

INSPECTION REPORT

JUDGEMEADOW COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Evington, Leicester

LEA area: Leicester City

Unique reference number: 120287

Headteacher: Mr David Powell

Reporting inspector: Dr David Benstock
20243

Dates of inspection: 28th April – 1st May 2003

Inspection number: 254796

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of students:	11 – 16 years
Gender of students:	Mixed
School address:	Marydene Drive Evington Leicester
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Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Eleanor Pepper
Date of previous inspection:	3 rd – 7 th February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20243	David Benstock	Registered inspector		<p>What sort of college is it?</p> <p>How high are standards – college's results and achievements?</p> <p>How well are students taught?</p> <p>How well is the college led and managed?</p>
17923	John Brasier	Lay inspector		<p>How high are standards – students' attitudes, values and personal development?</p> <p>How well does the college care for its students?</p> <p>How well does the college work in partnership with parents?</p>
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4922	Michael Driver	Team inspector	Science	
31688	Brian McGonagle	Team inspector	Art and design	
30128	Shirley Stanley	Team inspector	Citizenship Music	
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Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
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19404	Les Schubeler	Team inspector	Modern foreign language specialist college status Modern foreign languages	
20189	Jagat Nagra	Team inspector	Community languages	
30800	Betty Colley	Team inspector	Physical education	
20716	Reg Grogan	Team inspector	Religious education	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
1049	Brian Evans	Team inspector	Educational inclusion English as an additional language	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Judgemeadow Community College is an 11-16 mixed community comprehensive school, situated in Evington, a pleasant suburb of the City of Leicester. However, very few of the students live in the immediate surroundings and many come from the inner city where there is a high level of deprivation. As a result, the college's socio-economic circumstances are below average. The college has 1213 students on roll and is larger than average. The number on roll has been constant for the past four years and the college is oversubscribed. The percentage of students eligible for free school meals is close to the national average. The percentage of students speaking English as an additional language is around 60 per cent, which is very high compared to most schools. Approximately 20 per cent of students have declared their ethnic background as 'White British', 47 per cent are of Indian background, 20 per cent other Asian and the remainder of Black British and mixed heritage. The percentage of students with special educational needs and the percentage with statements are both close to the national averages. Most students with special educational needs have specific or general learning difficulties. The overall attainment on entry is below average, largely reflecting the difficulty that students have with aspects of literacy. The school provides a broad academic curriculum, with one vocational course in information and communication technology (ICT). It has been awarded specialist college status in modern foreign languages and internationalism, has support from the 'Excellence in Cities' initiative and is involved in other national and local initiatives.

HOW GOOD THE COLLEGE IS

Judgemeadow is a good college with very good and excellent features. It gives good value for money. In the most recent National Curriculum tests in Year 9, overall standards of attainment were broadly at the national average. The performance was well above average compared with similar schools, i.e. schools where the percentage of students eligible for free school meals is similar to this school. As students enter the college overall generally below average, especially in their literacy skills, they achieve well in English, mathematics and science. There has been an upward trend in attainment in line with the national trend. Standards seen reflect the performance in tests. In other subjects, too, standards are as expected for the age and ability of the students, and achievement is good. In the GCSE examinations in 2002, overall performance was close to the national average, and above average compared with similar schools. Standards currently are well above average in mathematics and above average in science. Overall, the quality of teaching is good throughout the college. Relationships between students and teachers contribute well to the learning. Expectations are high and students appreciate the commitment of teachers. Very good provision is made for the teaching of modern foreign languages. The curriculum is broad and balanced but gives limited opportunity currently to study vocational courses. Provision for the teaching of citizenship is unsatisfactory. The college is very well led and managed and receives good support from the governing body. The college makes a strong commitment to ensuring that all students have equality of opportunity. The harmony in the relationships between the minority ethnic groups is a strength of the college.

What the college does well

- The principal and his senior staff provide very good leadership and management.
- Attainment is well above average compared with similar schools at the end of Year 9.
- There is a pleasant climate of study, where all students are valued and included, relationships are harmonious, and where expectations of hard work and achievement are promoted strongly.
- Modern foreign language teaching is a very good feature of the college.
- The college endeavours to ensure that students with English as an additional language are fully supported and that their progress is maximised.
- The quality and detail of information about the college, its activities and procedures is high.
- Excellent links are forged with the community, including opportunities for adult learning.

What could be improved

- The extent of information provided for parents on the progress of their children in the college.
- Consistency in the monitoring of teaching and use of assessment data within departments.
- The provision for the teaching of citizenship, which is currently unsatisfactory.
- The balance of vocational and academic courses to suit the needs of students.
- Accommodation for physical education and design and technology.

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

HOW THE COLLEGE HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The college was last inspected in February 1997. Overall improvement has been satisfactory. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 9 have improved broadly in line with the national trend. Standards in the GCSE examinations have fluctuated. Overall, they were in decline from 1999 to 2001, but recovered partially in 2002. Standards seen in the inspection suggest further improvement. Good standards of behaviour and attitudes of students have been maintained and the quality of the teaching continues to be mainly good, with some being very good. In the last inspection six key issues were identified. Attainment in science has fluctuated, with results in Year 9 dipping in 2001, but overall improvement has been satisfactory. Standards seen currently in Year 11 suggest considerable improvement at GCSE. The provision for special educational needs has improved. Good progress has been made in monitoring academic achievement of students, although inconsistencies remain in the practice in departments. Punctuality to lessons has improved. Accommodation is still unsatisfactory. Satisfactory improvement has been made in the teaching of religious education, which is now taught by specialists except in Year 8. Good provision is now made for ICT, although insufficient application is made in the use of computers in measurement in science.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved at the end of Year 11 based on average point scores in GCSE examinations.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
GCSE examinations	C	C	C	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E

In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9, in English, mathematics and science in 2002, attainment was in line with the national average. Boys' attainment was higher than girls', although the reverse was true the previous year. Attainment was well above average compared with schools in a similar context and above average compared with schools having a similar range of prior attainment on entry. There has been an upward trend in the test results in line with the national trend, although attainment in mathematics has been more successfully improved each year. Standards in other subjects overall are broadly average, but above average in modern foreign languages. Results in the GCSE examinations have been broadly average for the past three years. They were above average compared with schools in a similar context. In 2002 girls' attainment was higher than boys'. Standards seen in mathematics in Year 11 are well above average. They are average in English and above average in science. Overall achievement by students is good. The college did not meet the challenging target set for the percentage of students gaining five or more A*-C grades at GCSE last year. Standards reached by students with special educational needs and by those with English as an additional language are as expected due to the good level of support.

STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the college	Good. Students are positive about their learning and aim to do well. They are attentive in class and complete work set.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Students are well behaved in and out of the classroom. They are courteous and respectful.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Students respect each other and work well together. There is no evidence of bullying or other oppressive behaviour.
Attendance	Good. Attendance in 2001-2 and the level of unauthorised absence were both close to the national average. In the current year the attendance rate is significantly higher, and comparable with previous years.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of students:	Years 7 – 9	Years 10 – 11
Quality of teaching	Good	Good

The quality of teaching and learning is mostly good throughout the college. The teaching is good in mathematics, English and science and as a result the progress made by students is good. Teaching is very good in modern foreign languages and students are highly motivated by the consistently strong features of the teaching in this area. Teaching and learning are notably good in geography and in art and design in Years 10 and 11. The consistency of good teaching across most subjects is a strong feature. During the inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teaching was satisfactory in religious education. Good planning is common in most subjects, and the high expectations result in students being well motivated to learn. Very good relationships are forged in the classroom and teachers ensure that work in general matches the needs of students of all attainment levels. There is some inconsistency in the use of assessment data and marking of students' work. Good provision is made for support for students with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language. Good opportunities are provided for those who are gifted or talented. The extreme literacy needs of some students are met well and all teachers are aware of their responsibility in developing literacy skills in all subjects. The teaching of literacy is a priority in the college. Numeracy is also taught well across subjects and particularly in mathematics where extra lessons are timetabled in Year 7.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE COLLEGE

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced. Very good provision is made for modern foreign languages and extra-curricular opportunities. The contribution of community links is excellent. Currently provision for citizenship is unsatisfactory and there is limited provision for vocational courses in Years 10 and 11.
Provision for students with special educational needs	Good. Support is provided well through withdrawal sessions and in-class support. A very clear emphasis is placed on promoting a climate where all students are included.
Provision for students with	Very good. The college has very clear arrangements for providing

English as an additional language	support. There is good quality in-class support, very good strategies to assist transfer from primary school, and effective tracking procedures.
Aspect	Comment
Provision for students' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Spiritual education is good, including appropriate opportunities now for students to reflect on their own faith in religious education in all years. Provision for moral, social and cultural development is very good, with full opportunity taken to embrace the rich multicultural diversity in the college.
How well the college cares for its students	Good. Good procedures are in place for the care of students, including child protection. Monitoring of academic and personal development is good and personal support and guidance is very good. Procedures and use of assessment overall are good, but there are inconsistencies of practice in departments.

HOW WELL THE COLLEGE IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the principal and other key staff	Very good. The principal and senior team have a very clear, shared vision for the development of the college. They have effective delegated management responsibilities and support staff well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are supportive, and highly involved in the college. They provide good expertise in monitoring initiatives and proposals for development.
The college's evaluation of its performance	Good. The college has a very good process of evaluating its performance against national expectations. Departments are reviewed regularly but monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom is not sufficiently rigorous.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Financial resources are used well and specific grants are appropriately allocated. The college applies the principles of best value well.

There is a good match of the qualification and experience of the teachers to the demands of the curriculum. Non-teaching staff provide good support. Overall learning resources are adequate, although there is inadequacy of resources in areas such as design and technology. Accommodation remains unsatisfactory despite the efforts made to refurbish several areas. The purpose-built modern foreign languages building is very good, but accommodation for areas including physical education, and design and technology are unsatisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE COLLEGE

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College expects child to work hard • Child likes college • Child is making good progress • College helps child to become mature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which they are kept informed about their children's progress • How closely the college works with parents • The amount of work to do at home • Range of activities outside lessons

The inspection team agrees with the positive comments of parents. The team supports the view that the extent to which parents are kept informed about the children's progress needs improvement. Homework

is satisfactory but there are inconsistencies in quality. The range of activities outside lessons is extensive. The college makes considerable effort to liaise with parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The college's results and students' achievements

1. On entry to the college in Year 7, students have a wide range of ability. In the National Curriculum tests at Year 6, the intake in 2002 was below average in English and science, and broadly average in mathematics. Students are entered for cognitive abilities tests each year, and these show their non-verbal and mathematical skills were average in Year 7, but the verbal reasoning scores were below average. This indicates that students enter the college with below average literacy skills, which impedes their learning. The pattern has been similar for previous years on entry.
2. In the National Curriculum tests in Year 9 in 2002, the proportion of students gaining target Level 5 or higher in English, mathematics and science was close to the average for all schools. The proportion gaining higher levels was above the national average in English and mathematics, and close to average for science. The overall performance of students, as measured by their average point score, was also close to the national average.
3. The results show some difference in performance of boys and girls. Overall, in 2002, boys performed better than girls. Boys' attainment was above average, whereas girls' was slightly below. However, in the previous year, girls' attainment was higher than boys' and each year has shown fluctuations in relative performance. Variations are attributed to the differences in cohort from year to year.
4. Students have achieved well in their time in the college from 1999 to 2002, based on their test results. Overall, being largely below average on entry, they have progressed well to be close to average at the end of Year 9.
5. Over the past four years there has been an upward trend in the results in Year 9, broadly in line with the national trend. In mathematics, results have risen steadily, at a level mainly above national average. In English, there have been significant variations, where performance increased from being below average in 1999 to being well above average in 2000. In subsequent years results were above average. In science, results have been broadly at the national average each year, except for a fall in 2001, again due to variations in the nature of the cohort.
6. The performance of students in the core subjects was well above average compared with similar schools, i.e. where there is a similar percentage of students eligible for free school meals. Comparison with other schools where the range of prior attainment in Year 6 was generally similar to Judgemeanow, shows that progress from Years 7 to 9 was above average in 2002. Progress in English and mathematics, based on attainment in the tests, was well above average, and in science it was broadly average. The 'value added' measure now published for schools confirms that progress from Years 7 to 9, is above average compared with all schools, but well above average compared with schools in a similar context and background.
7. Overall, results in the GCSE or GNVQ examinations in 2002 were broadly average. The total point score gained per student was in line with the national average and above average compared with schools in a similar context. The percentage of students who gained five or more GCSE A*-C grades and the percentage who gained five or more A*-G grades, were both close to the national average. The percentage of students

gaining at least one pass grade in GCSE was above national average. The percentage of students gaining five or more A*-C grades was well above the average compared with that in similar schools. Girls attained a higher percentage of A*-C grades than boys in 2002.

8. Targets set by governors for the percentage of students gaining five or more grades A*-C, have been challenging and were not met in 2002. Similarly, the target set for the overall point score per student was not met. However, the target for percentage of students gaining at least one GCSE grade was exceeded.
9. In comparison with schools where the prior attainment in Year 9 was at a similar level, the attainment and, by implication, the progress from Year 9 to Year 11, was recorded as being well below average in 2002. However, the progress being made by students is affected by the limitations of literacy of many students for whom English is not their first language. Detailed analysis by the college indicates that progress over Year 9 to Year 11 is much better than the GCSE statistics indicate. Analysis of results according to ethnic groups shows that the achievement of many students is good when allowing for their own individual literacy difficulties and social background.
10. Overall, attainment in the core subjects at GCSE in 2002 was broadly average. The percentage of students gaining A*-C grades was close to average in English and overall in science, but above average in mathematics. On this basis, achievement from Year 9 was satisfactory, with standards being largely maintained against national benchmarks.
11. In other subjects, performance in the GCSE examinations in 2002 was well above average in history, above average in French and community languages, drama and geography. It was below average in religious education and well below average in ICT and Spanish. Results in remaining subjects were broadly average.
12. The overall performance of students has fluctuated year to year. There has been an upward trend but the improvement has been below that of the national trend. The total point score per student fell from 1999 to 2001, but has recovered partially in 2002.
13. Standards of work seen in English during the inspection and in the scrutiny of students' work are broadly average for the ages in both Year 9 and Year 11. Achievement in English is good since students enter the school with below average standards in literacy. Standards of written work are average in Year 11, and many students have developed their skills well. Standards of reading, speaking and listening are all closely in line with expectations for the age groups.
14. Standards of work seen in mathematics are above average in Year 9, and indicate that students achieve well from Year 7. The work seen in Year 11 is well above average and reflects the continued good achievement throughout the college. Students with English as an additional language achieve equally well as other students in mathematics. Boys achieve slightly higher standards than girls overall.
15. Standards of work seen in science are broadly average in Year 9, and above average in Year 11. Students are making good progress in their gains of knowledge and understanding of science, but also in development of practical skills as these are common features of the teaching of the subject.
16. In other subjects, standards seen in lessons are generally as would be expected for the ages of the students nationally and overall achievement from entry to the college is

good. Standards seen are above average in geography, history, art and design and music in both Year 9 and Year 11. Standards seen in modern foreign languages are above average in Year 9, and well above average in Year 11, reflecting the emphasis placed on these subjects within the specialist language provision. There is very good progress made by students in modern foreign languages. Progress is particularly good in French and also in the community language of Punjabi. Standards of work seen are below average in religious education in both Year 9 and 11.

