set regularly according to the timetable and is well used to extend learning. For example, after a lesson on Christian perspectives on suicide pupils were asked to do research by visiting the Samaritans' web-site.

200. The leadership and management of the department are very good. Departmental documentation, including the development plan, is of a high standard. The development plan focuses on raising standards and sets appropriate priorities. However, it is very ambitious and time-scales sometimes look unrealistic. Very interesting schemes of work have been recently written and enhanced by the inclusion of imaginative resources to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning is not fully developed, and the department does not make full use of statistical data to track pupils and set targets. Teachers meet regularly both formally and informally and there is a very high commitment to improve. The head of department provides very clear direction and the growing success of the department is shown by the big increase in numbers choosing to follow the subject in the sixth form.

201. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. Teaching is now considerably better and there are no unsatisfactory lessons. Standards on the GCSE course in Years 10 and 11 have improved. However, statutory requirements for religious education for all pupils in Years 10 and 11 are still not met.

PART E: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

202. In the inspection, thirteen subjects and courses were inspected and are reported on in detail. Work in other subjects and courses was sampled and contributed to the overall picture of teaching and learning in the school.

203. The table below shows entry and performance information for courses completed in 2001.

GCE AS level courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Biology	1	100	52	0	2	1.00	0.79
Business Studies	3	67	76	0	12	1.00	1.69
French	1	100	78	100	13	4.00	1.65
Other social studies	4	50	11	25	74	2.00	1.47
Spanish	1	100	na	00	na	2.00	na
Business post-16 VQ	7	na	na	na	na	10.29	10.45
IT post 16 VQ	13	na	na	na	na	12.00	9.97
Art and design post-16 VQ advanced	11	na	na	na	na	na	na

GCE A level and AVCE courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art and design	18	100	96	44	46	6.11	6.57
Biology	8	100	88	50	34	7.25	5.25
Business Studies	15	100	92	13	32	5.60	5.50
Chemistry	4	100	90	25	43	7.00	5.90
Media Studies	21	90	93	14	31	4.86	5.53
Dance	2	100	89	0	39	5.00	5.53
Drama	15	100	99	27	38	6.40	6.59
English Literature	15	80	95	27	37	4.93	5.91
French	8	100	89	38	38	7.00	5.59
Full Design and Technology	6	83	91	33	30	5.33	5.38
Geography	5	100	92	40	38	5.60	5.74
German	7	100	91	57	40	7.71	5.81
Graphical Communication	8	100	88	13	22	5.00	4.74
History	10	60	88	20	35	3.80	5.45
Mathematics	9	67	87	11	43	3.33	5.80
Music	2	100	93	0	35	5.00	5.74
Other Languages	1	100	93	0	56	4.00	6.84
Other Social studies (Psychology and Government and Politics)	20	85	87	20	34	4.10	5.30
Physics	5	100	88	0	40	5.60	5.67
Spanish	10	100	89	30	39	5.00	5.70
Sports/PE Studies	11	91	92	36	25	6.18	5.09

Intermediate vocational qualifications

Qualification	No in final year	% gaining qualification		% gaining merit		Average point distinction	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Engineering	8	50	na	12.5	na	na	na
Leisure and Tourism	5	60	na	0	na	na	na
Information technology	Awaiting results						

SUBJECTS AND COURSES GROUPED IN CURRICULUM AREAS

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCES

204. The school offers courses leading to mathematics at AS level and A2 level. The students taking mathematics study a combination of pure mathematics, mechanics and statistics. There is a re-sit GCSE course for those studying A-level in other subjects who did not achieve a grade C in Year 11. Lessons in pure mathematics were seen in Years 12 and 13 and in mechanics in Year 13. One GCSE lesson was observed. Work was scrutinised and a representative sample of pupils interviewed. Physics was inspected. Biology and chemistry were also sampled in both AS and A-level courses. Teaching was good or very good in all science lessons seen. Examination performance in all three sciences has closely matched predictions based on previous attainment. There is no noticeable difference in the results of male or female students. Take-up for science courses is relatively low, but potential students within the school and from other schools are showing increasing interest. Retention rates, once students have settled on their courses, are good. Biology continues to be the most sought-after course for both male and female students, but a number of students on the AS course are irregular attenders and their future results are therefore at risk.

MATHEMATICS

205. Overall, the quality of provision is **good**.

Strengths

- Teaching is good for A and AS level students.
- Students' attitudes to their work and their teaching are positive.
- The new sixth form induction arrangements are helping to raise standards.

Areas for improvement

- The attendance of some students in the lower sixth is not regular enough.
- Some AS level students have yet to come to terms with the volume of work that is required if they are to be successful at A2 level.

206. The number of students entered for A-level year-on-year has been relatively small. Comparisons with national averages, therefore, are not appropriate in most years since the last inspection. Results vary from year to year. In 2000, for example, results were above the national average and in 2001 they were below. In general pupils perform in line with expectations.

207. AS level results for 2001 were disappointing. The department has reviewed the order in which topics are taught, and has introduced improved induction procedures for those students moving from Year 11 into the sixth form to address the issues associated with this disappointing performance. Better use is being made of time at the end of the summer term for pupils in Year 11 and students in Year 12. Students are now expected to use the time available to them during the summer holiday for private study and completing set homework. These arrangements are having a positive effect for those students who have complied. Standards, even for those who have not obtained the highest GCSE grades in Year 11, are in line with what is expected in these cases.

208. The standard of work seen was broadly in line with national levels. All of the students in Year 13 produce work equivalent to a grade D or above at A-level. They handle the calculus with confidence including integration and differentiation of logarithmic and exponential functions. All have a firm grasp of trigonometric identities. Some find difficulty

with the sum to infinity of binomial expansions. Any weaknesses that exist in mechanics are related to a lack of rigour in applying principles, which are mostly understood, to real situations in problems. Students in Year 12 are coming to terms effectively with more complicated algebra including the factor and remainder theorems. Basic trigonometric equations and identities are understood. Work in folders shows that most are reasonably confident handling surds and algebraic fractions. Several do not yet understand basic principles so that, for instance, they can quote the formula for the general solution of a quadratic equation but do not apply it when confronted with problems. Nor can they apply their knowledge of trigonometric identities to problem solving.

