

# INSPECTION REPORT

**BARKING ABBEY COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL AND  
SPORTS COLLEGE**

Barking

LEA area: Barking and Dagenham

Unique reference number: 101241

Headteacher: Mark Lloyd

Lead inspector: Mr M Beale

Dates of inspection: 13 – 17 October 2003

Inspection number: 259373

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of students:	11 to 18
Gender of students:	Mixed
Number on roll:	1663
School address:	Sandringham Road Barking Essex
Postcode:	IG11 9AG
Telephone number:	020 8270 4100
Fax number:	020 8270 4090
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor F Barns
Date of previous inspection:	20 October 1997

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

There are currently more boys than girls among the 1663 students on roll. Most come from three local primary schools. Attainment on entry has risen in recent years and is now close to the national average, although writing is a weakness for many students. The proportion of students with special educational needs, including those who have a Statement of Special Educational Need, is below average. Just under half of the students are of white British backgrounds. Other groups represented in reasonably large numbers are from families of Pakistani, Indian or African heritages. Although 30 per cent of the students have a mother tongue that is believed not to be English, only one student is at an early stage of learning English. The socio-economic background of the students is broadly average. An average number of students join and leave the school at times other than the start of the year. The school has several features to its work. It is a specialist sports college and a Beacon School. It became an ICT Testbed School in September 2003. There is also a Centre for Footballing Excellence attached to the school. It has received a considerable number of national awards in recent years, such as Basic Skills Quality Mark (2000), Investors in People (2000), Schools Curriculum Award (2000) and Technology College Trust Awards for Most Improved and Most Value Added (2000, 2001 and 2002). The 325 students in the sixth form mostly follow courses leading to AS and A Level but with some vocational courses also available. Entry requirements are such that their attainment is broadly average when they embark on these courses.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19385	Martin Beale	Lead inspector	
14066	Gill Hoggard	Lay inspector	
4351	Jeanne Strickland	Team inspector	English; English as an additional language
32947	Linda Coventon	Team inspector	Mathematics (11-16)
15079	Tony Boys	Team inspector	Science; biology (sixth form)
8052	Ken McKenzie	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
30563	Jackie Pentlow	Team inspector	Religious education; physical education (sixth form)
31685	Val Girling	Team inspector	Art and design
27665	Alrene Lees	Team inspector	Music
15051	Lynne Kauffman	Team inspector	Design and technology
23324	Sylvia Greenland	Team inspector	Geography; history (sixth form); sociology (sixth form)
8096	Nigel File	Team inspector	History
12408	Alan Frith	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
23268	Kevin Corrigan	Team inspector	Physical education; business studies (sixth form)
4126	Clive Parsons	Team inspector	Chemistry (sixth form); physics (sixth form)
28002	Sue Taylor	Team inspector	Special educational needs
31238	Gordon Clubb	Team inspector	Mathematics (sixth form)

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a very good school that gives very good value for money.** The students achieve well because teaching is good, they have very positive attitudes to learning and their attendance is good. The students make good progress and attain above average standards at GCSE. Leadership provides a very clear direction for the school and is successful in focusing the work of staff on meeting the needs of all students. As a result, it is a harmonious and well-ordered school in which the students are happy and their learning thrives. New buildings have greatly enhanced the working environment, but there are many shortcomings in other areas of the accommodation that hold back learning and achievement.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- A significant proportion of the teaching is lively, interesting and promotes considerable commitment and hard work from the students.
- The headteacher has skilfully involved staff, parents, students and governors in shaping the vision for the school so that there is a strong commitment from all involved towards its success.
- The many exciting innovations and developments are carefully planned, rigorously evaluated, sharply focused on the school's aims and contribute significantly to raising achievement.
- Participation in extra-curricular activities is high and greatly enhances standards particularly, but not exclusively, in physical education.
- Additional features, including the sports college status are used creatively not just to raise standards but also to place the school firmly at the centre of the local community.
- The recently introduced information and communication technology (ICT) project is already having a beneficial effect on teaching and learning, but students do not have the opportunity to apply their ICT skills in all subjects.
- The school does not meet requirements for teaching religious education above Year 9.