17. Attainment in examinations, and the standard of work seen by students with special educational needs, is below average in both key stages. Nonetheless, they are currently making good progress in lessons, mainly as a result of the support and guidance provided by members of the special needs department and by carefully prepared lessons by subject staff who provide a number of differentiated activities for these students.
18. Attainment in examinations, and the standard of work seen by students who are gifted and talented, is above, and in some cases well above, average in both key stages. Students make very good progress and achieve very well in a number of subjects, particularly in music, physical education, design and technology, and geography.
19. There is effective provision in place for meeting students' literacy needs and, as a result, they make good progress in their subjects. Students enter the college with weaker literacy skills than would normally be expected. By the end of Year 9 they are able to adapt their writing to subject need and most are able to write at length in a range of styles. Evidence of extended writing was seen in history where writing covers news reports, charters, leaflets and factual accounts. Note taking skills are well developed in science and students are encouraged to talk about and discuss their findings. In geography students are able to organise and present information sequentially and their extended writing is of high quality. The use of technical vocabulary is strong in information and communication technology and students are fluent and clear when answering questions. The literacy aspect of the work done in modern foreign languages is also strong, with many opportunities afforded for writing in varied styles for different audiences. Students understand the language patterns used and have a good knowledge of grammatical terms.
20. Skills are further developed as students progress through the college. Overall, students read the varied subject texts with increasing confidence and with understanding because of the attention the college gives to developing this basic skill. Students also speak well. In mathematics students explain themselves clearly because teachers emphasise the importance of oral skills by encouraging and supporting them to be fluent when answering questions. They also listen carefully, an essential attribute for effective learning.
21. Students enter the college with average standards of numeracy. These skills are rapidly developed because they have an additional mathematics lesson in Year 7. This increased provision is proving effective because students have the skills they need for other subjects. For example, students competently handle formulae in science and understand rhythmical patterns in music. They use scale well in geography and deploy their numerical skills when using spreadsheets in ICT. The one area in which they experience difficulty is when asked to estimate in design and technology. Overall, the college makes good provision for the development of students' numerical skills.

Students' attitudes, values and personal development

22. Relationships and the absence of oppressive behaviour are very good. Attitudes, behaviour, personal development and attendance are good. This is similar to the situation at the last inspection.
23. Students are proud of their college. Their attitudes in lessons range from satisfactory to excellent and are generally good. They usually apply themselves well, remain on task despite any distractions, and demonstrate considerable enthusiasm for what they are doing. For instance, in a Year 10 science lesson about the heart the students were absorbed in the practical demonstration and the teacher's exposition and tackled their written task with enthusiasm. Around the college and at lunch and on the playground attitudes are good; civilised conversation is the order of the day, and students enjoy each other's company.
24. Behaviour is good. However, there are some students in the college who have yet to learn to control their emotions. The college is addressing this problem, but it accounts for the relatively high rate of fixed term exclusions and very occasional interruptions to learning in some classes. Peaks in exclusion frequency relate to community problems, and the college works hard to maintain its calm and pleasant environment. Incidents of poor behaviour are recorded and are analysed to good purpose. Racial incidents are recorded and are all confined to the use of unsuitable language in the heat of a moment. Such incidents are unusual because there is excellent racial harmony in the college. Friendship groups on the playground almost always include a variety of ethnic groups and cliques of a single ethnic group are not seen. Bullying occurs, but students were clear that it is unusual and usually confined to the younger ones. When it occurs it is dealt with effectively.
25. Relationships between students and between staff and students are very good. Adults in the college treat students as mature persons, and give them a great deal of encouragement and praise without being patronising. Students work together well, assisting each other where appropriate, and forming teams with a strong sense of collaboration. For instance, in Year 11 music lesson students listened to each other's GCSE submissions with great interest and gave each other much encouragement. Students take good care of the visually impaired children in the college community and see the chance to support them as a privilege.
26. Students with special educational needs are generally keen to learn and value the additional support offered both in and out of class. Those with emotional and behavioural difficulties are occasionally lively but are handled well in class by teachers with appropriate and stimulating activities. Teachers' good management of students, using very clear instructions and much praise, ensures that students produce work of merit. In many cases they work diligently to produce work of a quality which matches or exceeds the standard achieved by their peers, for example in physical education, art and design and sometimes in mathematics.
27. Gifted and talented students are very appreciative of the many interesting and challenging activities provided for them.
28. There are many opportunities for students to use their initiative and take positions of responsibility and they respond well. For instance, they run the college council, support newcomers as buddies, raise money for charity, help younger students to read, and act as guides to potential students and their parents.
29. Attendance is good. In the academic year 2001-2002, the attendance rate, 91.5 per cent, was broadly in line with the national average. Attendance in the first two terms of

the current academic year was 92.4 per cent, representing an improvement over the previous year and comparable with earlier years. An intensive campaign on punctuality has been successful. College starts on time and there is good timekeeping throughout the day. Registration is efficient.

HOW WELL ARE STUDENTS TAUGHT?

30. The quality of teaching is good throughout the college and is leading to good achievement. The quality of the learning overall is slightly better in Years 10 and 11 where the skills of literacy have become more secure. Teaching is very good in modern foreign languages. The language centre facilities have had a strong influence on learning. The range of languages studied is wide and students learn very well in this area of the curriculum because they are strongly motivated. Teaching and learning are also noted to be particularly good in geography and in art and design in Years 10 and 11. Teaching and learning are consistently good in most other aspects of the curriculum. In religious education, the teaching and learning are satisfactory, but with several good features. For example, there is good planning, and students are managed well.
31. During the inspection, all lessons observed were at least satisfactory. None was unsatisfactory; more than half of all lessons seen were taught well, and in approximately one quarter, teaching was very good. None were judged to be excellent.
32. In general, learning matched the teaching well, and in most subjects little difference was noted between the quality in Years 7 to 9 compared with Years 10 and 11. However, in design and technology, teaching was found to be better in the younger age group. This is due to new strategies in the curriculum design after changes in departmental leadership. In ICT, the quality of teaching and learning is better in Years 10 and 11 because the style of the course motivates the students to learn more effectively.
33. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this is used well to extend and challenge students. This is a strong feature in English, music and modern foreign languages. Students quickly develop their own knowledge and understanding of these subjects.
34. Lessons are planned well and incorporate a good range of activities. Where appropriate, careful attention is given to the guidance in the National Strategies for Years 7 to 9 for teaching styles. The strong emphasis in the college on developing effective learning appropriate to the needs of all students, especially those from different ethnic backgrounds, is highly noticeable in lesson planning. There are good procedures within departments generally to match the work to the levels of attainment of the students.
35. Basic skills are taught well in most subject areas. Teachers are aware of the need to take every opportunity to extend the literacy of students, for example in extended writing, or reading aloud in class. There is good development of oral skills in mathematics. ICT is used increasingly to enrich learning, though use is limited for control and measurement in design and technology, and science. However, there are many very good applications, for example in music.

36. Teachers use a wide variety of techniques to develop learning. Skilful questioning is used well in some subjects, such as religious education and mathematics, to assess students' understanding and ensure that they are all included in discussion. Questioning is not as effective in design and technology, ICT, English or history. A good range of practical work is undertaken in science, although there is fairly limited open investigation.
37. The quality of ongoing assessment is good in many subjects. There are inconsistencies, however, in the quality of marking, and in the use of assessment data. Teachers have a considerable amount of information at their disposal, and use this to different extents to identify the progress made by students. Time is allocated to ensure that students are aware of their targets for improvement. Although the college has a clear policy and produces very detailed performance data analyses, there are inconsistencies in departmental practice.
38. Relationships formed between teachers and students contribute significantly to learning. Students are responsive and willing to ask questions, which builds their confidence. Relationships between ethnic groups are harmonious, and teachers encourage students to work closely together. This strength within the teaching in the college is particularly effective in history, English and mathematics.
39. Teachers in general have high expectations of the level of work and effort that should be made by students. This shows, for example, in the good achievement that is made by higher-attaining students in Years 7 to 9, in reaching the higher National Curriculum levels in mathematics and English. The students respond well and the pace of learning; students' interest and concentration are raised. The consistency of high expectations from many teachers is a strength of this college.
40. Overall, teaching resources are used well. They are used particularly well in applications of ICT in lessons and science activities, although the involvement of students in class demonstrations is not as good as it might be. ICT resources are used particularly well in the teaching of modern foreign languages and music. The learning resources in design and technology are not used sufficiently well and this has an effect on progress, particularly in Years 10 and 11.
41. Homework is variable in quantity and quality. In subjects such as modern foreign languages it is used very effectively, but in others, for example religious education, there is not enough opportunity to extend students' learning. It is good in mathematics and also in geography, history and ICT in Years 10 and 11. Elsewhere, homework is satisfactory.
42. Teaching of students with special educational needs in both mainstream classes and in the smaller withdrawn classes is good, sometimes very good. Teachers are very well prepared, understand the learning needs of students and the best way for students to make progress. Classroom support is used to good effect where learning support assistants provide general support for all students who require it, although there is a significant number of classes with relatively high numbers of students with special educational needs, which would benefit from additional support.
43. Individualised support for students with statements of special need is provided for all who need it and is very effective. The committed and knowledgeable special educational needs teachers prepare interesting and stimulating lessons for targeted groups and individuals which enable students to make progress, particularly in the literacy skills of reading, speaking, the use of dictionaries and listening skills.

44. All teachers are aware of those students who have been identified as gifted and talented at the college. In virtually all subjects teachers accommodate the needs and aspirations of these students by planning a range of activities with different levels of challenge. As a consequence, the students achieve very well in lessons. Additional lessons are provided after school, and classes or activities are held in the holidays. However, in religious education there is insufficient planning of work to match the needs of the higher-attaining students and they are not being stretched as much as they ought to be.

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

Quality and range of curricular opportunities

45. The college has established a broad and diverse curriculum, which meets the needs of most of its students. Students at all levels of attainment have equality of access and opportunity, including those who are identified as gifted and talented. The languages department provides an extensive range of courses; all students take two languages throughout the school. As a Specialist Language College the curriculum is enriched by the range of language courses offered and the comprehensive nature of the international links which have been nurtured to enhance teaching and learning in college. In the successful music department the wide range of activities is enhanced by very good use of ICT and the impressive orchestra continues to flourish. Successful partnerships are found with a wide range of organisations within the local community including the quality and range of 'work experience' placements with the local business community.
46. There is a very comprehensive range of extra-curricular activities open to all students and arrangements are made to facilitate attendance after college. The use of whole days for innovative curriculum initiatives is effective. Students benefit from the very large number and wide range of extra-curricular activities during the school term and in holidays, including visits in the UK and abroad. The college invests a great deal in promoting the benefits of these successful activities. The highly successful college orchestra contains a number of very talented musicians. Several students are involved in promoting the annual Leicester Book of the Year Award, which promotes local authors.
47. The college also runs a number of very well attended 'twilight' clubs for the more able students, which include classes in Italian, French, science, young engineers, chess and GCSE graphic products. In mathematics a number of students will be entering their GCSE examination early, which will allow them to begin studying for higher qualifications in Year 11. In preparation for entry to higher education, many students have taken part in the Leicester University Shadowing Scheme and taken the opportunity of visiting other universities including Cambridge and Oxford.
48. The college makes good, effective use of 'collapsed days' where the timetable is suspended to pursue whole-school initiatives, for example Language Awareness Day, Literacy Day, World-On-Line Day. Partnerships and links with the local community are strong. The site is used for further education activities after school and by adults and under fives during the day. Very successful links are maintained with the local business community with regard to work placements for students during the well-planned and co-ordinated provision. Provision for careers education is very good. In Year 8 students use the 'Real Game' decision-making activities. In Year 9 there is good guidance for students in relation to their option choices. In Years 10 and 11

students take a certificated course called the Work Related Achievement Programme (WRAP), which includes work experience.

49. Curriculum provision for students with special educational needs is good with all students having access, where appropriate, to National Curriculum subjects. A number of students are disapplied from certain subjects and those who are not studying English literature receive additional support for the English language GCSE and have had success in alternative literacy examinations. Students also receive additional support where needed for their GCSE coursework. There is, however, a need to find more time for subject staff to liaise more closely with special educational needs teachers and learning support assistants to ensure that lesson content is appropriately planned and covered for all students. Statutory requirements are met for those students with statements of special need.
50. Curriculum provision for gifted and talented students is very good with a range of academic and non-academic initiatives provided for these students outside the main college curriculum. These include working with the local further and higher education institutions on a number of projects including a highly successful botanic science simulation project, which has now been extended to include all Year 8 students. Many students attend the gifted and talented summer schools, which cover a range of specialist teaching and coaching sessions including those in art and rugby. Art students have been involved in producing banners to promote local art and music events using advanced photographic technology.
51. Contributions made by the community to students' learning are excellent. Teachers and managers at the college have been very proactive in establishing and maintaining these links. Links with the Race Equality Council were established initially for pastoral support, and have now been extended to form a collaborative project to produce materials for anti-racist lessons within the personal, social and health education programme. There are contributions from African-Caribbean and Bengali community groups which are being used to involve parents and other community partners in attempts to raise students' achievement.
52. Links with feeder primary schools and post-16 institutions are very effective. Good use is made of the information from primary schools to place students in registration groups. The Key Stage 3 co-ordinator visits all feeder schools initially. The special educational needs co-ordinator, form teachers and core subject teachers make subsequent visits to schools providing over 20 students. All new students attend taster days when they meet prefects, buddies and learning mentors, if appropriate, as well as form teachers and some subject teachers. This is all done to ensure that transfer to the college is as efficient as possible.
53. Similarly, transfer to post-16 institutions is helped by providing students with details of their accomplishments and ambitions through the careers element of the personal, social and health education programme. Students are equipped with a career action plan and a comprehensive portfolio of achievement to inform their decisions before attending the careers conference where post-16 institutions make presentations. Students are prepared for this conference and accompanied by form tutors and learning support assistants. A further conference for students with special educational needs is also attended if necessary and providers of modern apprenticeships are invited to speak to groups.

54. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good. It is delivered as a discrete subject within the timetable, and is taught by form teachers with an additional specialist lesson in Key Stage 4. The programme builds over time and gives all students access to lessons on healthy living, dealing with their emotions, sexual matters, rights and responsibilities, and preparation for work. The planned programme is very thorough, providing students with a pertinent range of stimulating and challenging activities, although the monitoring of the programme lacks consistency. Schemes of work give teachers a clear and planned structure. Assessment systems are in place and, in most years, show what the students have actually learned. The programme is well developed and ensures that all students can access all the opportunities offered.
55. The provision for improving students' literacy skills is good in all subject areas. The college's literacy co-ordinator has undertaken extensive work to organise training for her colleagues and has worked with subject representatives to monitor and provide for those students who need support, particularly in developing their reading skills. The work is in progress and the teaching of literacy skills continues as a priority for further development.
56. The college has recently adopted a policy on the teaching of numeracy. This contains a great deal of practical advice for teachers of all subjects. The policy is complemented by a useful 'toolkit', which informs teachers of the best way to teach certain topics, such as drawing graphs. A group of teachers, drawn from a wide range of subjects, is developing the approach to the teaching of numerical skills throughout the college. They organised a training day at which all teachers were made aware of how they can develop students' numerical skills.
57. Many of the main areas for improvement in the curriculum are identified in the college development plan. It is noted that provision for citizenship is not clearly identified in all years. There is currently limited vocational provision in Years 10 and 11, but more courses are planned. The physical education curriculum is constrained by limitations in accommodation.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

58. The college makes very good provision for the personal development of its students, overall. The special multicultural ethos of the school goes beyond accommodating difference to celebrating diversity in a way that fosters mutual respect and allows all students to realise their potential. The school has a well-formulated policy for promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It found expression in the week's assemblies, which rejected the notion of 'the average child', for the idea that each human being is made of stardust, from which carbon is derived.
59. Spiritual education is good, now that proper provision has been made for religious education in Years 10 and 11, including the opportunity for students to study their own faith, as an option, alongside the core study of Christian perspectives on moral issues. A local Imam leads Friday prayers for Muslim students. Opportunities for students to reflect on what they are learning and its relevance to questions of meaning and purpose in life arise in art, geography and modern foreign languages, but there is scope for developing students' spirituality in the majority of subjects, along the lines indicated in college policy.