209. Progress overall is satisfactory. Year 13 students are achieving well in comparison with their prior attainment, as are many of those in Year 12. For some, however, there is little evidence of their working over and above that which is directly expected of them by teachers. In particular these students give too little extra attention to those areas that they find difficult. They have yet to recognise that understanding in lessons, when the teacher is on hand to explain and peers are close by with whom to discuss, is different from confronting a problem effectively on one's own without support. In both years there are students who find difficulties with interpreting questions and answering them quickly enough when under the time constraints of test or examination conditions.

210. GCSE students work hard and are making very good progress building upon and improving what they learned for GCSE when in Year 11. Most students are on line for achieving a grade C or higher in next summer's GCSE showing a potential improvement in some cases of two grades or more upon their previous result.

211. Teaching overall is good, with that observed in most lessons very good. All lessons are carefully prepared and well presented providing the right level of pace and challenge for pupils of all abilities. One teacher had made some very good models demonstrating the position and effect of a body's centre of gravity when on a level or an inclined rough plane. Very good teaching strategies in lessons included the students working individually or in groups on different problems and then explaining their solution to the rest of the group. This gave rise to some good discussion involving a high degree of intellectual challenge. In another very good lesson students were given examples of answers to questions with mistakes in them, which the pupils had to find and explain. The marking of work in the sixth form is of a good quality. All work is corrected with much marked by the teacher and annotated with detailed supportive comments.

212. Students feel very well supported by their teachers. They feel free to approach them when they are in difficulties. They say that they are not afraid to speak out in class or ask questions when they do not understand. Year 13 students feel more secure with teachers that they have this year than with some of the lessons they received last year when they feel that the class size was rather large and some teaching less good.

213. Leadership and management are very good. Teachers are enthusiastic and pull together as a team. The timetabling arrangements referred to as problematic in the last inspection have been sorted out.

PHYSICS

214. Overall, the quality of provision is **very good**.

Strengths

- Very good teaching,
- Excellent staff-student relationships,
- Good facilities and resources.
- An assessment system that monitors and supports student performance and keeps them well informed.
- Well-motivated and enthusiastic students.

Areas for Development

- There are no significant areas to develop.

215. AS results in 2001 were better than the predictions for almost all students. In the A-level examination, all five students gained C or D grade passes, generally matching predicted results and in line with their prior attainment.

216. The standard of work seen in both courses is generally at the nationally expected level. Year 12 students have clearly made the leap from GCSE classwork to the independent learning required in AS and work in a mature and organised manner, gradually gaining in confidence. They began the course with a variety of previous attainment in GCSE, but all of them are tackling the course with enthusiasm and determination. Year 13 students have learned to appreciate the freedom that more independent learning gives them to work at an individual pace and to develop individual interests and skills. Scientific vocabulary widens markedly in sixth form work, and AS students are coming to terms with teachers' insistence on precise terminology and precise description, while A-level students have become more confident in this. Note-making and research skills develop quickly, and practical work is of a good standard with students constantly learning new skills and reinforcing those learned for GCSE as they are confronted with new equipment. The added emphasis on independence and personal initiative gives them added scope to develop their own techniques and the opportunity to investigate to greater depth. The structure of the courses, with regular academic review and constant informal contact with staff is supportive and students regard it highly.

217. Students learn well as the result of very good teaching. Enthusiasm for the subject and wide subject knowledge enable staff to interest and motivate their students, while considerable examination preparation experience allows them to build confidence, harness particular individual interests and show students how best to satisfy the examiners' requirements. Brisk pace, unusual activities and different approaches all contribute to interesting and absorbing lessons. Expectations of recall, application and personal organisation are high, and students are challenged both by the difficulty of the subject material and the time deadlines which have to be faced. In general these challenges are met well. A lack of A-level mathematical skills is not allowed to impede progress, and teachers have a variety of strategies for helping non-mathematicians over such hurdles. The demands of the wider AS curriculum means that some sixth form science lessons must necessarily take place in the lunch break. Students accept this restriction on their time and have the energy and commitment to handle this current requirement. A major benefit to students is the tutorial nature of the teaching when group sizes are small. Individual support can be given, and faster workers given further challenges. More work is covered more quickly and to a greater depth than would otherwise be achieved. Students thrive on this extra-supportive situation, learn well and enjoy doing so. At the heart of this good teaching and

learning are high quality relationships between students and teachers. Students meet their teachers' expectations willingly, interaction is good-humoured and staff and students alike enjoy lessons. The good manners, motivation and helpfulness of students are most noticeable.

218. Good leadership and management are reflected in the results achieved so far, and by the obvious enjoyment and enthusiasm of both staff and students of both years. Student numbers seem set to rise, and examination results match expectations well. The availability of a dedicated sixth form laboratory in which coursework or experimental work can be left without risk is a distinct asset. Students speak highly of the texts and other references and ICT facilities available to them in the Learning Resource Centre that augment what is available within the department

ENGINEERING, DESIGN AND MANUFACTURING

219. Three courses are taught: product design (either graphics or resistant materials) at A-level and GNVQ (intermediate) in engineering. All are commented on under design and technology.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

220. Overall, the quality of provision is **good**.

Strengths

- The quality of teaching is good.
- The three sixth form courses provide for breadth of study.
- The behaviour of pupils and their attitudes towards study is good.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive.
- Accommodation and resources are good.

Areas for development

- Access to computers is sometimes difficult and there is a need to improve ICT provision.
- Aspects of CAD/CAM require further development.

221. Results last year in the AS examination were badly affected because a number of students failed to complete their coursework commitment. Eight students were on the course, five were ungraded and no student achieved a grade higher than a D. Students on A-level courses in product design (graphics) and product design (resistant materials) were more successful and grades in the range A to N were attained, almost all in the A to D range. Half of the eight students on the GNVQ (intermediate) course in engineering were also ungraded, most of the others achieved a pass grade. Predicated grades for all students were largely achieved and 'value added' is satisfactory.

222. Open access to the sixth form and, in some cases, limited guidance has resulted in a number of students experiencing difficulties with course requirements. There is a problem with retention that has resulted in only one student remaining in Year 13.

223. Achievement in lessons is satisfactory. However, there are individual students, without appropriate GCSE grades, who are experiencing difficulties with AS and A-level studies. They are developing ICT skills and ability to research from a number of sources.

Understanding of the design process is sound and many students have developed work with a distinctive personal style. Students show interest in their work and are keen to succeed.

224. The current display of student work provides important stimulus material and establishes standards of quality expected. Students' wide range of abilities is reflected in the variety of approaches teachers use in lessons.