Improvement since the last inspection in 1997 is good. Standards have risen overall and, in the case of GCSE results, have improved more rapidly than nationally. The main weaknesses from the last inspection such as raising standards in English at GCSE and improving writing have been dealt with successfully. Teaching has also improved in Years 7 to 9 and the careers education programme is much more effective. By contrast, ICT is still not used sufficiently by students as a vehicle to support learning.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Performance compared with:		all schools			similar schools
		2000	2001	2002	2002
Year 11	GCSE/GNVQ examinations	B	A	C	D
Year 13	A/AS level and VCE examinations	n/a	C	D	

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
For Year 11, similar schools are those whose students attained similarly at the end of Year 9.*

**The students achieve well overall.** They consistently attain better results at GCSE than might be expected from their attainment when entering the school. Achievement is good from Years 7 to 11, so that standards by GCSE are above average from below average attainment when these students enter the school. The rising trend in GCSE results has been more rapid than improvements nationally over the last five years. The 2002 results were lower than the very good year in 2001, but results rose again in 2003 to a comparable level. Results in the Year 9 tests have also risen over the last five years. They were above average overall in 2002 and were well above the average of results in similar schools.

Standards are maintained in the sixth form where achievement is satisfactory overall. The students' results in individual courses are close to the national average overall but, because a significant proportion do not take three courses, their combined results are below average.

**The students' moral and social development is very good. Their cultural development is good and spiritual development is satisfactory. The students have very good attitudes and behave very well. Attendance is above the national average and punctuality to both school and lessons is good.** The students work hard and participate in large numbers in the wide range of extra-curricular activities that the school provides.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good.** Teaching is good overall. The students achieve well in lessons in most subjects and learn well. The curriculum is carefully planned and rigorously evaluated. Many innovative approaches have been introduced to ensure that the specific needs of each student are met. The key skill of literacy is promoted well, but the students do not consistently apply their ICT skills in subjects. The care and welfare of the students are high on the school's agenda. There is a very strong and effective partnership with parents. The school plays a pivotal role in the local community, which it serves very well particularly through its specialist status. Large numbers take advantage of the school's facilities and it has developed very strong and productive links with other schools and colleges.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are very good overall.** The headteacher is a highly effective leader with a clear vision for the future of the school. He is ably supported by other senior managers and key staff. The many innovations and initiatives that the school has adopted are focused sharply on achieving its aim of high standards. Staff are thoughtful and willing to reflect critically on their practice. Improving teaching and learning is central to the work of staff, who operate well as a team at all levels. Governors have developed secure procedures to enable them to fulfil their roles effectively, with the exception of ensuring that statutory requirements are met for collective worship and religious education in the sixth form. They set challenging targets for the school and monitor its work carefully. The school's vision and priorities are pursued very effectively through a coherent development plan and rigorous procedures for monitoring the work of staff.

## **PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents very much support the work of the school. They are pleased with the information that they receive and that staff seek and listen to their views. Students in the main school are also more than happy and feel that this is a good school. However, not all are convinced that the school listens to their views. Some students also feel that they do not have someone to turn to if they have a problem.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

There are few areas of weakness for this very effective school to tackle. The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- provide coherently planned opportunities in all subjects, including in the sixth form, for the students to apply their ICT skills;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- provide religious education in Years 10 to 13;
- provide a daily act of collective worship.

# THE SIXTH FORM AT BARKING ABBEY COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL AND SPORTS COLLEGE

## OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is an effective sixth form that gives good cost-effectiveness.** Standards are average overall and represent satisfactory achievement for most students. Teaching and learning are both good overall and sixth form provision is well led and managed. The school tries hard to meet the needs of as many students as possible through the range of courses that it offers, but recognises that it is not suitably equipped and resourced to provide the vocational courses it would like to. The accommodation also has some shortcomings, including the lack of suitable study areas.

The main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Staff stimulate a desire to learn, which significantly raises the students' aspirations.
- Achievement in physical education is very good.
- Teaching is good overall, with much that challenges the students' thinking.
- Insufficient attention is given to developing the ICT skills of those students who do not follow specific courses and there is no religious education course for all students.

## QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES OF THE CURRICULUM

Judgements about the provision in the subjects and courses inspected in the sixth form are shown below. They are based mainly on the quality of teaching and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects in the sixth form were inspected.