60. Provision for moral development is very good. College assemblies, themes for the week and the code of conduct communicate effectively the college's values regarding honesty, fairness, justice and respect for truth. The multiracial composition of the staff provides good role models for the different ethnic groups among the students. The principle of equal opportunity is upheld in all aspects of college life and is reflected in the multicultural displays around the college. The harmonious relationships among the diverse groups of students testify to the moral strength of the college community. Tutors guide their tutor groups throughout their college career, delivering the personal and social education programme, which has a strong element of moral education. Most subjects develop students' ability to discern right from wrong through rational discussion of moral issues.
61. Students receive very good social education across most subjects and in personal and social education, and through belonging to a college community, which is characterised by the quality of its caring relationships. Support for vulnerable students is strong, such as the achievement group's work with underachieving students. The wide range of clubs and activities after school, including fieldwork and residential visits, add to students' opportunities to develop their social skills. Similarly, collaboration within group activities in lessons is a regular feature in many subjects. The school gives students various responsibilities as prefects, 'buddies' to junior students, peer mentors and tour guides on open evenings. Students have a voice in college affairs through their elected student council, which also has good links with the local community. The council directs students' fund-raising for charities on non-uniform days and special events.
62. There is a rich provision for students' cultural development in this multicultural college, which takes full advantage of the diverse cultures in its midst and uses its language college status to develop students' appreciation of the international cultural scene. The college has excellent international links and exchanges that raise students' global awareness and enhance their cultural development. Music is particularly strong among the performing arts and the large college orchestra has visited Israel, Germany and Slovakia. Regular visits to theatres, art galleries and museums enrich the curriculum in English, art and humanities. Equally, a full programme of extra-curricular clubs and activities encourages students to develop their expertise in sports, music, art, foreign languages, science and computing.

HOW WELL DOES THE COLLEGE CARE FOR ITS STUDENTS?

Care for students

63. Pastoral care is good, with good monitoring of academic performance and personal development and very good educational and personal support and guidance. This is similar to the position at the last inspection.
64. All the expected safety precautions are in place and detailed reviews of aspects of safety are continually taking place. Risk assessments are made on a regular basis. In design and technology some safety lapses were observed during the inspection, implying that routine safety inspections are insufficiently rigorous, because the lapses were longstanding situations resulting from a reorganisation. The composition of safety inspection teams is in need of review.
65. Child protection procedures are very good. In recounting details of current concerns, the nominated person demonstrated sensitivity and commitment to achieving thorough protection of students. There are several students looked after other than at home, and some of these have made excellent progress due to the extra attention that they have

received. Great emphasis is placed on referring cases of suspected child abuse to a very senior level and, as a consequence, staff are not trained how to respond, but are trained not to interfere and refer if a student starts to reveal details of an abuse. Occasions may arise where immediate referral is impossible and some guidance would be beneficial.

66. Welfare is very good. There is a staffed medical room offering advice as well as medical attention to students. Students may seek advice on personal as well as college matters from any teacher in the college. There is a number of first aiders in the college to ensure good support in case of need. Healthy living is promoted through lessons in different subjects. Breakfast is available in the college to ensure a high level of personal care for all students.
67. The procedures for improving attendance are good. A system is in place to contact selected parents on the first day of absence if no message has been received. A home/college liaison officer is employed to encourage attendance. She speaks four of the Asian languages commonly encountered among parents and helps the education welfare officer in promoting attendance. In practice she helps many parents to overcome problems that may be related to the difficulty of getting their children to college. Prizes are given for good attendance and classes are made aware of their attendance performance every week.
68. There are very good procedures for improving behaviour. Very high expectations coupled with very good relationships are the basis, backed up by clear rules, a precise chain of consequences if sanctions are necessary and a thorough recording and analysis of behavioural transgressions. Where students have not reached the maturity to comply well with the policy, other initiatives are used, such as anger management, student support plans or extended work experience and a tailored curriculum. These procedures are backed up by the promotion of the caring and civilised ethos of the college by management and teachers. This is also the route to eliminating harassment and oppressive behaviour.
69. Form tutors provide good support for students academically. Regular interviews are held with the student's tutor to look at the workbooks and diary, discuss academic progress and, where available, the results of regular testing in lessons. There is scope for the information available to tutors to be considerably increased, especially for younger students.
70. There are good procedures for encouraging students' personal development through the tutor system and the interest shown by heads of year and tutors in the way their charges are maturing. All information about a student's behaviour is passed through the tutor, and tutors are able to have a good picture of the student's personal development. Where appropriate, more detailed reporting on a student's performance is put in place. Senior management and heads of year are very approachable and students appreciate this.
71. Students with special educational needs work in an environment where they feel safe and valued for their efforts but where they are expected to work hard to achieve the targets set by teachers. The college successfully caters for a range of learning needs but has a particular strength in the identification of and support for students with dyslexia, providing expert guidance to members of staff. The college has also successfully integrated a student with severe visual impairment and, as part of an arrangement with a local special school, caters for some of their students to attend classes at the college, for example in design and technology and physical education.

Assessment

72. The arrangements that the college has created for assessing students' attainment and progress are good. A thorough audit of assessment practices across the college has been carried out. This process uncovered disparity across departments, both in terms of assessment methods and also in the way that criteria were used. Based upon this information, a new assessment policy was introduced in September 2002, which aimed to create a coherent strategy that was derived from best practice in individual departments.
73. This current assessment model applies to the whole college and all relevant assessment material is contained in one Assessment Policy and Guidance Document. Monitoring of progress made by students in Years 7 to 9 is based upon Standard Attainment Tests (SATs) information from the primary schools, reading ages and Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs). These tests provide the college with basic information about students and help to identify those with particular weaknesses in certain areas.
74. The SATs take place in Year 9 and these, combined with teacher assessment data, provide useful information about progress made by students entering Year 10 and are used to predict performance in the GCSE examinations. In Years 10 and 11, use is made of SAT and CAT levels to generate predicted grades. This information is stored in a form tutor's file, one for each student, and each week one hour is set aside for pastoral time to enable the form tutor to discuss the content of this file with each individual student. This process ensures that students whose performance has deteriorated can be quickly identified.
75. The college has also devised a standard called 'The Performance Measure', which enables student achievement in Years 10 and 11 to be tracked and monitored. At the beginning of Year 10, SAT results are analysed and the expected grade for each of the subjects is calculated using standard formulae.
76. The college systems for using assessment information to guide its planning are good overall. Target setting is designed to help students to raise the standard of their work and improve performance by setting realistic and appropriate targets. Form tutors work with individual students during the weekly pastoral period to assist them in setting these targets. Students are encouraged to identify targets that are based upon their assessment of their own performance.
77. Individual departments are required to produce an assessment policy that clearly shows how assessment is to be carried out. There is inconsistency in the use of college procedures in departments. In some subject areas such as modern foreign languages and science, for example, the data used tends to be department based and value-added data is not available. In English, students undertake a series of common assessments and are given a level. Seven or eight of these are carried out in any one year. These are recorded and so value added can be tracked. All students have been given a copy of the National Curriculum levels written in language that they can understand. This system runs alongside the college's grading system for attainment, which leads to unnecessary duplication.

78. Assessment procedures for students with special educational needs are appropriate and rigorous. A huge range of data is collected from CAT scores, but at present there is no real analysis of value added making use of hard, objective data. It is clear, therefore, that these parallel systems have resulted in some degree of confusion and led to inconsistency in assessment procedures in and across departments. Overall the use of these assessment systems to guide planning and to set targets is good, but to be wholly effective they must be applied with much greater rigour and consistency across all departments in the college.
79. The college collects an impressive amount of relevant data on students with special educational needs. This now needs to be used to provide an effective and detailed assessment of progress, in terms of subject National Curriculum levels, GCSE results and other measures, to show individual progress over time and for these specific groups of students at the college.
80. Individual education plans are now being restructured into a more appropriate, meaningful format with the previous ones, which included inappropriate, generic targets, being phased out. This process has begun with Year 7, although it must now be a priority to engage in the same process for those with statements regardless of year. As prescribed in the Year 7 individual education plans, (IEPs), student targets are specific and, importantly for students, focused on clear, simple and measurable outcomes. In addition, the learning support department needs to continue to work closely with subject departments so as to include, where appropriate, relevant subject-specific targets.
81. As with other areas, the college collects an impressive amount of relevant data on gifted and talented students. Students are identified in Year 7 using both quantitative and qualitative measures, for example using both CATs and teacher recommendations. The college would benefit from developing a format and framework which clearly measures and evaluates the success of the many excellent initiatives undertaken at the college.

HOW WELL DOES THE COLLEGE WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

82. Partnership with parents is generally good, but some very good features are offset by a shortfall in information to parents on students' academic progress.
83. As demonstrated by the extent of oversubscription for entry, parents value highly the education at the college. In response to questionnaires they singled out for approval its approachability, its high expectations, the progress made, the management, the activities outside lessons and the contentment of their children with their college. Thirty per cent of the parents who answered the questionnaire complained that they were not well informed about how their children were getting on, and the inspection team agrees with that criticism. In some classes parents meet their children's teachers for the first time for a planned discussion at the end of the summer term. Only in Years 7 and 11 are parents informed of progress more than once a year. No targets and test results are made available to parents and the relevant parts of the planners are not filled in. Parents of students who are performing badly receive more information.
84. Overall, the information provided for parents is good. The format of the annual reports on their children's progress is good, National Curriculum levels are quoted, targets are given, personal development assessed, the number of merits and referrals reported and the development of a number of skills is also assessed. The best reports are very good. However, too often comments and targets are insufficiently incisive and the

detail of progress on specific knowledge, understanding and skills is not sufficient for parents to know how well students are doing in subjects.

85. The Governors' Annual Report fulfils the requirements in providing information about the college, but is a missed opportunity to tell the local community about the strengths and achievements. The prospectus is a first-class document, giving a clear and accurate view of the college. There are very good newsletters. These documents are offered with a translation service for the four Asian languages most commonly spoken by parents.
86. There is only one progress meeting per year, usually during the summer term. There are other useful evenings on choices for GCSE, the curriculum and the results of the mock GCSE examinations. There is an open evening and open day. Staff with language skills assist communication at these meetings. The college contacts parents by telephone with both good and bad news. Parents are invited in to discuss problems and help to plan further action. They are involved in the regular reviews of student support plans and individual education plans. Parents are given an opportunity to learn how to help their children with their work at home. Parents are welcome at the school and are often seen even if they arrive without an appointment.
87. Parents' contribution to their children's education is good. They help with projects and support homework. They attend events and support progress meetings, over two-thirds attending. There is good support for the prizegiving and some parents sponsor prizes. Parents have been trained to help with reading and to accompany college trips. The music and art departments have strong links with parents, who assist in various ways.
88. Induction procedures for new students are effective and both students and parents are made to feel welcome.
89. The special educational needs department works closely with parents, ensuring that they are fully involved in identifying needs and in the process of providing appropriate support for students. Parents are invited to attend meetings to discuss progress and to be involved in the development of individual education plans and in the setting of targets.
90. Parents are very pleased with the provision for gifted and talented students.

HOW WELL IS THE COLLEGE LED AND MANAGED?

91. The quality of the leadership and management of the college is very good. The principal and his senior team share a very clear vision for raising achievement and developing the college. The team work well together, and have clearly defined responsibilities, for which they are accountable.
92. The college undertakes to evaluate very closely its own performance and actively seeks ways to improve all aspects of the provision. Information is of the highest quality and supports staff extremely well. Very good analysis of performance data is carried out and careful evaluation is used to influence planning and development initiatives.

93. Departmental reviews are carried out thoroughly. Careful records through senior management departmental link arrangements and regular meetings ensure that the process is effective. Monitoring of departments is rigorous. However, monitoring of teaching within departments lacks the same level of rigour. Heads of department are generally aware of colleagues' strengths and areas for improvement, but there is insufficient focus and rigour on the evaluation of skills needed to raise the quality of teaching and achievement even further. Nevertheless, senior staff are highly committed to raising the quality of teaching and sharing good practice.
94. Governors are supportive and contribute actively to the development of the college. They are also committed to raising achievement and regularly monitor all areas of the development plan. Governors scrutinise in detail all proposals, and carefully monitor, for example, finances and budgets. Governors consider carefully initiatives proposed by the senior management but do not come forward proactively enough with their own proposals for development. Most governors are regularly in college and are reasonably aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the provision. Committees are well run and much of the work of the governing body is devolved to these groups.
95. The leadership and management of departments are mainly good. There is a shared commitment to improvement, good teamwork and involvement of staff that is promoted by the clearly delegated responsibilities given to departments. All departments have well-conceived development plans that relate to the whole-college improvement plan. Work in departments reflects the college aims well. Assessment procedures are more inconsistent, with some departments making good use of whole-college data, value-added analysis and targets, and others valuing more their experience and departmental procedures in tracking the progress of students. Leadership and management are very good in science and music and excellent in modern foreign languages. They are good in almost every subject area. The leadership of the language college is excellent and has led to many initiatives in this subject area.
96. Provision for special educational needs is well led and managed. The learning support manager, appointed in January 2002, has made extensive improvements to the provision for students with special educational needs at the college. Identification procedures, record keeping and the deployment of support is now robust and well founded on the appropriate special needs of students. Working closely with the lead learning support assistant, whose administration of the department is excellent, and with the head of the Curriculum Support Unit, she ensures that support is comprehensive and appropriately targeted.
97. The learning support assistants provide very good support in lessons and share the caring but firm approach to students and their work. They are effectively managed and appropriate training is provided for them, for example in the support of students with hearing impairment. However, there are still not enough to support the learning needs of all departments who would wish to use additional support. In addition, there are as yet no formal procedures in place for formally reviewing, monitoring and evaluating their effectiveness as part of the process of their continuing professional development. The regular informal and formal meetings between full-time staff and assistants ensure that problems and issues can be aired quickly and dealt with effectively.
98. The inspirational gifted and talented co-ordinator provides very good leadership in this area by providing expert guidance on identifying, supporting and challenging the more able students. She works closely with subject staff, organising and promoting a range of academic and non-academic activities. Staff and parents are regularly updated on what is being provided or planned for gifted and talented students and in ensuring that

staff are appropriately trained. She recognises that the next major activity is to review and evaluate the success or otherwise of each of the individual initiatives which are now running at the college.