225. Three courses were inspected in Year 12 and a range of project work in progress observed. Attainment is satisfactory in both AS graphics and resistant materials courses. In the resistant materials course many students are building on hobby interests in their project work and personalising the products. For example, a bicycle trailer to cater for a range of interests and a portable materials kit for the artist/designer/student. Students are motivated and generally work hard. In graphics, students undertake projects of interest to them, often developed from a study of exemplar materials. They are confident in their approach and tackle the aspect of experimentation with enjoyment. They use ICT skills competently and one student reviewed a range of geometrical solids in preparation for creating a perfume bottle form, in line with a developing style. Another generated a three-dimensional model of a car to be cut into blocks as part of a child's educational toy. A student with a keen interest in video games was modifying a system of control to improve user interaction. Students in engineering are steadily working through a modular course of graphics, mathematics and science and engineering project work. Projects are specific and students are developing a range of key skills in this area of study.

226. The one Year 13 student works independently or joins the Year 12 groups for appropriate work. His project is limited to his interest in ICT and is based on a specific personal need. He has designed a document folder, with built-in diffused lighting, which he can use in conjunction with his computer. Achievement is satisfactory.

227. Sixth form schemes of work and learning support resources are well planned and organised. Teaching is consistently good and is reflected in a satisfactory level of achievement overall. The relationship between students and teachers is good and students respond positively to effective teaching styles. Lessons proceed at an appropriate pace and students are keen to succeed. Teachers have created a good learning environment within the department that is both stimulating and supportive.

228. Teachers plan their lessons well, resources are appropriately organised and project work monitored and assessed. Conditions for study are good and teachers expect students to work hard. Insufficient emphasis is placed on the development of study skills that underpin important techniques such as research and analysis. The teaching team is experienced and knowledgeable and most are involved directly in teaching whole courses or parts of courses. They are well supported by an able technician who contributes much to the running of the department.

229. The head of department is experienced and knowledgeable and has clear objectives for sixth form study. There is a system for monitoring progress and assessment procedures are detailed. Computer equipment is limited and access is sometimes difficult. Aspects of computer assisted design and manufacture (CAD/CAM) are under-developed. Financial resources appear reasonable and students have textbooks and an appropriate range of learning materials. Equipment and machinery is sufficient for courses currently being offered.

BUSINESS

230. Overall, the quality of provision is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- The monitoring of teaching is good: support is given where required.
- The curriculum is planned carefully.
- Students learn well independently, often well supported by teachers working as 'individual tutor'.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good.

Areas for improvement

- Not all lessons are dynamically or enthusiastically presented which fails to enthuse students.
- Some more able students are not well enough challenged to extend their learning fully.
- The quality of marking of students' work is variable and sometimes poor

231. Business is taught at three levels: AVCE, AS level and A2 level. Overall results are in line with national averages. The A-level results from 2000 were in line with what would be expected: all students entered gained a grade between A* and E. However few gained A or B grades. Sixteen students were entered for AS level examinations in 2001 but it is too early to make national comparisons. AVCE results demonstrate a rise in standards for both males and females over the last three years, with a significant increase in the number of distinctions achieved.

232. During the inspection, students were learning about a range of subjects within business studies, though most time was spent on individual studies. At A and AS levels, they demonstrate understanding of the break-even analysis and what it is for. They discuss how to calculate fixed and variable costs and how to work out sensible margins of safety. They look at market penetration and consider the choice of marketing mix. At AVCE level, students had a good understanding of how ICT helps with external and internal communication.

233. The study of business has a positive impact on students' literacy and numeracy skills. Students who did not feel that they were confident in mathematics, demonstrated that they had good facility in basic accounting skills and understanding. Teachers discuss questions with the students and help them tease out the different ways to plan and provide good quality written questions. Some use is made of ICT, for example use of the Internet to access company information, but this is an area that could be developed further.

234. Students' attitudes to learning in the classroom are good. A few find that the subject is not always presented in an enthusiastic or upbeat manner, which rather mutes their own enthusiasm. Students have responsible attitude to learning, are tolerant of one another and most share their ideas and opinions with confidence.

235. Students respond well to high expectations from teachers. They feel confident enough to seek assistance when it is required. Students generally work well together but in some lessons most work is completed on an individual basis. Learning is not so good in those lessons as where interaction and discussion are encouraged.

236. Teaching is satisfactory overall, although parts of some lessons are dull and uninspiring. Conversely, some lessons were dynamic and students learned more in these. In all lessons, teachers' knowledge of what was being taught was strong, but only in some

lessons was an excitement for the subject demonstrated. The range of teaching methods seen was limited. More able students are not challenged sufficiently in some lessons. In the best lessons, the teacher's relationship with the students is strong. They are treated as young adults and they learn well because of it; students feel that they were sharing in the learning process. Learning is satisfactory; students can talk with understanding about different aspects of the study of business but few demonstrate particular enthusiasm or ardour for the subject.

237. Module tests and good knowledge about students' work ensures the head of department knows well what progress students are making. However, teachers' marking of work is inconsistent; for some students, there is little positive and critical feedback. Marking is often brief, with little to encourage students to strive to produce better work.

238. Resources available for the subject are adequate, though there is still little in the way of video or dedicated software for students. The accommodation is satisfactory, being sensibly located next to the careers library. However, links with other subjects, such as leisure and health are not well emphasised.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

239. The focus was on AVCE IT. GNVQ intermediate IT and European computer driving skills were also sampled. One GNVQ IT intermediate lesson was sampled and teaching was satisfactory. Standards were below average. Key skills lessons are not taking place this year but students are following a course that leads to the European Computer driving licence. One lesson was observed; teaching was satisfactory and the two students were making satisfactory progress.

AVCE IT

240. Overall, the quality of provision is **good**.

Strengths

- Teachers have specialist knowledge and understanding and communicate this very well.
- Attitudes to the subject are positive.
- The range of IT courses on offer is good.

Areas for improvement

- Standards in public examinations.
- The monitoring and assessment of learning to give students more regular information on what and how to improve.

241. The overall pass rate on the advanced vocational course has improved over the last three years and numbers taking the course have increased. Students can follow a single or double award course of study. In 2001 the course had a good retention record with twelve out of thirteen students completing the advanced course. Three students achieved merit and one a distinction. Achievement was good in comparison to performance at GCSE. Female students did better than male.