99. The college is funded above the average level. Spending is well planned to support the college's improvement plan and so financial resources are used well to raise achievement. The governing body's finance committee has a knowledgeable and experienced chairman. He scrutinises plans carefully and makes a valued input, such as advising management to include plans for replacement when purchasing computers. The governing body monitors the financial performance of the college well but is not involved at a sufficiently early stage of the planning.
100. Finances are well managed by a suitably qualified business manager. He ensures that spending is used for the intended purpose and has good procedures for monitoring expenditure. He works closely with the vice-principal responsible for finances, ensuring that the educational needs of the college are fulfilled. Regular reports on spending are made to the governing body. All comments from the most recent auditor's report have been acted upon. The college planned well for recent unavoidable increases in spending so that provision was maintained. Very good use is made of the many additional grants received, such as those for ethnic minority students, as a Language College and under 'Excellence in Cities', to make additional provision for gifted and talented students. However, the college is dependent upon these sources of income and has not made contingency plans should these income streams cease.
101. The college complies well with the principles of 'best value'. It has conducted a detailed comparison of expenditure with a similar, local school. It conducts consultations, one example being when students were asked their views on the provision in mathematics. The college has taken on the management of catering which has led to generation of income for the college with additional benefits such as 'food days'. Very recently, it has taken on the management of cleaning.
102. The overall provision for learning resources is satisfactory. Whilst the college has allocated significant resources to ICT since the last inspection, provision just meets the national average ratio of computers to students. ICT provision in music is excellent. Resource provision in modern foreign languages is very good, with multimedia and interactive technology promoting higher standards of achievement. Teacher produced resources are good; they are a particular strength in geography. However, learning resources in design and technology are inadequate and hinder the raising of achievement. The library, although small in floor area, effectively promotes higher levels of literacy. Resources for special educational needs are good and the department is making effective use of the computer software to improve students' literacy skills.
103. The provision of teaching staff is good overall. Specialist teachers teach almost all lessons. There are sufficient teaching staff for students with special educational needs, but there are not enough learning support assistants to provide sufficient support for the number of students who do not have statements of special need but who require such support. There is not enough technical support for food technology. The higher-than-average number of administrative staff provides very good support for teachers. The arrangements for the professional development of all staff are good, and have contributed to an improvement in teaching quality. The college makes effective use of its own staff expertise to share good practice. There is very good support for teachers new to teaching and for teachers in training.

104. The accommodation provided for some subject areas is unsatisfactory. The college has tried hard to comply with the issues raised in the last report. Some upgrading and refurbishment has been done and concerns relating to ceramics have been satisfactorily resolved. Music rooms, criticized in the previous report, have been included elsewhere in the building; this is also an improvement, although soundproofing is not sufficient to combat the cross-contamination of noise across adjacent rooms. Where partitions have been introduced to overcome previous open- plan areas and rooms are suited and subject specific, such as in English, religious education and art, provision is good. The purpose-built modern foreign language and community language block is a very good facility but the popularity of courses and the success of the overall scheme are already causing strains on the accommodation. Arrangements in these subjects make sharing of resources and communication between teachers easier.
105. The college utilises its accommodation fully and managers are constantly manipulating space looking for possibilities of extra accommodation; for example, in physical education a small room has been provided as a result of relocating music. This room is unsuitable for much practical use because of a pillar which divides the room and offers a potential hazard. This new area would provide a much needed theory room for physical education for students on the examination course. Despite this innovation and deployment of college funds and the dedication of a good team of on-site workers, as well as constant lobbying to improve provision of suitable accommodation, some subject areas mentioned in the last report remain unsatisfactory or poor and standards are affected. This is detrimental to students' learning in some subjects. For example, progress in some National Curriculum physical education indoor lessons is affected and the problem is exacerbated by the time taken to walk to community facilities, ensuring loss of teaching time to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum.
106. The restricted space in physical education reduces the number of activities that can be offered in curricular and extra-curricular time; this is affecting standards. Health and safety factors remain within design and technology where no improvement has taken place and provision is now poor. Science laboratory teaching and planning can be affected by cramped conditions in four of the nine laboratories available; this is unsatisfactory. Provision for ICT is unsatisfactory because of cramped conditions and the unspecialised nature of stations.
107. Accommodation for special educational needs is unsatisfactory. Students are taught in the library. This can be disruptive to other users and distracting to students with special educational needs; this is unsatisfactory. There are no dedicated teaching rooms for classes and the accommodation used is shared with the library and careers. However, the Curriculum Support Unit is relatively spacious and provides a quiet and relaxing environment for students who work there.
108. The library is too small for the number of students and courses in the school. There is little room for computer stations and research is impeded. Other classes in some subject areas are not always taught in designated rooms, causing inconvenience for teachers and constant movement of equipment. For example, in geography, students using the mobile classroom do not have equal access to displays in the humanities area. Some classrooms are small, allowing poor circulation for students and ventilation and overheating difficulties in hot weather, for example in mathematics. These rooms have to be vacated in such conditions, causing further strain on site facilities. Access to some classrooms is through other classrooms, with the potential to cause some disruption, for example in religious education. Younger students complain of access to and numbers of toilet facilities. The college makes the best use

of most of the accommodation available but significant weaknesses remain due to the increase in student numbers since the college was built. At lunchtime, the hall area, which is used as a canteen, becomes very crowded and it is not large enough to accommodate all students who wish to sit and eat their lunch. The college has reorganised its lunchtime arrangements to overcome this problem, reducing the opportunities for extra-curricular opportunities.

109. At change of lessons stairs and corridors become congested, and although students are well supervised, and for the most part behave sensibly in the confined spaces, it is difficult to move easily in some areas. Some action has been taken to give better access for the physically impaired and there is a lift in the new language area; discussions with the local authority to improve access elsewhere are taking place.

WHAT SHOULD THE COLLEGE DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

110. In order to raise standards the governors, principal and senior staff should:

- (1) Provide more extensive information to parents on the progress of their children by
 - Bringing forward consultation evenings to the autumn term;
 - Extending the use of interim reports;
 - Notifying parents of students' main targets and assessments, possibly by means of the planner;
 - Improving the incisiveness of comments in reports.(Paragraphs: 84, 85, 86)

- (2) Improve the consistency in the monitoring of teaching and use of assessment data within departments by:
 - Providing further training and support for heads of department in monitoring and evaluating teaching, and in the analysis of performance data;
 - Sharing the good practice that exists more widely across departments.(Paragraphs: 93, 95)

- (3) Provide more effective teaching of citizenship in Years 7 to 9 by:
 - Identifying the aims of citizenship in departmental planning;
 - Ensuring that adequate time is allocated to fully implement the subject.(Paragraphs: 172, 174, 176)

- (4) Improve the balance in the curriculum for vocational and academic courses to suit the needs of all students by:
 - Establishing the level of demand from students and parents for vocational courses;
 - Reviewing the options in Years 10 and 11.(Paragraph: 57)

- (5) Improve accommodation for the teaching of physical education and design and technology by:
 - Monitoring and evaluating the impact of the unsatisfactory accommodation on the standards of achievement in the identified areas;
 - Address, as a matter of urgency, the health and safety issues identified in the design and technology accommodation areas;
 - Review the arrangements for regular health and safety inspection;
 - Seek to ensure that appropriate funding is made available to secure adequate accommodation.(Paragraphs: 104, 105, 184, 239)

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

Specialist college status in modern foreign languages and internationalism

111. During the four years since first being awarded specialist college status, the language college has had a major, positive influence upon attainment in modern foreign languages and upon the development of a very strong international dimension in the college.
112. The leadership of the language college with regard to both the language learning and to the international focus is very good. All of the major targets in the first phase were successfully achieved. The bid for redesignation as a language college for a further four years was recently accepted. There is a strong, continuing commitment to succeed in the second phase on both fronts. The targets are well thought out, and achievable yet challenging.
113. Attainment in modern foreign languages at GCSE has improved. Results are now well above the national average. At the end of Year 9, the percentage of students working at Level 5 and higher has increased to 55 per cent, which is above the national average.
114. Eight languages, French, German, Gujarati, Italian, Japanese, Punjabi and Spanish, are taught in the college curriculum. All students study French in Year 7, then an additional language is chosen from German, Gujarati, Punjabi or Spanish in Years 8 and 9. Almost all students study two languages in Years 10 and 11. In addition to GCSE courses, the college offers courses in Italian and Japanese leading to the Certificate in Business Language Competence. A group of students in Year 9 studies Italian out of school hours.
115. There is a purpose-built block where the modern foreign languages department is based. It has 10 classrooms, including one room equipped with 24, networked, computers. The use of ICT is firmly embedded in the teaching of modern foreign languages in the college. Its success has been a major contributory factor in the growth of the subject.
116. High quality accommodation, enhanced by attractive displays, many of which celebrate the students' successful achievement, creates an environment conducive to effective learning and positive attitudes.
117. The impact of language college status is having a beneficial impact also on the college's primary school feeders and partner schools in the LEA. Teachers from the college run an after-school language club in the partner primary schools. All Year 6 students took part in an intensive language day or a World-On-Line Day in the language centre. The response from the primary schools has been very positive.
118. Teachers at Judgemeanow have provided tailor-made training in language teaching to schools across the LEA. The college works closely with Leicester Adult Education College and runs courses in nine foreign languages as part of its community education provision.
119. The effects of the development of an international dimension are far-reaching. Contacts and links with students and others in a very wide range of cultures in various parts of the world make an important contribution to the global awareness and cultural development of Judgemeanow students. International visitors have been received from many parts of the world, including Jordan, Brazil and Germany to examine good

practice and to work with college students. A Japanese visitor worked for six months with students on Japanese language and culture, music, calligraphy and art. There have been international exchanges involving college staff to Europe, North America, Australia and Japan to investigate such matters as cultural exchanges, management techniques, immersion courses, and language teaching developments.

120. Students have taken part in a Slovakian music exchange. Twenty-five students and three teachers studied Slovakian over a period of 12 months and spent two weeks in Bratislava participating in joint performances with the Slovaks. Nicaraguan students worked with Judgemeanow students to produce murals and develop Spanish language skills. The students also took part in an international camp focusing on a sustainability project. There are exchanges with schools in France and Germany. All Year 8 students make a visit to Boulogne. Groups of students have taken part in video conferencing with students in France.

Community links

121. The college makes excellent use of the community to enhance students' learning. These links support many aspects of the students' personal, social and academic education. Teachers and managers at the college have taken the initiative in establishing and maintaining these links. Input from the Police, National Health Service, Fire Service and Community Associations contributes to the personal, social and health education programme.
122. The college facilities are used to provide educational opportunities for the community and offer a large range of adult courses, youth provision and crèche facilities for three days a week. Although much of this is outside 'school hours', students within the college are used to the presence of community groups, including adults, disabled people and parents with under-five children, being on site. Provision of adult education is co-ordinated with Leicester Adult Education College and other language providers to ensure a coherent programme across the city. The site and facilities are used to provide a venue for adults with special educational needs for five weeks during the summer recess. This is organised in conjunction with Social Services. Youth work provision is set up for students attending other schools and colleges in the city.
123. The college maintains close links with its community of feeder primary schools and other educational institutions through its language college status and provides primary language clubs in French, Punjabi and Gujarati. It provides intensive language training for its partner primary school staff. The college also uses its facilities to support these partner primary schools with ICT training and technical help. The college offers training for language teaching across the LEA and offers intensive language days for gifted and talented students from across the LEA. The college hosts World-On-Line Day for partner primary institutions and Ashfield Special School.
124. The college works closely with training providers, including universities, in initial teacher training in providing placements for trainees, and in providing training sessions for university PGCE students on primary liaison. Judgemeanow students also benefit directly from these links, with participation in medical science shadowing visits to Leicester University Medical School, university experience days at DeMontfort University and gifted and talented students have visited several Oxford colleges.

125. Links with the wider community are also beneficial. Work with the Race Equality Council was developed initially for pastoral support, and has now been extended to look at a collaborative project to produce materials for anti-racism lessons within the personal, social and health education programme. There are contributions from African-Caribbean and Bengali community groups, which are being used to involve parents and other community partners in attempts to raise students' achievement.
126. With the college being separate from its catchment area, staff from the college maintain a presence in the area at key times of day in order to foster relationships with the local community. Staff are careful to be constructive in developing links with the local community and have been instrumental in setting up cycle routes to and from the college to encourage more staff and students to cycle to college. College council representatives have met with members of Community Action for Evington, the local village, to discuss local issues about litter, road safety and the environment. Students have had the opportunity to contribute to being a lobbying/pressure group and to take action to improve the local environment.
127. Local business industry contributes to ensuring work experience for all Year 11 students and to providing extended placements for Future Pathways students. Year 10 students work with 20 local industrialists on the Making Opportunities conference.

English as an additional language

128. Overall, the quality of provision for students with English as an additional language is very good.
129. The students who speak English as an additional language come from a wide range of ethnic groups. The most widely spoken community languages are Gujarati, Punjabi, Bengali and Kutchi. There are a small number of refugee students. For example, there are a few Somali from The Netherlands whose main language is Dutch. The large majority of these students are fluent in most aspects of the use of English, although they still need support in the use and understanding of very formal writing or complex words. There are very few students at the beginning or developing stages of learning English; most are consolidating their literacy skills.
130. Overall, the standards reached by students who speak English as an additional language are not significantly different from the standards of students in the college as a whole. All make good progress but there are variations in test and GCSE results between languages. Bengali boys do not achieve as highly as students from other language groups in the college but achieve above the national expectation for Bengali students.
131. Three key factors in the good student achievement patterns are:
- the effective college student tracking procedures and assessment analyses which are used well by teachers to meet individual learning needs
 - and, as an allied strength, the good quality of in-class support for students' learning, particularly in science and modern foreign languages
 - and, especially for Year 7 students, the Family Literacy Project initiative which, during transfer from primary school to secondary college, supports families with limited access to knowledge of how the education system works.
132. The teaching of students with English as an additional language is good in all subjects. For example, in an English Year 7 guided reading session with a mixed multi-ethnic group of six students, the teacher's sensitivity and excellent modelling of language

enabled students to make very good gains in their understanding of Shelley's poem 'Ozymandias'. Relevant links were made with the present day as, for example, in the reference to the pulling down of statues in the Iraq war. Two specialist support teachers work alongside teachers in the classroom supporting students. They make an effective contribution to students' learning. For example, in a Year 9 science revision lesson, the partnership between the subject teacher and the English as an additional language teacher enabled students to make good gains in accurately matching definitions to key words in their focus on 'Living things'. The support for students in a Year 7 French lesson was similarly effective and enhanced by the support teacher's fluency in French.

133. Students with English as an additional language respond well to teachers and relationships are good between all ethnic groups. All students are generally keen to learn. Concentration spans are good across all levels of attainment. Behaviour is generally good and learning takes place in a positive learning environment. Students feel valued. For example, less confident students attend voluntarily 'twilight' sessions with support staff at the end of the college day. Effective learning mentors who are available to support all students, including those with English as an additional language, further enhance provision.
134. An assistant principal manages support for students with English as an additional language very well. The college as a whole has achieved a positive atmosphere and welcome for students who speak different languages. They are given the confidence to ask for help and are integrated well into a harmonious community. Parents are well supported through a range of initiatives. The college has made good improvement in its provision for students with English as an additional language since the last inspection.

Community languages

135. The quality of the provision for Punjabi and Gujarati is given fully in the modern foreign languages section of Part D.
136. Overall, the provision for community languages within the modern foreign languages department is good. Standards attained in Punjabi and Gujarati by the end of Year 9 are above the national expectations. Students' achievement is very good in both languages. Standards in the most recent examinations in Punjabi at the end of Year 11 were above average and those attained in Gujarati were average. The standards of students' work seen in both Punjabi and Gujarati are above the national expectation. Their speaking and listening skills are more developed than their reading and writing skills and the standard of pronunciation is good. Students' achievement in reading and writing skills is very good in relation to their prior attainment.
137. The overall quality of teaching and learning in community languages is good. Teachers are native speakers, use the language in classes and have good subject knowledge. Lessons are generally well planned and expectations are high. Students respond very well. However, learning is not properly assessed according to the National Curriculum criteria.
138. Punjabi and Gujarati are a part of the modern foreign languages department, where the leadership and management are excellent. Teachers are fully supported and their planning and teaching are monitored by the head of department and also by the director of languages.

PART C: COLLEGE DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	144
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and students	65

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	42	73	29	0	0	0
Percentage	0	29	51	20	0	0	0

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

Information about the college's students

Students on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11
Number of students on the school's roll	1213
Number of full-time students known to be eligible for free school meals	214

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11
Number of students with statements of special educational needs	30
Number of students on the school's special educational needs register	155

English as an additional language	No of students
Number of students with English as an additional language	780

Student mobility in the last school year	No of students
Students who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	27
Students who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.2

National comparative data	7.8
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National comparative data	1.2
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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)

Number of registered students in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	119	125	244

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of students at NC level 5 and above	Boys	86	85	82
	Girls	88	84	75
	Total	174	169	157
Percentage of students at NC level 5 or above	School	72 (72)	69 (71)	64 (55)
	National	66 (64)	67 (66)	66 (66)
Percentage of students at NC level 6 or above	School	37 (41)	52 (41)	30 (22)
	National	32 (31)	45 (43)	33 (34)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of students at NC level 5 and above	Boys	72	91	67
	Girls	81	87	56
	Total	153	178	123
Percentage of students at NC level 5 or above	School	63 (56)	74 (70)	51 (54)
	National	67 (65)	70 (68)	67 (64)
Percentage of students at NC level 6 or above	School	27 (22)	43 (36)	24 (22)
	National	32 (31)	44 (42)	34 (33)

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 students in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	130	112	242

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of students achieving the standard specified	Boys	57	118	129
	Girls	63	106	109
	Total	120	224	238
Percentage of students achieving the standard specified	School	50 (47)	93 (92)	98 (98)
	National	50 (48)	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 student	School	37.5
	National	39.8

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

Vocational qualifications	Number	% A*-C
Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those students who achieved all those they studied	School	0
	National	

Ethnic background of students**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of students on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	234	11	0
White – Irish	7	0	0
White – any other White background	15	3	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	44	7	0
Mixed – White and Black African	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	34	1	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	12	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	572	21	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	59	3	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	89	9	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	88	3	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	28	5	0
Black or Black British – African	9	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	6	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	11	32	2

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	73.01
Number of students per qualified teacher	16.6

Education support staff: Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	31
Total aggregate hours worked per week	702

Deployment of teachers: Y7– Y11

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	79
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 3	25.1
Key Stage 4	23.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	3,511,738
Total expenditure	3,497,321
Expenditure per student	2,883
Balance brought forward from previous year	184,498
Balance carried forward to next year	198,915

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	22
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	32

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
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	1213
Number of questionnaires returned	304

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	44	51	3	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	40	54	4	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	49	10	2	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	51	14	3	2
The teaching is good.	33	55	6	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	23	46	24	6	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	41	48	7	2	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	37	2	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	21	53	15	5	5
The school is well led and managed.	38	49	4	1	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	53	5	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	45	9	2	8

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

From the questionnaire, parents agree that the college expects students to work hard, that students like college, that students are making good progress and that the college is helping the students to become mature and responsible. They are less in agreement that they are being kept well enough informed about students' progress, that the college works sufficiently with them, that there is the right amount of work to do at home and that there is an interesting range of activities provided outside lessons.

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

ENGLISH

Overall, the quality of provision in English is **good**.

Strengths

- Students learn well and make good progress because of the positive climate for learning in all lessons.
- The very good working relationships and students' positive attitudes to the subject contribute significantly to the above average levels of achievement.
- The development and use of high quality resources is a strength in the teaching of the subject.

Areas for development

- The standards attained by the boys in the GCSE English literature examinations are too low.
- There are a number of students who are not developing an appropriate range of writing styles by the end of Year 9.

139. The proportion of students obtaining a grade in the A*-C range in the 2002 English language GCSE examinations was broadly in line with the national averages for boys and girls. Students from all ethnic backgrounds attained the results and they represent good achievement. The most competent students and those with special educational needs also achieved well. The standards attained in English language at the time of the previous inspection have therefore been maintained. The 2002 English literature results were significantly below average in terms of attainment at grades A*-C because of the poor performance of the boys. The girls' results in the subject were similar to those of girls nationally.
140. Attainment in the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 9 was above average. The proportion of students obtaining Level 5 was average but at Level 6 it was above average. Boys and girls did equally well, as did students from the many varied backgrounds. Significantly, in comparison with their national counterparts, the boys did better than boys nationally. The results overall were well above those of similar schools and achievement was very good, when account is taken of students' prior attainment, in the national tests at the end of Year 6. The results also exceeded teachers' expectations. They were broadly similar to those obtained in mathematics but better than those in science.
141. The standard of the written work seen by the end of Year 9 is broadly average and achievement over time has been therefore good when account is taken of students' below average attainment on entry to the college. The standards were below those attained in the national tests in 2002 because of staffing difficulties, which have now been resolved. The higher standard of work produced by the girls compared to that of the boys equates to the differences seen nationally. Students from the various ethnic backgrounds are progressing equally well in developing their writing skills. All students are able to write at length fluently and with reasonable levels of accuracy and the organisation and presentation of their work is satisfactory. Although most students write well in a range of styles for various purposes, the number failing to do so is significant in some teaching groups and this is an issue for the department to address. The standard of written work seen by the end of Year 11 is also average and achievement good. This is the case for all groups, including the most competent

students and those with special educational needs. Standards are similar to those attained in the 2002 GCSE English language examinations. Students are able to write analytically and to make well-reasoned and logically presented points. This is seen in their work on John Steinbeck's 'Of Mice and Men' where they write about the economic and social difficulties of the period and use them as the setting for their analysis of the novel. As a result their writing is perceptive and carefully presented. Students are also able to adapt their writing to the readership and can write for varied purposes. Good use is made of computers for drafting and presenting such writing. The standard of work in the literature course is average and therefore higher than that attained in the 2002 English literature examinations because of improvements in the curriculum.

142. Standards of speaking and listening are in line with national averages and students are reasonably confident and articulate when speaking in groups and responding to questions. There are students, however, albeit a minority, who are not confident when called upon to speak to the whole class and whose command of standard English is limited. Students' listening skills are good and contribute significantly to how well they progress. Such skills reflect the good behaviour seen in lessons and the positive attitudes which students display to their work. Their moral and spiritual awareness is evident in the respect they show for the values and beliefs of others. Year 9, for example, learn about the moral issues explored in Shakespeare's 'Twelfth Night' and understand how they are founded on the values the characters share. Standards of reading are at expected levels across all years and students respond with interest and understanding to the increasingly challenging texts they encounter as they move through the college. The nature of the issues they meet in their reading affords many opportunities for them to develop socially and culturally. The progress students make across all years in developing the skills of reading, speaking and listening is good.
143. Overall, the standard of teaching seen during the course of the inspection was good. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of students from the varied ethnic backgrounds and give additional support to those whose mother tongue is not English. They make good provision for those students with special educational needs and there are extension work and enrichment activities for those of greater competence. The strong relationships that teachers establish in the classroom result in students learning well. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good and lesson plans contain well-formulated learning objectives. These learning objectives are not always communicated clearly in all lessons, however, and this results in a degree of confusion for students. The resources that teachers develop for students' learning are of a high quality and a great deal of care and thought has been given to creating an interesting and stimulating environment in all rooms. There is effective use of questioning to develop students' understanding and this was seen in the revision lessons with Year 11 where the questioning was rigorous and tailored to the requirements of the likely examination questions. Students are therefore being well prepared for the papers they sit. There are occasions, however, when the technique is not used to monitor students' progress in the course of a lesson. Supplementary questions are rarely used to prompt students to reflect further and to draw out extended answers and they are never used to lead a student to understand why his or her answer is incorrect. Teachers' marking is regular and supportive and students receive advice on how to improve the quality of their work. The most significant issue to address in the teaching is the need for a more consistent approach in some classes to providing opportunities for students to develop a range of writing styles by the end of Year 9. There is a marked variation in both the amount of writing done and the variety of writing attempted between classes in the same year and this lack of consistency is holding back further improvements in standards.
144. The leadership and management of the subject are good. In leadership terms, the head of department has a clear vision of how to take the subject's work forward and

this is set out in a well-formulated improvement plan. The priorities for development are appropriate and achievable. She understands the strengths of her team and manages their work well. Routine matters are very well organised and there is clear delegation of responsibilities to the department's more senior colleagues. The newly implemented assessment system is beginning to work well and enables teachers to monitor and evaluate students' progress in a systematic way. Lessons are observed on a formal basis and teachers regularly discuss ways to share good practice and improve provision. Teachers have done a great deal to implement the National Strategies for raising standards and as a result students have made good progress in developing their literacy skills because of the effectiveness of the provision. Teachers have also ensured that there is an extensive extra-curricular programme in place for students to develop their understanding and enjoyment of the subject. There has been good improvement since the last inspection in terms of the standards attained in the national tests at the end of Year 9 and the ability of teachers to maintain boys' GCSE English language results at a level above that of their national counterparts. The department is in a strong position to improve further on the already good provision.

MATHEMATICS

Overall, the quality of provision in mathematics is **good**.

Strengths

- Students achieve well.
- Good teaching sets demanding but realistic challenges for students.
- A good range of activities beyond timetabled lessons helps students learn.
- The subject is well led and well managed.

Areas for Improvement

- Some marking of work is not as informative as it should be.
- Reports to parents do not provide enough detail as to what a student has learnt or how to improve in mathematics.

145. In 2002, results from national tests taken at the end of Year 9 were above the national average. These results were well above the average compared to those from similar schools. Students gained results similar to those for English and better than in science. Boys gained slightly higher results than girls did. This was because they entered the college with higher levels of achievement. In recent years, results in these tests have risen in line with the national rate. Good improvement has been made since the previous inspection when results were at the national average.

146. GCSE results in 2002 were well above the national average. They were well above the average for similar schools. Boys gained slightly higher grades than did girls. Students gained results above those in other subjects. Results at GCSE have improved at a rate above that found nationally.

147. Standards of work from students in Year 9 seen during the inspection were above the national average. These standards do not differ from those recorded in the results of the previous year's national test results. Students achieve well in the first three years, having entered the college with average standards. Students develop their arithmetical skills well owing to the good application by teachers of techniques suggested in the Key Stage 3 strategy. Students have a good understanding of shape and space and draw clear, informative graphs, but they are less skilled at using their mathematics in more independent problem solving investigations.

148. The work of students in Year 11 is well above the national average. This again reflects the standards of the most recent GCSE examinations. By the end of Year 11, students are competent in all areas of the subject. They can form and test ideas when exploring a problem but do not always give as full an explanation in writing as they do verbally. Students improve their standards from above the national average to well above during Years 10 and 11. This represents good achievement during their last two years.
149. Throughout the college, students speaking English as an additional language achieve well. They show positive attitudes to the subject and enjoy its challenges. They often support each other well in class. Students from differing ethnic backgrounds achieve equally well because the work is well suited to all their needs. Teachers take care to ensure that contexts of questions are not weighted towards any particular culture.
150. Throughout the college, boys achieve slightly higher standards than girls do. This is because boys had already achieved higher standards by the age of 11. This difference does not become any wider as students move through the college. Students with particular gifts and talents make good progress in mathematics. A significant reason for this is the extensive range of activities to meet their needs. These include 'master classes', collaboration with a local university and visits to mathematical events. The most able mathematicians are now being prepared to take GCSE before the end of Year 11. This has led to high levels of motivation. These students will leave the college having learnt more of the subject than would otherwise be the case.
151. Students with special educational needs make good progress throughout the college. This is because they are taught in smaller groups so they benefit from greater individual attention. In some classes, these students are well supported by classroom assistants. These assistants know the needs of the students well and work very closely with the teacher. In one lesson, an assistant very ably led a small part of the lesson for the full class, whilst the teacher provided support to individuals. However, there are occasions where support is not available and this has an adverse effect on the learning of students with special needs.
152. Teaching is good which is why students learn well. In four out of every five lessons seen, teaching was good or better and was very good in one third of lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. The most effective teaching places strong emphasis on students understanding the work they are doing. Teachers ask students to explain their ideas and skilfully reassure students that all ideas, even incorrect ones, are welcome. This is very effective as when a girl in Year 8 not only answered a question but immediately said 'and do you want to know why? It's because

This approach makes a good contribution to the development of students' speaking and listening skills. Effective lessons present students with demanding but achievable challenges which students enjoy. Many students respond very positively, being keen to answer questions and working well collaboratively. The positive attitude of students to their work is another significant reason why they learn well. Unlike at the previous inspection, no unsatisfactory behaviour was observed.
153. ICT is well used in many lessons. This was seen to good effect when Year 7 students used a new computer program to learn about the equation of a straight line. Students developed their computer skills as they explored the features of this program which they were using for the first time, without being dependent upon the teacher. This program to test ideas stimulated them. They worked very well in pairs, discussing what might happen as they changed parts of an equation. In the minority of lessons where teaching is less effective, the teachers are not as aware of what the students already

know. This can lead to students not learning. In most lessons the teacher provides additional work for students rapidly grasping an idea and additional help for any student experiencing difficulties. This does not happen in every lesson.

154. Another improvement since the previous inspection is that all student work is now marked. The best marking is very helpful to the students, telling them what they have learnt, the progress being made and what they should do next to continue developing. Not all marking is to this standard so some students are less well informed as to how they are doing. Similarly, some reports to parents are not sufficiently informative. All parents are told of the level of their son's or daughter's work. Some reports do not tell parents what mathematics has been learnt, commenting only on attitudes to work. All reports include a target for further improvement but some of these targets are too general to be helpful, whilst others relate to students' personal organisation skills.
155. Mathematics makes satisfactory provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Examples include consideration of the way ancient Greeks viewed the subject. However, not all teachers take advantage of opportunities for such development and rarely are students required to reflect on their work.
156. The subject is well led and well managed. The head of the department has developed a strong spirit amongst his team. He is developing good links with primary schools. These links were not in place at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers from Judgemeanow have taught lessons in primary schools. This helps primary school teachers to know how mathematics will be taught after the age of 11 and helps students to settle into secondary school. Students' progress is monitored very thoroughly, as is the work of each teacher. These processes allow good practice to be identified and spread whilst any weakness can also be addressed.

SCIENCE

Overall, the quality of provision in science is **good**

Strengths

- Teaching is good
- Standards at the end of Year 9 and Year 11 have been raised significantly. Standards at the end of Year 9 are average and at the end of Year 11 are above average.
- The range of teaching and learning opportunities has been broadened
- Students' attitudes are positive

Areas for improvement

- There is currently too little use of ICT as a result of a lack of resources
- There is insufficient open investigative work
- There is not enough extended treatment of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues.

157. Standards in the tests at the end of Year 9 were average in 2002. They have risen in recent years in line with the national trend but dipped in 2001.
158. Standards at GCSE in 2002 were above average in biology, chemistry and physics and were below average in double science and single science. Overall, standards in science were average. Students' performance in biology, chemistry and physics was in line with the standards achieved in other subjects. Performance in double and single science was significantly below that in their other subjects.