242. In work seen standards are in line with course expectations. Students were currently working on two units of work. In one they were at the early stages of developing their knowledge of visual basic programming language and in the second their knowledge and use of multimedia. Whilst their knowledge and familiarity with technical vocabulary is the weaker

aspect of their understanding students were making good progress with their learning. Progress with earlier course units has been in line with course expectations and they are able to build upon this. In a lesson exploring the qualities of image files learning was good because the teacher got the students to work in pairs to experiment with changing screen resolution and provided magnifying glasses to enable them to see the changes in detail. Although students' knowledge and use of the correct terminology was weak they gained a good grasp of the principles and differences in the resolution of different types of image files. Progress was made with using specialist vocabulary correctly. In a lesson on visual basic a very clear review of work to date supported by diagrams on the board and questioning by the teacher promoted good learning. Students made good progress building sub routines and assigning functions to elements of their programmes. The teacher provided good individual support for those in difficulty and this sustained the pace of the lesson well.

243. Year 12 students start the course with varying levels of experience in the use of information and communications technology. Teaching is very good and this ensures good pace to lessons and very good progress. In a lesson linked to unit one of the course, students were challenged by questions from the teacher. Some had limited knowledge of the subject of mail merge but the teacher developed the topic very effectively through examples and students made good progress with their understanding. As a result they had confident and positive attitudes to practical work and were able to set up the necessary data fields and construct an appropriate letter to conduct a survey of media organisations. In another class the teacher used questioning very skilfully to challenge students perceptions about the validity of information and the reliability and bias of sources. Students worked in groups and made very good progress with their learning applying this to their own research of information from the Internet. The groups then used this effectively to prepare presentations to the class for the next lesson.

244. Attitudes to learning are good. Relationships between students and teachers are good and lessons are characterised by a healthy balance of productive discussion and questioning that respects individual contributions.

245. Teaching is good overall with some very good teaching. Teachers share the teaching of course units. They use their individual expertise and experience very well. The range of methods used is well matched to the broad ability range of students. Well-planned lessons that benefit from teachers' breadth of experience and specialist skills ensure that very good use is made of time available.

246. The monitoring of students' work is systematic but there is scope to share marking and evaluation more regularly with students across the teaching groups to further their understanding of how to improve.

247. The department has suffered recently due to sudden changes to staffing and the difficulty of recruiting new staff. The new head of department is providing strong leadership, has a clear vision of areas for improvement and is using the various strengths within the teaching staff to very good effect. The department analyses and makes very effective use of data to monitor its work. There is a very good team spirit and a good focus on sustaining the improvements of recent years. The growing numbers of students wishing to follow courses and demands on equipment from the main school mean that resources are increasingly under pressure and on occasions some groups have to use older and less suitable equipment.

HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

248. Physical education, travel and tourism and leisure and tourism were inspected. There is also a course in leisure and recreation. During the inspection, leisure and tourism Intermediate GNVQ and travel and tourism AVCE only were inspected. The latter is a new course. Up to 2001 students had followed the Advanced GNVQ course in leisure and tourism. Neither subject had featured in the previous inspection, thus no estimations of improvement can be made.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

249. Overall, the quality of provision is **good**.

Strengths

- Attainment is above average.
- Students achieve well.

Areas for Development

- There are no significant areas for development.

250. In 2001, twelve students took the A-Level examination and their overall attainment was better than the national average. This is true both of the proportion obtaining at least a pass grade (A-E), and for the proportion obtaining higher grade passes (A-B). The twenty students who took the AS level examination all gained pass grades that were at least in line with the school's predictions. Inspection evidence indicates that the seventeen students currently in Year 13, and the thirty-two students who are just finishing their first term of the AS level course are producing work that is at least in line with the national average, and some are doing better. Students' practical programmes show a good range of skills in different activities. Students can analyse practical performance confidently and they use their evaluations to refine their work. Students in Year 13 can ask quite perceptive questions of their teachers, and have a good command of technical language and can apply it accurately and effectively. Some students have used the Internet to broaden their knowledge and to research individual topics.

251. The teaching of AS and A-level is good. Teachers are aware of the different ways in which their students learn and they work hard to use methods, and provide them with resources that meet their needs. A particularly impressive feature is the importance which teachers place on a continuity of approach from Year 11 to Year 12. They know that the change to sixth from study can be difficult for some students and they therefore attempt to ease their students into research and further reading. The expectation of what students can do is high, and students respond with high levels of industry and a mature approach to their studies. Teachers pass on their considerable subject expertise and challenge students to think intellectually. They contribute to students' learning by giving them and pointing them towards a wealth of background information and resources. They give students the opportunities to make and share extensive notes. Lessons proceed at a good pace, and teachers mark the students' work consistently so that they know how to improve their achievements. In addition to having impressive knowledge teachers have good relations with their students and treat them as responsible adults. Teachers know their students well, are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and are skilled at asking them just the right questions in order to prompt thought, and to enter into discussions.

252. Half of the students who are taking A-level courses in physical education are members of the Cheam High School Tennis Scholarship Scheme. The scheme provides performance-level junior tennis players with the opportunity to combine a serious tennis programme with their educational studies within the school timetable. Students on the

scheme fit in well with the school's other students and make an important contribution both to the academic life of the school and the social life of the sixth form. There is some concern at the irregular attendance of some of the students on the scheme.

253. The physical education department is well managed. Teachers work well together as a team. They provide students with good advice on how to structure their work under examination conditions. The process of setting assignments encourages good independent learning. Assessment and recording are good and students receive helpful individual feedback.

LEISURE AND TOURISM AND TRAVEL AND TOURISM

254. Overall, the quality of provision is **satisfactory**

Strengths

- The vocational context is stressed well in lessons.
- The department has developed good vocational links.

Areas for improvement

- Teachers who have little previous experience of teaching on vocationally orientated courses need additional support.
- Insufficient emphasis in lessons is placed on the business and economics context of the work.
- Students on all courses are not encouraged enough to undertake more individual research work.
- Course completion rates are not good enough in Intermediate leisure and tourism.

255. Results in the leisure and tourism GNVQ intermediate course in both 2000 and 2001 were below average and in both years the recorded course completion rate was also below average. For the GNVQ advanced leisure and tourism course, results in both 2000 and 2001 were in line with national averages, while the course completion rate improved from being below average in 2000 to above average in 2001. In both years, no candidates succeeded in gaining a distinction grade. Recorded standards are adversely affected if students do not complete sufficient course work to warrant accreditation. For present students, standards on both the intermediate leisure and tourism and advanced travel and tourism courses are below average. The standards achieved by the intermediate candidates are limited by their lack of literacy skills and by some poor attendance rates. Advanced candidates are developing good factual knowledge of the travel and tourism industry, but their analytical skills are less well developed. This particularly applies to students' abilities to apply economic reasoning to some of the problems presented. Standards for some also suffer because relevant and challenging homework tasks are not always completed on time. This results in the pace of some lessons being slower than planned because the teachers have to recap ideas and they cannot always progress to the level of work they had planned.