159. Students achieve well in Years 7 to 9. They make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of concepts. Standards in Year 9 are average in terms of students' ability to calculate moments, understand pressure and explain the appearance of objects in different coloured lights. Students are able to follow instructions and work safely in carrying out practical tasks. In Years 10 and 11 students again make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of concepts and standards of work seen were above average, for example in terms of their understanding of efficiency and the cost of electrical energy and their ability to construct formulae using ions and understand displacement reactions. Standards of coursework are consistent with students' general level of ability. Students with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress due to high levels of support and the awareness of staff to the specific needs. Gifted and talented students make progress in keeping with other students but also benefit from additional activities in homework.
160. Overall, teaching is good. The teaching seen was always at least satisfactory. There is a high proportion of good teaching and a significant amount of very good teaching. Students respond well and show a positive attitude to their learning. Particularly good features were well-planned and structured lessons, involving a variety of activity, with well-chosen teaching activities. Lessons were conducted at a good pace. Effective starter activities were used at the beginning of lessons and in some lessons good use was made of ICT and of models. Relationships with students were good and students participated actively in lessons. Teachers' questioning encouraged students to think and speculate, as in a Year 7 lesson, for example, where students had to try and explain why the spots in a chromatography experiment rose to different heights. At the time of the inspection there was a substantial amount of revision taking place in Years 9 and 11. Some very effective revision strategies were seen, including use of a 'Blockbuster' game, students preparing posters for use in peer teaching, 'looped question' sheets and use of 'Bitesize' revision questions. Some lessons that were satisfactory lacked variety of activity and clear timescales were not given to ensure a good pace. There are good assessment systems to track students' progress and set targets. Not all students are sufficiently aware of their targets, however. Work is marked regularly but there is variation in the depth of marking. Learning opportunities have been broadened but resources available limit the use of ICT, and there is not enough open investigative work. There is insufficient extended treatment of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, including the Ideas and Evidence aspect of the curriculum. Science makes a good contribution to the development of students' literacy and numeracy skills.
161. Leadership and management of the department are very good. There is a strong, shared commitment to the raising of achievement in science. Regular monitoring of teaching and systems of peer observation have been established. Schemes of work have been thoroughly revised and a wider range of teaching and learning styles introduced. Regular evaluation of student progress is carried out, and assessment data is used well.
162. The improvement since the last inspection is very good. Standards at the end of Year 9 and the end of Year 11 have both improved and the overall standard of teaching is now good, with no unsatisfactory teaching. Leadership and management are now very good.

ART AND DESIGN

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

Strengths

- The head of department has succeeded in creating a positive working environment
- Teachers possess good subject knowledge and are very well informed
- Teachers have very high expectations and relationships are very good
- Students respond positively to tasks set by their teachers

Areas for improvement

- Assessing and marking of students' work at the end of Year 9
- The narrowness of the curriculum that places undue emphasis on drawing, painting and craft
- The use of modern technology, photography and ICT as means of generating images

163. When students enter the school at the start of Year 7 their level of attainment in art and design is below the national average for students of their age. Teacher Assessments of Year 9 students' work in 2002 suggested that students were producing work of a standard that was well below the national average. However, current work indicates that the majority of Year 9 students are working at a level that is above national expectations. Achievement from the start of Year 7 through to the end of Year 9 is very good. In the 2002 GCSE examination in art and design the number of students that achieved the highest A*-C grades was above the national average. The results showed that their attainment in art and design was just above that of all of the other school subjects that they took that year. The standard of work that Year 11 students are currently producing is above national expectations. Achievement is satisfactory from the end of Year 9 through to the end of Year 11. This is in part due to the narrowness of the curriculum that provides few opportunities for students to produce images by means of photography or ICT and also to the recent involvement of a non-specialist teacher of art and design in the department.
164. During the inspection, Year 7 students were seen to work well to improve their drawing, painting and craft skills. The majority make good progress in the first year. In one Year 7 lesson, the students were observed making good use of computers to develop images that were based upon self-portraits that they had previously drawn. Students in Year 8 continue to make good progress and most work well to develop and communicate ideas through drawing and painting. Year 9 students show genuine interest in the themes that are set by their teachers. They apply themselves readily to the task of acquiring new knowledge and developing their basic drawing and painting skills. Most are producing work of a standard that is above national expectations.
165. Students in Year 10 have acquired the capacity for sustaining concentration over much longer periods of time and for conducting in-depth research into the subject matter that is set by their teachers. Some are beginning to work with greater independence to acquire new knowledge and to develop appropriate technical skills. The majority of Year 11 students are producing work of a standard that is above national expectations. They settle readily to their work with little prompting from their teachers and work primarily within a highly traditional model of the curriculum that places emphasis on drawing, painting and craftwork. Most make very good use of their visual diaries to collect a wide range of visual information from which they can develop their own personal ideas in the art studios in college. However, there were few opportunities for students to develop their own ideas and concepts through photography and ICT, which has an effect on the range and variety of work that they produce in Years 10 and 11. This also affects achievement over these two years, but achievement from entry in Year 7 to the end of Year 11 is very good.

166. Students with special educational needs and with English as an additional language are very well integrated into teaching groups, work well and make good progress. They receive very good support from the learning assistants.
167. Teaching and learning range from good in Years 7 to 9 to very good in Years 10 and 11 and are good overall. Teachers are obviously interested in the subject and they succeed in communicating this enthusiasm to the students at both levels. Teachers possess good subject knowledge, are very well informed and capable of motivating most students, but particularly in Years 10 and 11. Planning is very good and clear objectives are set for students during lessons. They have very high expectations of students and relationships between teachers and students and between student and student are very good which creates a very good climate for learning. However, insufficient use is made at present of modern technology in the form of filmstrips, videos, television, CD ROMs or DVDs as means of creating visually exciting and stimulating introductions to lessons. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 need to be carried out with much greater rigour and brought into line with national results.
168. Leadership is very good and management of the department is good. The head of department has only been in post for one year and already has had a positive impact. She has succeeded in setting very clear aims and objectives and has involved all staff in the decision-making process. She is working to create new and more effective assessing and recording systems, particularly in Years 7 to 9, by involving other members of the team. At present there are difficulties in making use of available objective data to inform this process as these are often derived from sources other than art, craft and design. There is a good departmental development plan, which is reviewed every year in the summer term and altered accordingly.
169. Accommodation is very good. There are three large, well-lit studios that can be used for both two-dimensional and three-dimensional work. In addition, students have access to two kilns that are located in the technology department. Storage facilities are very good, both for students' work and also for equipment and resources.
170. Learning resources can only be described as satisfactory at present because of the restrictions that are imposed upon students who are obliged to work within a highly traditional model of the curriculum that places undue emphasis on drawing, painting and craftwork and provides little opportunity for design work. There are only two computers in the art department, which means that students have great difficulty in producing images by means of photography, or by the use of computers, scanners, digital cameras and printers in the context of the art studios. This is of particular importance in Years 10 and 11 as it affects the range and variety of objects that students can produce. This in turn affects achievement over these two years.
171. Improvement since the last inspection is good and there was evidence during this inspection to show that the overall standard of students' work continues to improve.

CITIZENSHIP

Overall, the quality of provision in citizenship is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- The senior management has gone partway down the road in implementing the introduction of citizenship as a National Curriculum subject.
- The college council is effective in involving students in all years.

Areas for improvement

- The college has not yet fully implemented citizenship.
- Most subject areas do not identify the aims of citizenship in planning and students are not informed about citizenship aims in lessons.

172. Students' work at the end of Year 9 has not yet been assessed. Citizenship modules have not yet been fully implemented. Aspects of citizenship are delivered through the personal, social and health education programme and in some subject areas. The school has done an audit and this has identified gaps in coverage.
173. Some students of all ages participate actively in the year and college councils and representatives attend community council meetings. Students spoken to felt their views are listened to and taken back to the councils. The college council has brought about improvements, for example litter clearance at the local shops.
174. A new scheme of work is being implemented but at present does not ensure that all students receive appropriate teaching in the subject. For example, citizenship aims are not generally shared with students.
175. Inspectors observed some good examples of citizenship during the inspection. For example, in geography students in Years 8 and 9 study fundamental human rights and responsibilities, the law, and how it affects young people. In physical education and mathematics, students are made aware of the effect of their actions on others. Year 9 students discuss the tax system and an individual responsibility to prioritise spending. This work is followed through in Years 10 and 11, in personal, social and health education lessons where teaching identified taxation in the context of citizenship.
176. In personal, social and health education lessons and work seen in Years 7 to 9, students are learning the meanings of some of the subject vocabulary, for example society, community, citizen, government and taxation. They are beginning to show an understanding of democracy and racism. However, there are missed opportunities in some lessons for teachers to present an understanding of citizenship issues.
177. Senior and middle managers have started to introduce citizenship. Planning has been slow. The college is aware of the need to monitor the audit across all subjects and to continue to develop assessment procedures using the National Curriculum guidelines.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Shared staff commitment to raising standards
- Positive student attitudes to the subject
- Secure staff knowledge and understanding

Areas for improvement

- Monitoring and evaluation of teaching method and style
- Accommodation in workshop areas, and range of quality learning resources to promote more effective teaching methods
- Systematic development of ICT, including CAD and CAM
- The level of technical support for food technology

178. Standards in GCSE 2002 were well below national expectations and well below that of similar schools. This was the result of inappropriate short course study at GCSE. Results from a small cohort following full GCSE in textiles, food technology, graphics and child development were well above national expectations; results in electronics were well below national expectations. Inspection evidence revealed improving standards across all areas, particularly in Year 10. All students in Years 10 and 11 now follow full courses. Coursework folders are methodically developed and reflect a secure student grasp of the design process. Research skills are developing with improving use of a range of appropriate source materials and methods. Students are confident in expressing and generating design ideas, although graphics skills need a wider range of techniques and refinement, including the organized use of computer aided design (CAD) software. Standards of annotation are satisfactory but require greater technical depth. Standards of manufacture and finish in resistant materials need to be higher. Effective monitoring of coursework in all areas is emerging, along with the development of clear targets for improvement.
179. Teacher assessment data at the end of Year 9, 2002, reveals below average performance, particularly of boys, but reorganisation of curriculum time and the dissemination of KS3 strategy good practice is raising levels of achievement. Secure design and make standards are consistently emerging in all areas. Secure assessment data is now collected and is effectively informing curriculum planning, organisation and the monitoring of student performance. Students with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress.
180. Inadequate and uninviting accommodation in resistant materials and systems and control slow up the drive to raise standards. Additionally, learning resource provision is poor for manufacturing and audiovisual support in all practical areas. Provision for ICT is satisfactory but a broader range of ICT skill requires systematic development in both key stages. Computer aided manufacture (CAM) needs consistent coverage in all material areas and expansion and CAD requires urgent development in graphics and systems and control in Years 10 and 11.
181. Overall student attitudes to learning are good; they are very good in child development and graphic design. Students collaborate well, share their design ideas and experiences when solving problems but are reluctant to extend independent thinking.

Effective strategies are not in place in Years 7 to 9 to improve the performance of small groups of immature boys.

182. The overall quality of teaching is good with some very good teaching in child development and graphic design. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Lessons are well planned and well structured with clear learning targets communicated to students at the start of lessons. All staff display good subject knowledge and understanding. Effective use is made of exemplar work, particularly in textiles, food and graphic design, underpinning sound teacher expectations. All students would benefit from more intense challenge to their technical knowledge during questioning. A wider range of teaching methods and delivery styles, incorporating ICT, would further raise and consolidate attainment. There is not an effective numeracy policy being used to extend student skill and understanding, particularly in Key Stage 3.
183. Leadership and management from the recently appointed subject head are good. A clear vision has been created and realistic priorities for improvement established. Firm emphasis has been placed on developing teamwork with a shared commitment to succeed. Urgent review of staff responsibilities is required in order to allow more effective delegation of key responsibilities. There is insufficient emphasis on monitoring and evaluating teachers' performance with a structured approach to in-service training. Risk assessments always need to be incorporated into lesson planning.
184. Technical support is inadequate in food technology; teacher time requires release. Capitation is adequate but poor learning resource provision is hindering student achievement. Uninviting workshop accommodation, identified in the last inspection, still remains. Provision of multipurpose teaching spaces is poor, restricting standards of design and make. Timber machine areas are unsafe and require urgent attention. Inappropriate GCSE courses have been replaced and the curriculum for Years 7 to 9 is being systematically reorganised, with secure standards emerging.

GEOGRAPHY

Overall, the quality of provision in geography is **good**

Strengths

- Attainment in Year 11
- The use of enquiry methods in teaching
- Teachers' knowledge and understanding
- The use of assessment information

Areas for development

- The level of detail in reports provided for parents on students' progress
- The use of assessment to calculate projected grades for GCSE

185. At the end of Year 9 in 2002, students' standards of attainment were reported to be above national expectations, consideration of attainment on entry as being below national expectations. Evidence from work seen during the inspection shows that all students, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are making very good progress. Students in Year 7 quickly develop their knowledge, skills and understanding and are able to apply these to study contrasts between different places. By Year 9 the higher-attaining students were seen discussing and making decisions about the value of different types of aid given to less economically developed countries. Lower-attaining students were seen to be able to describe and account for the cause and effects of changes to industrial patterns.

Students make appropriate use of ICT and number to support their learning. Literacy skills are developed, with students using new geographical vocabulary in context and learning to use extended writing in assessment topics.

186. In 2002, the percentage of students achieving A*-C grades was above national averages. The percentage achieving A*-G grades at GCSE in 2002 was also above national averages. Boys' attainment at A*-C is above that of the girls', and above national averages, while the girls' is in line. At A*-A grades the girls' attainment is above that of the boys', but both boys and girls exceed national averages. The attainment of lower-attaining students, including those with special educational needs, is above average, with all students attaining A*-G.
187. The department tracks student performance against prior attainment and projected grade, calculated from prior attainment in geography and other subjects. Evidence from this tracking shows that not all students who reach the highest levels of attainment at the end of Year 9 choose to study geography in Years 10 and 11. This tracking shows that, overall, students make good progress in Years 10 and 11, and that the gifted and talented students and those with special educational needs make very good progress.
188. Students' attitudes to the subject are good. Their teachers' enthusiasm is contagious. There are good relationships and students work together well when asked to do so and they help each other appropriately. Behaviour in lessons is good and a positive working environment is generated in classrooms. Attitude improves as students move through the school and is evidence of the effect of the subject's contribution made to students' moral and social development.
189. Overall, teaching is very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and good knowledge of the examination system. They communicate this well to their students. Their teaching of basic skills is good and helps students to develop literacy, numeracy, ICT and basic geography skills. Teachers' enthusiasm for the subject encourages students' intellectual and creative effort in lessons and students are rewarded for their efforts with praise and merit stickers. There is very good pace in learning. Lesson planning pays specific attention to both students with special educational needs and to the needs of higher-attaining students. Students are given work of appropriate challenge to ensure that they all make very good progress. There are regular assessment exercises, which are marked to National Curriculum levels. Students are aware of their current level and of what they need to do to achieve higher levels. Teachers' expectations of academic progress are high, especially in Years 7, 8 and 9. GCSE projected grades are, however, based on attainment at the start of Year 7 as well as attainment at the end of Year 9. Consequently, any progress made in Years 7 to 9 is given less value and targets for many are lower than their end of Year 9 assessment in geography would indicate.
190. Students' attainment is tracked and appropriate targets are set. GCSE grade criteria are shared with students for assessment topics and GCSE coursework. However, assessments on students are not reported in sufficient detail to parents.
191. The department is well led and is given clear educational direction. Teachers are well matched to the courses they teach. Teaching is monitored and evaluated by senior managers. The head of subject monitors the teaching formally on a regular basis. There is also regular informal monitoring and sharing of ideas and expertise within the subject group. As teachers contribute to the teaching in humanities, departmental meetings devoted to geography are less regular, and a regular geography bulletin, combined with informal daily contact, forms the basis of the effective day-to-day

running of the subject. Management from the head of humanities ensures contribution to the students' development and use of literacy and numeracy. All geography teachers use ICT in lessons. This is used to develop research and presentation skills. There is scope for the development of mathematical modelling using spreadsheets.

192. Resources for teaching are now plentiful within the department and good use is made of the textbooks and teacher-produced resources to support enquiry methods. Teachers now have access to, and make use of, a laptop computer linked to a projector. At other times access to computers to support learning is given by booking computer rooms. Good use is made of field studies that are linked to topics studied in the classroom.
193. Accommodation is satisfactory. The main geography room provides a good learning environment with good, relevant wall display. The second room provides similar supportive wall display, but space is more limited therein. One member of the department uses a third teaching room; this is very small and cramped for the students to work in. Other teaching takes place in rooms designated for the teaching of other subjects, or in mobile classrooms outside the main buildings. Students studying in these rooms are disadvantaged by the lack of appropriate wall display and the distance from the main resource area, which limits the resources available for lessons.
194. Since the previous inspection there has been considerable improvement in teaching, results at GCSE and in the resources available for teaching, particularly in Years 10 and 11.

HISTORY

Overall, the quality of provision in history is **good**

Strengths

- Teaching is good
- Students in Years 10 and 11 are prepared very well for examinations
- Relationships are very good
- The leadership and management of the department are good

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient use of ICT
- Insufficient appropriately-matched work for the lowest and highest attainers in Year 7

195. By the end of Year 9, students' overall level of attainment is in line with that expected nationally. Most students begin Year 7 with a level of attainment that is a little below average. In 2001 and 2002, teachers assessed their students' work at the end of Year 9 as broadly average. The overall standard of work seen during the inspection was average, although a significant proportion was above average.
196. Most students make good progress in learning about the past, in understanding why events have happened and in developing the capacity to use and evaluate historical sources. The highest attainers understand that there are different views about the past. Students with special educational needs make good progress, although the majority attain below average standards. Those students for whom English is an additional language make good progress and reach similar standards to students whose first language is English. The gifted and talented students make good progress.
197. The proportion of students gaining grades A*-C in the GCSE examinations was significantly above the national average in 2002. It was well above 2001. In both years

all students who took the course gained at least a pass grade. In 2002 36 per cent obtained an A* or A grade compared with the national average of 24 per cent. The attainment of boys was significantly higher than the boys' national average. These results are an improvement since the last inspection. There has been a rising trend in GCSE attainment from above average in 1997 to significantly above in 2002. In recent years students have tended to perform better in history than in their other subjects.

198. The standard of work seen in lessons in Years 10 and 11 was above average, and many students showed clear potential for the very highest grades. Students for whom English is an additional language reach standards at least equal to those whose first language is English. Students make good progress in Years 10 and 11. This is largely the result of good teaching and the commitment of students to their work.
199. Most students in Years 7 to 9 have good knowledge and understanding about the past. They usually recall well work done in previous lessons, so that teachers can move on to new work quickly. The majority of students in Years 7 to 9 use historical sources well in order to understand past events. They make valid deductions and support them with appropriate evidence. Higher-attaining students successfully assess the reliability and usefulness of sources. The lower attainers use sources adequately for information. Students usually write well at length; the highest attainers produce extended writing of a high quality - as, for instance, in their work on the assassination of President Kennedy.
200. Students in Years 10 and 11 have very good knowledge and understanding of the topics they study. Students in Year 11 demonstrated that they understood well the impact of the Treaty of Versailles on Germany post-1919. The highest attainers use a range of historical sources well - analysing, evaluating and interpreting successfully. Most students in Year 11 write well at length. The essays written by the highest attainers argue a point of view effectively and support it with valid historical evidence. The essays from the lower attainers are usually narrative or descriptive rather than analytical.
201. The majority of students have a positive approach to their work, show interest and enthusiasm and are good learners. The standard of behaviour is good overall. Relationships are very good, and students are prepared to work hard for their teachers. These are important contributory factors to the overall good progress throughout the college.
202. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching is often very good in Years 10 and 11, and contributes significantly to the high attainment in GCSE examinations. Teachers use an appropriate variety of learning methods, including whole-class, individual, paired and group work. They make a good contribution to the development of students' literacy, and to their moral, social and cultural development by using a wide range of appropriate examples for study. The opportunities for extended writing and for independent learning, criticised at the time of the previous inspection, are now good. There is, however, insufficient appropriately matched work for the lowest and highest attainers in Year 7. Relatively little use is made of ICT as a teaching and learning tool.

203. Teachers know their subject well and communicate their knowledge effectively so that students acquire good understanding about the past. The lessons are planned well and the work is demanding and interesting. A group of students in Year 7, for instance, were very motivated by work which extended over a series of lessons on medieval village society in which they took on the role of a specific villager and identified with the individual's life and work. Students are successfully motivated to try hard and achieve well. The preparation of students for GCSE examinations is rigorous and thorough. Very good whole-class teaching, for example, guided students in Year 11 through practice examination answers, which the students were asked to mark and then to justify the mark given. This very successfully helped them to understand what makes a top grade answer.
204. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The head of department is committed to maintaining and if possible improving the already well above average GCSE standards. He has a clear understanding of the department's strengths and where it needs to improve. The department works effectively as a team. There is, however, no formal system for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the teaching in the department to ensure that the good practice is maintained.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

Strengths

- Teaching in discrete ICT lessons in all years and assessment in ICT courses.
- Leadership and management of the ICT department.
- The effective use made of current ICT resources.
- Extra-curricular access to ICT resources.

Areas for development

- Standards in examinations in Year 11.
- The level of ICT resources to meet increasing demand.
- The use of ICT to measure changes during practical science activities.

205. Standards in Year 11 in the GCSE examination in 2002 were below the national average. In the previous three years there was a steady improvement in results, which matched the national average in 2001. Staffing difficulties within the department had a significant effect upon results but this problem has been resolved.
206. In work seen during the inspection, attainment in Year 9 is consistent with expectations overall. Evidence in lessons and in samples of work indicates that many students achieve well and make good progress in Years 7 and 8 where all have discrete ICT lessons covering the requirements of the Key Stage 3 ICT Strategy, particularly in using ICT for communicating and handling information. In a Year 7 lesson students were achieving a good standard in the production of newspaper pages set out in columns and well illustrated with topical images obtained using the Internet and relating to a range of current world events. Students also have opportunities to use ICT for control in design and technology. In Year 9 there are no separate ICT lessons and students rely upon using ICT in other subjects. There are procedures for tracking ICT use but the experiences of individual students can be varied using the cross-curricular approach. Nevertheless, most do continue to make progress in developing and using ICT their skills, notably in mathematics, music and modern foreign languages.

207. In Years 10 and 11 all students have the opportunity to develop their ICT skills in an ICT module of the work-related course as well as opportunities in the other subjects of the curriculum. In addition, a significant proportion follows an examination course in ICT. The GCSE course has now been replaced by intermediate level GNVQ. Inspection evidence indicates that overall standards in ICT in Years 10 and 11 are consistent with expectations but a significant number of students are attaining the higher grades in current GNVQ coursework. In a Year 10 coursework lesson an activity focused on 'accuracy checks' and was very successful in raising students' awareness of possible errors in planning and in the use of several software applications. There are opportunities for some students to use ICT to measure rates of change in physical education using heart monitors but there is much more scope for students to experience the use of ICT to measure change in practical science work. The use of ICT in science is underdeveloped.
208. Students have a very positive attitude towards their work in ICT courses and when using computers in the subjects of the curriculum. They understand the value of ICT to enrich learning and to improve the presentation of their work. Computer rooms do not have to be locked outside lesson times and there is a great deal of extra-curricular use by students in all years, in particular by students in Years 10 and 11 for coursework in ICT and other subjects. Procedures for monitoring Internet use are very effective and students use it appropriately and responsibly.
209. Teaching and learning in ICT lessons is good in Years 7 and 8 and very good in ICT examination classes in Years 10 and 11, where students are particularly well motivated by the nature of the vocational course. Lessons are well planned and based upon detailed and appropriate schemes of work. Activities in ICT lessons, in all years, are designed to have appropriate challenge for the whole ability range. In addition to good or very good individual support from teachers, well-produced learning materials are usually available on paper or via the computer, to ensure that all students can make good progress. The improvement of literacy and numeracy skills is a strong feature of many lessons. Classroom management, which is usually very good, ensures that time and resources are used well. Marking is regular; assessment in ICT courses is very thorough and is used to inform planning. Students taking GNVQ are very well aware of their progress and what they need to do to improve.
210. The ICT department is well led and managed. Staffing difficulties have been resolved. Appropriate changes have been made to the examination curriculum. The use of ICT across the curriculum is monitored. The number of computers is close to the average for a school of this size and resources are reliable and well managed. However, the rapidly growing demand for cross-curricular use, as well as for ICT courses, means that access to computers is often limited. Without careful planning, this poses potential difficulties, particularly for the appropriate coverage of ICT requirements in Year 9 where there are no discrete ICT lessons. However, development planning is good and there is a strong commitment, at all levels of management, to improve ICT resources. Overall, improvement in provision since the last inspection has been good and the college has the capacity to improve further.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Overall, the quality of provision in modern foreign languages is **very good**.

French, German, Spanish and Italian

Strengths

- Excellent leadership ensures a strong commitment by all teachers to the improvement of language learning.
- Very good teaching, practised consistently across all foreign languages, enables all students to make very good progress throughout the college.
- GCSE results are well above the national average.
- Impressive use of ICT has a beneficial effect on students' learning and attitudes.
- The provision of a wide range of foreign languages enriches the college curriculum.

Areas for improvement

- Not enough opportunities are provided for students to develop independence and spontaneity in their language learning.
- The GCSE results of boys lag behind those of the girls.

211. Teacher assessment of student performance in Year 9 shows that standards were above the national average in 2002. The performance of boys matched that of girls.
212. The proportion of students entered for GCSE modern foreign languages is well above the national average. Results in French, which is the first foreign language for most students, have steadily improved since the last inspection, peaking in 2001. Although the proportion of students gaining A*-C grades fell a little in 2002, it was still well above the national average. The proportion of students who gain A*-A grades matches the national average. Girls achieve better results than boys. The difference between girls and boys in terms of A*-C grades is greater than the national difference. Nevertheless, boys' results are above the national average.
213. The standard of work in all languages seen during the inspection was above the national average at the end of Year 9. Students develop a wide range of vocabulary. They have a good understanding of written and spoken language. Written work is mostly accurate and the higher-attaining students accurately use tenses other than the present. Students speak confidently in their foreign languages in situations that are tightly controlled by the teachers in the classroom. However, there is little use of the foreign language by students in everyday exchanges with one another or with their teachers. The overall gains made by students, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, represent very good achievement across Years 7 to 9.
214. The standard of work of students following examination courses in Years 10 and 11 is well above the national average in all foreign languages. Students broaden their knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, and apply it well in their work. Again, although students speak very well in well-rehearsed dialogues, their skills in replying spontaneously to questions beyond the confines of closely controlled situations are inadequately developed. Overall, however, the achievement of students on GCSE and on Certificate in Business Language Competence courses is very good.

215. The quality of teaching throughout the college is very good. Lessons have a very clear focus and consequently students know what is expected of them. Students respond positively to the wide variety of appropriately challenging activities that teachers provide. Teachers contribute effectively to their students' literacy development by encouraging them to think about language patterns and by setting them a broad range of reading and writing tasks. The regular use of ICT, including multimedia presentations, effectively supports students' language learning and has a positive influence on students' attitudes. Teachers know their students very well. The very good progress that all students make is partly attributable to the way in which teachers very carefully plan activities that are closely matched to the needs of individuals. This represents a very good improvement on the teaching found in the last inspection. There is not enough emphasis on making students use the foreign language in everyday, routine classroom exchanges, and, as a result, the ability of students to speak spontaneously is weaker than it should be.
216. The leadership of the department is excellent. The head of department has a strong commitment to improving the quality of learning, which is shared with her colleagues. Systems of monitoring the work of the department are very well practised. Ideas are shared effectively so that there is a consistency of very good practice across all teachers of all languages. Very good systems of assessment are used to track the progress of individual students, who are made aware of their strengths and weaknesses.

Punjabi and Gujarati

Strengths

- Learning is good because teaching is good.
- The very good attitudes and behaviour of students create a good atmosphere for learning.
- Students achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment in Years 8 and 9.
- Very good leadership and management contribute to high standards.

Areas for improvement

- There is scope for further development of ICT in teaching.
- Although accommodation is good, teachers do not have their own teaching bases and this affects the quality of teaching and learning.
- Assessment of students in Years 8 and 9 is not yet carried out according to the National Curriculum requirements.

217. Standards attained in Punjabi and Gujarati by the end of Year 9 are above the national expectations. Considering that Punjabi and Gujarati are not offered in Year 7 and also that students have to learn a new script, their achievement is very good in both languages. Standards in Punjabi at the end of Year 11 are above average. GCSE examination results for A*-C grades in 2000 and 2002 were well above the national average and above the national average in 2001. The results for A*-G grades were above the national average in 2000, 2001 and 2002.
218. Standards attained in Gujarati by the end of Year 11 are average. GCSE examination results for A*-C grades in 2000 and 2002 were below the national average but in line with the national average in 2001. The results for A*-G grades for 2001 and 2002 matched the national average.

219. During the inspection, the standards of students' work seen in Years 8 and 9, and in Years 10 and 11, in both Punjabi and Gujarati were above the national expectation. Students' speaking and listening skills are more developed than their reading and writing skills. They can answer teachers' questions showing good understanding. Their standard of pronunciation is good. It is because teachers act as role models and the use of target language is encouraged in lessons. For example, students in Year 9 Gujarati and Punjabi lessons could give three or four details about different means of transport showing good fluency and pronunciation. Students' achievement in reading and writing skills is very good in relation to their prior attainment. For example, higher-attaining students in Year 9 can produce short paragraphs without making many spelling errors, while average, below average and students with special educational needs make several mistakes.
220. In Years 10 and 11, students build on their achievements in Years 8 and 9. Higher-attaining students can read and write short and long texts. For example, higher attaining students in Year 11 Gujarati and Punjabi lessons can read short and long texts from previous examination papers without making mistakes, but average, below average and students with special educational needs required the teacher's help to do so. Above average students can write paragraphs on topics such as 'festivals, my town, seasons' using an increasing range of vocabulary and grammatical structures. Average students can also write paragraphs on the same topics but make several spelling and grammatical errors. Below average students and those with special educational needs can copy sentences and also write short paragraphs but make many mistakes.
221. The overall quality of teaching in community languages is good. As a result, learning is good. Teachers are native speakers, have good subject knowledge and use the language in classes with a very positive effect on students' learning. In lessons where teaching is good or very good, lessons are well planned, objectives are clear, expectations are high, students fully participate, work is challenging and matches students' capabilities. In both languages, teachers use a variety of aids expertly to present language and to cater for students' diverse learning needs. Students respond very well to the enthusiastic approach of the teachers and the encouragement they provide. Strong classroom management provides a positive climate for learning. Students co-operate and help each other well when working in pairs. Teachers insist on high standards of work. It is regularly marked and teachers often provide guidance on how students can improve. Teachers have full assessment records on students but learning is not assessed according to the National Curriculum criteria in Years 8 and 9. Homework is given but not very regularly. While teachers make good use of ICT, students' use of computers is rather limited.
222. Provision for Punjabi and Gujarati within the modern foreign languages' department is good. Teachers are fully supported and their planning and teaching are monitored by the head of department and also by the director of languages. Teachers attend departmental meetings and also in-service training meetings organised by the college and also by the Examination Boards, which contribute to their professional development. Good relationships and strong commitment to raising standards are having a positive effect on students' learning. Although accommodation is good, teachers teach in several different rooms.
223. There was no separate paragraph on community languages in the last report except a brief mention that groups studying Gujarati and Punjabi attain levels above national expectations. Standards are as good as they were during the last inspection.