256. Teaching is satisfactory overall and, in some lessons, it is good. Lessons are set in an appropriate vocational context with good examples from the travel and tourism industry being given to illustrate the theories being covered. Teachers also have good vocational knowledge and this is reinforced by the links that have been cemented with the industry. These strengths help students to learn. However, in some lessons the work set lacks challenge and students are not offered sufficient opportunities to undertake purposeful research work for themselves. This impairs the quality of learning. Standards also suffer because teachers do not always develop the business or economic context sufficiently. For example in a lesson on popular tourist destinations a brainstorm was conducted based on a PEST analysis. While some factors were suitably stressed, the underlying economic

considerations were not adequately developed. The cost of travel and the influence of exchange rates were considered but other relevant factors, such as rising real income levels and the influence of advertising, were ignored. There is no business teacher amongst those teaching these courses and this results in some areas of theory not being covered in sufficient detail. This affects standards. In another lesson, the level of challenge was reduced because the teacher gave the answers. The lesson covered the role of travel agents but instead of the students researching these roles for themselves, the teacher listed them on an overhead projector. Teachers make some use of ICT in their lessons and teaching gives some emphasis to both literacy and numeracy. For example in one lesson students had to convert prices for airfares from various currencies into sterling. The Internet was used to research the fares and to find the prevailing exchange rates. However, some of the tasks set were too open-ended and a structure in which students are set clear tasks to research and write about should help to improve standards further.

257. The management of this vocational area is satisfactory; the co-ordination of the school's provision for vocational education is through an overview maintained by a deputy headteacher. Monitoring of retention and completion rates is done via school annual reviews. The level of resources made available for these vocational courses is good and students are able to gain suitable access to ICT equipment, thus allowing them to use the Internet as a research aid. Students also benefit from the good links that have been forged with the travel and tourism industry. Teachers of the various courses have varying levels of experience in vocational education. Undoubtedly some need more support than others.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

258. This area of the curriculum was not focussed on but a Year 12 intermediate GNVQ lesson and a Year 13 AVCE lesson were seen. Teaching and learning in both were very good. Standards were average in the intermediate work and above average in the advanced. The sixth form courses provide both an alternative to subjects studied by students when they were in Years 7-11 and a route for progression for those students who took the intermediate course in Years 10 and 11. The subject is well led.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

259. The focus was on Art; several lessons of drama and media studies were also seen. Examination standards in drama are above average. In work seen, performance skills are varied; most students can adopt a role but are weaker at sustaining it. Teaching is good and the students have a very good attitude to learning. Consequently, their progress is good. Standards in media studies are average. Students handle sophisticated vocabulary very well and their critical skills are average. They respond in a very lively and good-humoured way to the teacher's questions. Teaching is good and focuses well on examination criteria. Planning is good and is based on a very detailed scheme of work. However, student absenteeism is a problem. Art and design GNVQ was also sampled and standards overall were below course expectations. Teaching was unsatisfactory because the lesson lacked a clear structure and students were making insufficient progress.

ART

260. Overall, the quality of provision is **good**.

Strengths

- Current work, particularly in sketchbooks.
- The range of examination courses offered.
- Teachers' specialist knowledge is well used in lessons.
- Students' attitudes to art.

Areas for improvement

- The use of ICT.
- The range of three-dimensional work.

261. Standards in the 2001 A-level examinations were in line with the national average for the proportion attaining higher A and B grades. Male students did better than female students and all students achieved a pass in the examination. This was an improvement upon the previous two years when the overall standard was well below the national average. The department has an inclusive policy; it encourages a wide ability range to study art. Students can elect to study either a fine art or graphics course. Numbers taking art are increasing and students who have not followed a GCSE art course are accepted provided they show aptitude, commitment, and a willingness to succeed. In the new AS examination, students appear to have achieved well in comparison to their GCSE examination performance.

262. The standard of work seen in lessons indicates that students are achieving well in relation to their GCSE results and becoming more independent learners, well able to transfer skills from one media to another and experiment with new ideas relating to colour, texture and form. Students in Year 13 have positive attitudes to their work and have made good progress since starting their course, several achieving high standards in their AS examinations. Students' sketchbook journals show good progress with research through drawing, painting, printing and collage work and confident personal responses to subject matter through a range of media. Students are able to make good use of visits to galleries as stimulus for their own work and a visit during the summer to Barcelona has inspired some students to produce particularly good sketch book work. These visits and study of artists' work are adding a strong cultural dimension to pupils' knowledge and understanding of art. Some students make good use of school computers for research but not to develop their own work, as resources are limited.

263. Current Year 12 students, both males and females have made a good start to their AS studies, developing their sketchbook work based upon a range of research sources including the Internet. One group, for example, studying graphic art was at the early stages of developing a range of images based upon circles to be incorporated as part of an animation sequence. Although several students were reticent about discussing their work the teacher gave a clear example of how to analyse an image, which helped students and encouraged them to improve their discussion skills. In another Year 12 lesson students had looked at the work of Kandinsky. The teacher got students to speak about the images, use specialist vocabulary correctly, and used illustrations very effectively to promote discussion and develop understanding. As a result students were able to make comparisons and connections between images and went on to apply their ideas to abstract card sculptures, which were to be used for further observational drawing work.

264. Most students have positive attitudes and enjoy their practical work. A small number of students do not attend regularly because they are participating in the tennis scholarship

scheme and have to make up time through private study. A minority of other students has a relaxed attitude to punctuality and attendance and this slows their rate of progress.

265. Teaching is good. In the best lessons expectations are high and development of discussion skills and use of specialist language is good. Critical analysis skills are supported through good quality prompt sheets in some lessons, which help students structure their responses to works of art. Several specialist teachers are involved in the teaching of art and this provides a range of expertise and emphasis that enhance learning opportunities through their individual approaches to planning of lessons. Teachers are confident and have a depth of knowledge and expertise that is used effectively in lessons to provide a clear structure to working. Students make good progress as a result. There is a good balance between whole group and individual help that caters well for the wide range of abilities. Learning is supported by discussion, directed questioning and visual material. There is assessment of work against the examination criteria which, along with individual tutorials and group discussion, enables students to understand how to improve.

266. Leadership is not sufficiently active in sharing good practice and support materials across the department through a comprehensive scheme of work, which means that good ideas and methodology are not systematically experienced across the teaching groups and some of their impact is lost. Accommodation for sixth form use is satisfactory with a well-equipped photographic studio area for students, though this is underused. Resources in the form of computers and associated equipment are limited and restrict the access and use of ICT in art.

HUMANITIES

267. History, religious education and psychology were inspected. A lesson of A-level geography was also seen. Teaching and learning was good and standards of work satisfactory.

HISTORY

268. Overall the quality of provision is **good**.

Strengths

- The achievement of students on the AS level course.
- Good teaching with teachers using their good subject knowledge to support students well.
- Very mature attitudes to their studies particularly from A-level students.
- Good leadership and management demonstrated by the head of department.

Areas for Improvement

- The achievement of students on the A- level course in external examinations.
- The establishment of a study skills programme at the beginning of the AS level course.
- Independent learning based on more enquiry based work.

269. There are fourteen students studying history on the AS course in Year 12 and nine students on the A2 course in Year 13. In 2001 ten students sat the GCE A- level examination with only six gaining an A-E pass, which is well below the national average. The previous three years showed a similar pattern of results. Two students obtained B grade passes in 2001 and the proportion of students attaining the higher A and B grades has been very low most years. The rate of retention has generally been good on the course. Students have, in

line with the national pattern, reduced the number of subjects they are studying from four AS subjects in Year 12 to three subjects on the A2 course in Year 13. All nine students successfully completed the AS course in 2001 and continue to study the subject on the A2 course. All these students passed the AS examination with grades A-C. Five students attained the higher A and B grades. Two students left the AS course during the year to reduce their workload from four to three subjects.

270. Standards of work seen during the inspection were slightly above the national average although some students were working at higher levels on both the AS and A2 course. Students achieve well on both courses. Although somewhat early in the academic year, the standard of work seen in AS classes is good. Students acquire new knowledge quickly and by the end of Year 12 they have developed a good understanding of the topics studied. Most students in Year 12 demonstrate sound analytical skills and use source materials confidently. The amount of essay and other assignments completed in the first term is somewhat limited.

271. By the end of Year 13 students should be producing work broadly in line with the national average. Students had a sound knowledge of the topics and a good understanding of the work previously studied. However, in response to challenging questioning by the teacher on the relative importance of the coal, iron and textile industry during the Industrial Revolution in Britain, the level of analyses and synthesis was limited and at times insecure. This was mainly due to the area of study being new to them. Students are far more secure when they have a strong subject base such as when they are studying Twentieth Century historical topics. Students use historical information including source material and data well and overall they show good skills of investigation. Written work is of a good standard.

272. The difference between the poor A-level performance in previous years and the good standards of work seen in lessons, and confirmed by the AS results in 2001, can be explained by the positive leadership and management of the course by a new head of department, a major change in staffing in the subject and more highly motivated students on the course.

273. Students' attitude to their studies is good on the AS and very good on the A2 course. In lessons, students work conscientiously, are attentive and concentrate well. They show real rapport with their teachers and relationships when working in groups are very good particularly on the A2 course. However, students do rely very heavily on their teachers who work hard for them. In some classes students do not take sufficient responsibility for their own learning. While most prepare themselves well for lessons a few, mainly on the AS course, do not. Contributions to lessons vary often in direct relationship to students' background knowledge on the subject discussed. Students on the A2 course enjoy their studies, are very well motivated and their positive attitude to their work is a credit to themselves and the department.

274. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and there was some very good teaching observed. Lessons have a very clear structure and resources, particularly source materials, are effectively used. Teachers use their good subject knowledge and challenging questions skilfully to engage students, as exemplified in a role-play exercise and debate. They use a satisfactory range of teaching methods and plan lessons well so that students learn at good pace and maintain interest throughout lessons. Teachers' expectations are appropriately high and there is good productivity in most lessons. Teachers support students well and seek in many lessons to develop independent learning skills. Some students respond well to being directly involved in their own learning but others, due mainly to lack of confidence, have weak independent learning skills, particularly on the AS course. There is not enough regular consolidation and re-enforcement of the main teaching points visually on the board.

275. Work assignments are regularly marked and students are given sound judgements on the standard of work produced. Students on the A2 course are very clear of how they are progressing but many of those on the AS course are unclear of the standard of work produced against a predicted AS level grade. All students find teachers helpful and supportive and easy to approach. There is need of a more rigorous policy regarding students, mainly on the AS course, meeting their deadline in fairness to others who work hard to meet their commitments on time. When taking notes students need to be more selective. At times they fail to refine knowledge and do not apply it with sufficient understanding to their work. A thorough study skills programme needs to be established early in the AS course.

276. The sixth form courses are competently managed. Provision is well co-ordinated by the head of department with a team of teachers working together well in a mutually supportive way. Courses are well planned and fully cover syllabi requirements. Students have adequate resources to undertake their studies but more enquiry based material and films would further enhance the course. The current policy of ensuring that students embarking on the course are appropriately qualified, are well motivated and are capable of meeting the academic requirements of the course should ensure improved results. There is a good revision and examination course provided and this is very important in ensuring that the good learning evident is fully consolidated for the AS and A-level examinations.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

277. Overall, the quality of provision is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Students have very positive attitudes to religious education.
- More students, including male students, are choosing to follow the AS level course.
- There is a stimulating atmosphere in lessons.

Areas for improvement

- Most students do not receive their legal entitlement of a religious education course.

278. As at the time of the previous inspection, most students do not receive their legal entitlement to religious education. The only students who study religious education are those who choose to follow the A-level course. There were no A-level entries in 2001. In the previous three years the highest number of entrants in any single year was five. Results are below average but the numbers are too small to be statistically significant. All A-level entrants have been female. In 2001, four students (all female) entered for AS level. Results were below the national average but students did as well as expected in relation to their GCSE results.

279. Standards of work seen during the inspection are satisfactory. Students in Year 13 are achieving satisfactorily in relation to their GCSE and AS results. They understand specialist terms and definitions. They have a sound knowledge of some of the main philosophers' theories of ethics. For example, Year 13 students were seen to have good awareness of Kant's universal imperative. They know the major principles of the study of ethics but do not show detailed knowledge. In discussion they are handicapped by there being only three of them, although in one lesson they were tenacious in pursuing the question whether team spirit really exists. In another lesson, however, their lack of intellectual drive affected the quality of discussion and learning was no more than satisfactory. In addition to

gaining factual information they learn with some success to apply general principles to solve specific problems. Students in Year 12 are achieving well in their first term on the course. They benefit from being in a much bigger class than the Year 13 students, which makes it easier to have more profitable discussions. They are beginning to understand theological concepts such as classical theism and are developing a fairly sophisticated ability to argue their own point of view.