MUSIC

Overall, the quality of provision in music is **good**.

Strengths

- The excellent provision and use of resources, including ICT, are helping to raise standards in all years
- Teaching is good overall with very good features
- Assessment procedures are thorough
- The range and quality of extra-curricular activities are very good

Areas for improvement

- Planned opportunities for students' spiritual development are limited
- A significant minority of students in Years 7 to 9 are reluctant to be independent learners

224. Standards have improved since the 2002 teacher assessment of students in Year 9 and are satisfactory overall. A small minority of students are working at standards above the national expectations in playing and performing. These students are supported in their learning by instrumental tuition and opportunities to play and perform in college, in the community and abroad. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. In lessons and work seen, there is no significant difference in the attainment and progress of students with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Numbers taking external examinations have increased considerably this year. In 2002, entry numbers were too small to compare results with the national. However, these students gained higher grades than the school expected.
225. Attainment in work and lessons seen with students up to Year 9 is average. Standards in playing and performing are better than students' listening skills. Achievement in Years 7 to 9 is good. Standards and achievement in extra-curricular activities and in instrumental lessons seen are good. The majority of students in Year 7 understand and use the elements of music in composition work. They are gaining confidence in using computers, as seen in one Year 7 lesson on melodic writing. Students in Year 8 understand the effect of a key signature in a major scale. A significant minority of students in Years 7 and 8 lack confidence and are reluctant to move on without the help of the teacher. In lessons seen, Year 9 students are becoming confident performers in class ensemble work and are successfully using ICT to compose a fanfare using the brass natural harmonic series.
226. All students in the present Year 11 are expected to gain A*-C grades. Most achieve well. In work seen, they show a good understanding of terminology and are able to use this in their composition work. Performances show a good range of style and instrumental skills. In coursework seen, students in Years 10 and 11 show positive attitudes and have a good knowledge of their own strengths and weaknesses. Playing and performing skills in Year 10, overall, are above average. Listening skills in Years 10 and 11 are good overall. In lessons seen students are improving skills in composition using up-to-date software on computer. They have a good knowledge of how music works in various cultures and styles.
227. Teaching and learning are good in all years. Features that enable good learning include teachers' very good subject knowledge and classroom management. Ongoing assessment is good and teachers give feedback to students in lessons. There are opportunities in some lessons for students to self-evaluate their work and appraise the work of others. Lesson planning is always very good and matches the needs of all

students, including those with special educational needs and the more able. Students in Years 10 and 11 are aware of their progress and have individual achievable targets set for improvement. The majority of students are enthusiastic and willing to work. Many students were very helpful during the inspection week, taking time to explain their work and demonstrate their achievements. Homework was not set in any of the lessons seen.

228. The department is very well led and managed. All staff work very hard to give students a wide range of experiences in music. Staff have a very good balance of skills including technology. The department is well used by all years including some students who organise groups, for example the rock bands. Strengths of management lie in the shared commitment to improvement of the subject by the senior management and departmental staff. The department uses thorough assessment procedures and relates students' performance to National Curriculum levels. Resources, including ICT, are excellent and are used in most lessons as a vehicle for group music making, composition and processing work. All students have equal access to computers. Sixteen peripatetic music staff support the department, giving lessons to eight per cent of students, and assist with ensemble work.
229. Since the previous report the department has made very good progress. Standards have improved and the provision for ICT is excellent. The curriculum has widened considerably to meet the needs of all students and this has had a positive impact on the enthusiasm of boys for the subject. Uptake in Year 10 has risen considerably. The department makes a valuable contribution towards students' moral, social and cultural development; however, there are limited planned opportunities for students' spiritual development. The large orchestra practises and plays a wide range of music from different cultures and times and is a strength of the department. Accommodation has improved and is now good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of provision in physical education is **good**.

Strengths

- Teaching is good and teachers have good knowledge of the requirements of the GCSE examination course so learning is good.
- Good extra-curricular provision enriches learning opportunities.
- Students have good attitudes and behaviour so they achieve well.

Areas for improvement

- Use of prior attainment to measure progress and enrich learning.
- Consistent targets to improve basic skills and to extend the learning of gifted and talented students.
- Indoor accommodation is unsatisfactory so students' access to a variety of activities is limited.

230. Students enter the school with skills and performance levels which are below average in physical education. In 2002 teachers' assessments of students' performance at the end of Year 9 were reported to be well above national average.

231. In 2002 GCSE results were well below average for grades A*-C and above average for grades A*-G when compared with national results. Results in physical education were below average relative to the performance of other subjects in the college.

232. The work seen during the inspection indicates that the standards on entry are below average. For example, at the beginning of Year 7 students have little knowledge of athletics. Teachers work hard to build up students' understanding of safety aspects in throwing events so that students' awareness of dangers linked with such activities is raised. In a Year 7 introductory lesson students were in the initial stages of co-ordinating throws and learning to work safely. High-attaining students achieved sufficient spin and the correct trajectory height to get distance in their throws. Low-attaining students did not have the same control and the throw came from too close into the body so frequently throwers had too much height and little distance. Body position for all students was weak. Standards attained by students at the end of Year 9 are of average level when compared with national expectations. Students achieve well in comparison with their standard on entry into the college. They quickly acquire the skills and understanding to improve their performance. For example, in a Year 9 sprinting lesson high-attaining students quickly grasped the essentials of the sprint action and were able to use their arms to increase the speed of movement in the legs. Low-attaining students managed the skills involved but were not as effective in co-ordination of the whole action.
233. The standards attained by students in the lessons seen at the end of Year 11 in the GCSE course are average. The majority of students achieve satisfactorily when compared with their results at the end of Year 9. For example, in a Year 11 GCSE theory lesson high-attaining students were able to extend answers for extra marks in a revision test. Low-attaining students did not give examples and gave two, sometimes contradictory, answers when one was required. Standards in Year 10 are above those in Year 11. For example, in a Year 10 tennis lesson gifted and talented students gave very good demonstrations of the backhand and forehand drive and the majority of the group maintained above average standards in this activity. Analysis of written work revealed average, or above-average, standards in Year 10. In core curriculum physical education students' achievement is satisfactory, with students working to expected standards. For example, in a Year 11 football lesson high-attaining students had good ball control and made well-directed passes; low-attaining students were not as accurate. Overall boys do better than girls in mixed practical groups but girls do better than boys in GCSE theory work.
234. Students with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve as well as other students in the practical elements of most lessons because teachers focus students well on what is required through demonstration and clear explanation. Some opportunities exist for the gifted and talented students who have been identified but these could be extended.
235. Teaching and learning are good overall. In GCSE lessons teaching and learning are particularly effective because teachers have a clear focus on the requirements of the GCSE course. For example, in a Year 10 GCSE tennis lesson students responded very well, and had great satisfaction from their achievement when challenged by appropriate objectives and inspiring demonstrations. Gifted and talented students assist in demonstrations and are encouraged to join local clubs and participate in locally arranged specific activities for the gifted and talented. Students' strengths are praised during evaluation at the end of a lesson. Teachers are effective in including all students in questioning and are careful to maintain balance in teams for equal opportunities. Teachers usually review previous learning well to check understanding and consolidate before further progress is made. Teaching and learning is not as good when students are moved on before they have properly mastered sufficient skill to ensure safety. In some lessons students were given too many objectives for effective focused learning. In others too few teaching points are given for students to understand

fully how the proper action is undertaken, or students practise at unrealistic distances. For example, in a core Year 10 rounders lesson students were too close together to practise bowling.

236. In some lessons students remained inactive too long during long teacher explanations. In lessons where class management was weaker students did not progress and some students interrupted the learning of others. When students are not fully aware of areas for improvement and work is not marked against national criteria, learning is affected. Literacy and numeracy, although a part of some lessons, are not emphasised enough so students may not recognise this as part of a learning strategy. In some lessons, teamwork and safety were emphasised; such lessons would contribute well to citizenship. There is little opportunity for students to access computer facilities apart from some GCSE lessons.
237. Students' attitudes and behaviour overall are good. In most lessons, teachers insist on good behaviour. Opportunities for learning are enriched by the good provision of extra-curricular activities. Students are offered opportunities within matches; some students achieve local, county and national places. Students are usually considerate of one another. A few exhibit immature behaviour; this is a potential hazard where athletic events are taking place. Participation rates in practical activities are high. In good lessons non-participants are engaged in helping the progress of the lesson and learn from this involvement. In a few lessons non-participants are not sufficiently engaged and achieve little.
238. Leadership and management of the department are good. Teachers have addressed the below average results. They provide good role models and there is strong teamwork. Most teachers share their expertise and work to their strengths. Good organisation, planning and procedures are in place. Provision of resources is satisfactory. Books for independent learning are available for examination courses in the library but some of these are outdated and do not include enough to cover the physiology aspect; the department has additional books which complement the course.
239. Accommodation is unsatisfactory because of the poor indoor facilities available. There is no specific theory room available and the indoor gym is inadequate for the numbers in the college. Consequently, students' experience is not wide enough and the requirements of the National Curriculum are barely met in Year 9. The college makes use of the local swimming pool to complement its facilities but travel to this and other facilities reduces teaching time. Outdoor facilities are good; the department benefits from courts and extensive playing fields. Changing areas are not big enough to accommodate the numbers of students changing at any one time and are in need of refurbishment. Teachers make the best use of the facilities available but the lack of indoor facilities affects standards and reduces teaching and extra-curricular time.
240. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Extra-curricular activities remain good but constrained by facilities. Good systems are in place for identifying students' levels and grades, although links with national criteria are inaccurate. Use of prior attainment to measure achievement is not sufficiently included to notify students of areas for improvement. Examination performance is now well established. Teachers have compared 2002 results with the results in previous years and factors have been analysed such as the nature of the cohort and the positive residuals of students. The department is taking effective action to support GCSE students, especially in Year 10. A development plan links with the college improvement plan and most teachers use behaviour management strategies effectively. There is still a need for consistency in the use of basic skills and further links between practical and

theoretical elements would enhance examination prospects and full understanding of the subject. The physical education department is well placed for improvement and examination success.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- All students in Years 10 and 11 follow well-structured examination courses that build on their faith backgrounds
- Good relationships between teachers and students create the right environment for class discussion of moral issues and religious teachings
- A start has been made with objective testing of students' knowledge, understanding and skills, to establish their attainment levels in the subject

Areas for improvement

- A significant number of boys lack motivation and are underachieving in Years 10 and 11
- Insufficient matching of tasks and learning materials to suit students at different levels of attainment in the mixed ability groups
- Restricted range of textbooks available for class use in Years 7 to 9 and limited numbers of suitable books on different faiths for the GCSE courses

241. In previous years, a small number of students have taken GCSE examinations in religious studies. The results were above average in 2001 and around average in 2000 and in 2002, when 20 candidates sat the examination. This year, all students in Year 11 are being entered for the GCSE short course examination in religious studies.

242. By age 14, standards are below average. Students entered the college with below average standards in religious education and their achievement over the key stage has been satisfactory, gaining a reasonable knowledge of the beliefs and practices of the main religions in British society. Year 9 students who have benefited from regular teaching this year have reached average standards. In lessons, students were able to use biblical and contemporary sources to explain Christian attitudes towards capital punishment, balancing concepts of vindication and forgiveness. However, staffing problems have disrupted the learning of over a third of the students. Consequently, those students have done little extended writing on rites of passage and religious teachings about death, to show understanding of rituals and to express their own ideas. In their assessments, many students had difficulty comparing similarities and differences between different religious teachings about life after death. Higher-attaining students are able to discuss beliefs on resurrection and reincarnation and have produced well-argued essays justifying the Bat Mitzvah ceremony for Jewish girls. Lower-attaining students struggle with religious terms and concepts, and general literacy problems affect their ability to express ideas clearly.

243. By the end of Year 11, standards are below average, with a marked difference between those classes that have had regular teaching and those that have suffered discontinuity in their learning. Overall, students' achievement is satisfactory. Girls are performing better than boys in terms of detailed coverage of topics in their notes and fuller treatment of practice questions on moral issues. Students' motivation has been affected by teacher absence but it is generally the case that many boys are underachieving, judging by the poor organisation of work in their files and the difference between their target and predicted grades. The faith background of many students is

an advantage, as students are able to specialise for half the course, but they tend not to explain teachings in enough detail, with reference to scriptures, nor do they justify sufficiently their own views. For the majority of students, English is another language but their fluency prevents this from being a drawback.

244. Students' attitudes towards the subject are mainly good in Years 7 to 9. In lessons, students in Years 7 and 8 were interested in learning about Judaism through a reconstruction of the Seder meal and an examination of a Torah scroll. Attitudes are only satisfactory in Years 10 and 11, where there is some resistance, mainly from boys, towards the GCSE short course. Many students welcome the opportunity to gain a qualification from their studies but others are reluctant learners, whose attitudes have been exacerbated by the lack of consistent teaching. Behaviour is generally good in lessons, although there is some challenging behaviour from a small number of students that is usually handled well, avoiding confrontation. Students show a healthy respect for each other's faith and its sacred writings.
245. In all the lessons observed, teaching was at least satisfactory and most of it was good. For certain classes this was not the case prior to Easter, judging by the little homework that was set and the minimal marking of students' work, as a result of teacher absence. Except for Year 8, where religious education is taught by whoever teaches students history and geography, the subject is now taught by specialists, who are making the subject relevant to students' own experience of life. Teachers manage their students well, establishing good relations that are conducive to the discussion of moral and religious issues. Sometimes, class discussion is not capitalised upon with enough individual work requiring students to demonstrate their understanding in a variety of writing styles. Skilful use of class questioning and interesting exposition, using artefacts, engage students' interest in learning, as in the reconstruction of a Seder meal in Year 7 lessons. In some lessons the pace and challenge does not extend the different ability groups to progress to higher levels. More varied activities, including more independent enquiry, are needed to motivate underachieving boys in Years 10 and 11. Teachers are preparing students well for examinations, having devised effective revision booklets for them to annotate, to consolidate their knowledge.
246. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. They were shared at the beginning of the year but this arrangement failed and one teacher has successfully taken charge of the subject, until the new head of department arrives in September. Much effort has gone into the new examination courses for Years 10 and 11, producing detailed schemes of work and revision booklets. Resources are barely satisfactory, as examination textbooks have been depleted and there is little choice of books for Years 7 to 9. Assessment has been improved by more objective testing of subject skills to establish levels similar to those in the National Curriculum, if on a limited scale. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The reliance on non-specialists has been reduced and the time for the subject increased in Years 10 and 11, to allow full implementation of the local Agreed Syllabus. Consequently, standards have risen but are still below expectation. This year staffing difficulties have proved a setback but this has been resolved and the way is clear for renewed development.