280. Teaching is very good and pupils learn very well. The very good subject knowledge of the teachers combined with their great enthusiasm leads to an atmosphere that stimulates learning. Students like the social feel to the class, which gives them the confidence to participate. They have very good attitudes to learning. Their files are well-kept and arranged for revision purposes. Year 12 students say that in only one term the course has made their own attitudes to life more mature and thoughtful. They have become aware that there are reasons for people having different values and beliefs than their own and consequently they are more open-minded and respectful of the views of others. They are very clearly deriving enjoyment from intellectual pursuits.

281. Lessons are logically planned so that complex issues become more easily understood. This was seen in a lesson in which the objective was to examine materialist arguments concerning the possibility of life after death. First, the teacher engaged students in listing the separate characteristics of body and mind. They quickly realised that emotions and moods did not easily fit into either category. This led to the teacher introducing dualist and monist theories and their implications concerning life after death. From here it was a logical step to introduce the materialist viewpoint of Ryle. Students considered the view that a piece of music is no more than a set of vibrations. They made good progress and the lesson concluded with a consideration of whether the brain and the mind are the same thing. Teachers are fully aware of students' progress because of constant interaction with them in class. They provide students with detailed assessments and advice on how to improve their work.

282. Students cover a great deal of ground in lessons because teachers conduct lessons at a very good pace and focus very closely on the lesson objectives. They also make lessons interesting by using a variety of teaching methods. Students are usually actively engaged as was seen in a lesson on the problems that believers in divine providence have with the existence of evil. The class was looking at three theodicies: process, Augustinian and Irenaean. The teacher divided the students into three groups, each with the task of researching one of the theodicies. In a later lesson each group would present its critique to the others. Homework is designed to extend learning and to develop students' individual learning skills. The lesson mentioned above on materialist arguments, for example, was followed by homework on various sub-sets of materialism. There is a growing collection of suitable books in the library for individual research and students feel that they can find sufficient information either there or on the Internet.

283. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The schemes of work are designed so that the subject is taught in a logical sequence. Teachers work very well together and are fully committed to raising standards. The increased numbers of students in Year 12 and the presence of male students for the first time is an encouraging sign that reflects the growing strength of the subject.

284. However, religious education is limited to those students who follow examination courses. As at the time of the previous inspection the majority of students do not receive their statutory entitlement.

PSYCHOLOGY

285. Overall, the quality of provision is **good**.

Strengths

- Teaching is good and often very good.
- The enthusiasm for the subject demonstrated by the teachers has a positive effect on the learning of the students.
- Procedures for monitoring students' progress are thorough.
- There is a good focus on literacy skills within lessons.

Areas for Improvement

- Class sizes are large, which hinders some of the more practical activities.

286. Psychology is a new subject at Cheam High School, introduced in the last two years only. There are no national comparison figures available. The A-level results from the first year were disappointing overall, with many students under performing. The results from the first set of AS level examinations were much better, with most students attaining levels expected of them, or slightly above.

287. During the inspection, students were seen learning about a range of psychological topics. They demonstrate good understanding of the scientific method when discussing the psychoanalytical theories of Freud and Jung, whilst being able to outline aspects where their work has advanced psychological study.

288. Psychology makes a significant and positive impact on students' literacy and numeracy skills. Time is taken to consider in detail how to answer essay questions correctly, including planning it carefully. Statistical requirements and considerations, particularly in cognitive psychology, use and expand students' mathematical understanding. Limited use is made of ICT.

289. Students' attitudes to learning are very good, as demonstrated by their enthusiasm and energy in lessons. All students show willingness to share their ideas and freely offer their opinions without fear of embarrassment or inhibition. It is noticeable that they mirror the teachers' enthusiasm and respond positively to a calm, pleasant but firm approach. This has a positive effect on their learning. Relationships are very good, both between the students and students and teachers. Students respond well to high expectations and seek help and assistance when needed. They react positively when asked to do something that is difficult. There were instances of mature and responsible behaviour, for example helping late arrivals to catch up quickly.

290. Teaching is always satisfactory and in three of the four lessons or parts of lessons seen, it was good or very good. In all lessons, teachers' subject knowledge was strong and they demonstrated an excitement for the subject that rubbed off on the students. There is a good variety of methods used to encourage learning. For example, in one good lesson, students acted out the 'strange situation', which most students had had some difficulty understanding from the textbook. Despite having to play potentially embarrassing parts like 'a baby' and 'an observer', amongst other roles, the activity was very successful in helping students understand the mechanics of the original experiment.

291. In the particularly good lessons seen, the teacher's relationship with the students was excellent. It was very clear that students were treated as young adults and that they learnt especially well because of it. Students felt confident and there was an atmosphere of

enthusiasm and shared participation in the lessons. There was excellent use of humour to emphasise points and to gently direct students' learning.

292. Learning is good. In discussions, students could talk with knowledge about the different approaches to psychology about which they had learnt, but were so enthused about the breadth and applicability of the subject that they did not want to focus on one or two areas as being more popular than others. This was further evidence of teachers who enthuse and motivate their students.

293. The popularity of psychology has resulted in two noticeable effects. First, there is a very low drop-out rate between AS level and the second year A2 level. This is a good indication of students who are enjoying learning and well provided for. Secondly, class sizes are large, over twenty-five in some instances. One immediate effect of this is the amount of marking that is generated. Analysis of the students' work demonstrated frequent occurrences of exemplary ongoing assessment. It was positively couched, questioning, prompting, and cajoling. However, there were obvious occasions where insufficient time had been spent marking and it was brief, perhaps merely a series of ticks and with little to encourage students.

294. The department is well led. The department has analysed students' results in detail and has made significant changes to the way it has planned and executed the curriculum this year, based on this analysis. Indications are that students have been learning well because of these changes and assessment data indicates that students are now on track to achieve at least satisfactory results. Resources available for the subject are adequate and, as a minority subject, there is understandably no physical location defined as 'the department'. However, the fact that one classroom is used for much of the teaching has benefits for the students' learning. Wall displays support their ongoing retention of psychological facts and ideas, and resources are readily available to staff and students alike. This is conversely not the case for those who are taught elsewhere in the school. With only three teachers working within the department, all holding additional responsibilities within the school, opportunities for staff to observe and learn from one another are necessarily limited.

ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

295. English literature and Spanish were the subjects inspected. During the inspection sixth form lessons in French and German were also sampled. There is a high degree of consistency across all three languages; the standards achieved in students' work, the quality of teaching and the quality of learning are all very high. Over half of the pupils who started German in Year 8 normally now continue to study the language in the sixth form and several each year go on to a degree course in languages. Standards of German in the sixth form are above course expectations; Year 12 work shows very good progress from Year 11. It is typified by interesting, complex writing at length on themes such as the use of the Internet in Germany. Progress continues into Year 13 and A-level results are now consistently high compared with those found nationally.

ENGLISH

296. Overall, the quality of provision is **good**.

Strengths

- Teachers have very good knowledge of the subject.
- The course is well organised and individual lessons are well planned.
- Teaching is good.

Areas for improvement

- Some students do not make enough progress.
- All students do not play a sufficiently active part in lessons.
- The low attainment of some students in Year 13 is affecting standards overall.

297. A-level results in English literature in 2001 were below the national average. Overall, students performed slightly less well than predicted from their GCSE performance. Similarly, students who sat for AS level did not perform as well as expected overall. However, at both A and AS levels more students did as well as or better than expected than failed to reach expectations.

298. Standards of work seen during the inspection are satisfactory in both Years 12 and 13. Year 12 students have made sound progress in methods of analysing literature. They have a clear understanding of the concept of dominant and resistant reading positions. Thus they are aware of how different interpretations of literature can arise from the experiences and perspectives that different readers bring with them. They understand the idea of the sub-text and apply it to "The Bell". For example, they realise that Iris Murdoch is criticising the hypocrisy of some of her characters. There is a wide spread of attainment among students in Year 13. In a study of "A Passage to India" students show a close reading of the novel but in some cases this does not go far beyond a basic understanding. Others are more evaluative and critical. They are sometimes perceptive, for example when pointing out that sensitive characters do not "fit in" with most members of the club. They know how Forster develops various themes such as colonialism, evil and landscape in the novel. Some students, however, have only a vague grasp of such a basic concept as symbolism.

299. Teaching is good and students mostly learn well in lessons. The fact that there are students on the A2 course who obtained a U or E grade at AS level limits the progress that can be made. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and courses are planned in such detail that each lesson fits in to the whole scheme in a logical and structured way. Thus students are able to build knowledge and understanding systematically. Similarly, teachers make the objectives of each lesson clear to the students and focus closely on them. Consequently students are aware of the progress they are making. Teachers are very well organised and are careful to give students suitable guidance without spoon-feeding them. For example, in preparation for a piece of homework the teacher provided some ideas in bullet points but still left plenty of opportunity for students to use their own initiative.

300. Teachers employ a variety of methods in order to increase learning. For example, students are required to make oral presentations to the rest of the class. These are not always successful because the presentation skills of students vary from good to weak. No presentations were seen which succeeded in stimulating questions or comments from the rest of the class. The encouraging approach by teachers creates a good atmosphere for learning to which students respond positively. Nevertheless, although they are interested in their work, many are quite passive.

301. The English literature course is well organised. Teachers combine well to teach the various parts of the syllabus and are clearly committed to raising standards. More thought needs to be given to entry requirements for the A2 course as the low attainment of some students is having an adverse effect on overall standards.

SPANISH

302. Overall, the quality of provision is **excellent**.

Strengths:

- The excellent quality of teaching and learning
- Excellent relationships
- Students' very positive attitudes and commitment to high standards
- Students' achievement, especially in speaking and listening skills
- The excellent management of the subject

Areas for development:

- There are no significant areas for development

303. By the end of Year 13 standards achieved in 2001 in AS and A-level examinations in Spanish were below the national average in examinations. However the standards achieved in lessons and work seen during the inspection was of a very high standard and at the time of the inspection the school was awaiting the outcome of an appeal to the examinations board. The majority of students achieve standards that are very high in relation to the requirements of the courses. Students are very confident linguists; they respond appropriately and promptly to the exclusive use of Spanish at normal speed in lessons. Listening and speaking skills are of a very high order and are matched by students' written work. They have a very good understanding of the way the language works and all students manipulate the language successfully to express their views. Students write at length on a variety of topics such as immigration, relationships, drugs and other contemporary issues. They organise their writing well, preparing notes for debate and presentations and writing essays to present their views on a variety of topics. Students can make formal presentations to others, organising their ideas clearly and speaking with a good degree of fluency. They contribute freely to debate and discussion and justify their views in detail. They display a high level of independence in Spanish and respond spontaneously to the views of others. When working in pairs and small groups they remain in Spanish. Students use a very good range of vocabulary and structures and writing is usually accurate. They identify the main points and detail from a good range of authentic texts involving a variety of registers.

304. Attitudes to the subject are very positive. The subject is a popular choice and attracts a larger number of students than is the case in many schools. Students value the quality of teaching provided and the guidance they are given. They have a clear idea of how to improve and are very well motivated; they enjoy their lessons and take a keen interest in the advice offered by their teachers.

305. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently excellent. Teachers plan their lessons with attention paid to the needs of individuals within teaching groups; activities are well sequenced and appropriate emphasis is placed on increasing students' understanding of the way the language works and their repertoire of structures and vocabulary. There is clear and rapid progress through Years 12 and 13 because of the clear presentations and appropriate activities provided. Teachers have very high expectations; in a Year 13 class students rapidly became confident in using the subjunctive because of the clear presentation

and well focussed activities which enabled students to construct sentences using the structure to express their ideas. Students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning and activities are designed to increase their independence in using the language. In a Year 12 class, for example, students were able to work at their own pace in completing listening tasks. Teachers' subject knowledge and their exclusive and effective use of Spanish in lessons are major factors that result in the rapid progress made by students. Lessons are characterised by excellent relationships and high levels of concentration. Activities are competitive and practical, focus on developing students' understanding and application of grammar and are conducted at a brisk pace. Students frequently learn language through games and learning is a pleasure for them. Provision is enhanced considerably by the opportunity for students to work with Spanish nationals.

306. The management of Spanish in the sixth form is excellent. All students follow courses leading to AS or A2 level in Spanish. Students' progress is closely monitored and they are fully involved in evaluating both their own and others' performance in the language. In addition to the taught course teachers provide a program of independent study for their students that is a major factor in developing students' independence and in enabling them to take full responsibility for their own learning.