Curriculum area	Evaluation
English, languages and communication	<b>Provision for English is good.</b> The students achieve well. Teaching from highly expert staff is good, although poor accommodation is having a detrimental effect on achievement.
Mathematics	<b>Provision for mathematics is satisfactory.</b> Achievement is satisfactory, although relatively few students gain the higher grades at A Level.
Science	<b>Provision for biology is good.</b> Students have very positive attitudes and achieve well. Teaching is good overall and very good in Year 13, where much of the work is challenging. <b>Provision for chemistry is unsatisfactory.</b> There is considerable variation in the quality of teaching, some of which is poor. As a result, achievement is only satisfactory overall. <b>Provision for physics is satisfactory.</b> Achievement is satisfactory. There is some good teaching but the range of resources is limiting the development of high quality learning.
Information and communication technology	<b>Provision for ICT is good.</b> Students achieve well as a result of the effective teaching and good resources. Female students are under-represented.
Humanities	<b>Provision for history is good.</b> Good teaching and the very good attitudes of the students are leading to satisfactory achievement. <b>Provision for sociology is very good.</b> Achievement is good and A Level results are improving. This is largely as a result of very good teaching and excellent student motivation.
Engineering, technology and manufacturing	<b>Provision for design and technology is good.</b> Achievement is good. The students make good use of ICT, but the accommodation is unsuitable.
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	<b>Provision for physical education is excellent.</b> Achievement is very good as a result of much high quality teaching and the motivation of the students.
Business	<b>Provision for business studies is good.</b> The students achieve well because teaching is good and they have positive attitudes to their studies.



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*The curriculum areas are broadly common across all post-16 education and training. They do not necessarily correspond with subjects and courses taught by the school. Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. Excellent and very good are equivalent to the judgement 'outstanding' in further education and sixth form college reports; poor and very poor are equivalent to 'very weak'.*

## **ADVICE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT**

**Students receive good advice, support and guidance.** Their preparation for higher education plays a significant part in raising aspirations. Subject staff provide much valued academic support and as a result the students are aware of how well they are doing and how to improve the quality and standard of their work.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM**

**Leadership and management are good.** Staff focus their efforts on improving teaching and learning, although there are inconsistencies in some routines such as the quality of tutorial periods and the use of assessment data within subjects. There is a clear direction for sixth form work and the sports college status significantly enhances provision.

## **STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM**

Students are generally happy with the sixth form. They find the teaching challenging, feel that their work is regularly assessed so that they can see how it can be improved and generally feel that their teachers are accessible for them if they have any problems with the work. Students also feel that they are helped and encouraged to study and research independently. Some do have some concerns. For example, they are not universally happy with the quality of the advice and guidance received before and during their time in the sixth form, particularly if they are not continuing into higher education. As in the main school, a substantial number feel that the school does not listen to their views.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS

#### Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Achievement is good in Years 7 to 11 and satisfactory in the sixth form. Standards in the core subjects are above average by Year 11. Standards overall are average by Year 9, above average by Year 11 and generally average in the sixth form. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls or of students of different ethnic backgrounds.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- As a result of the good achievement in Years 7 to 11, standards rise as the students move through the school.
- GCSE results have risen more rapidly than nationally since the last inspection.
- The school has successfully tackled weaknesses in standards in English identified at the last inspection.
- Students with special educational needs are catered for well and many make good and often very good progress as a result.

#### Commentary

1. The broadly rising trend in the school's National Curriculum test results for Year 9 students has been similar to nationally. Results in 2002 (the most recent year for which comparative data is available) were above average overall. They were well above the results of students with similar Year 6 test results and represented good achievement for the students during their time in Years 7 to 9. English results were the best of the core subjects largely because a higher proportion of the students achieved or exceeded the nationally expected level. They were well above average in 2002, but fell in 2003, particularly for the proportion of students gaining the higher levels. Mathematics results were the weakest in 2002 and were average, but improved in 2003. Science results were above average in 2002 and at a similar level in 2003. The 2003 results represented very good progress for the students in mathematics from their Year 6 results and at least satisfactory progress in English and science. The school's challenging targets were not quite achieved in mathematics but were met in English and science.

#### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 9 – average point scores in 2002*

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	35.2 (33.1)	33.3 (33.0)
mathematics	34.2 (34.6)	34.7 (34.4)
science	34.2 (33.9)	33.3 (33.1)

*There were 275 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. The improving trend in GCSE results has been more rapid than nationally since the last inspection. This rapid improvement has been recognised by national awards for the results in 2000, 2001 and 2002. The high point for results was 2001, but following a fall in 2002, GCSE results picked up again in 2003 to a level comparable to 2001. Of note, was the considerable increase in the proportion of A\*/A grades from 12 per cent to 20 per cent of entries in 2003. The school considerably exceeded most of its targets in 2003.
3. It was a key issue for the school at the last inspection to raise English GCSE results to the same level as mathematics and science. This has been achieved so successfully that results in English in 2002 were well above the national average. These results also represented very

good progress for the students from their Year 9 test results. Mathematics and science did not fare quite so well in 2002. Results in science were above average and were close to the national average in mathematics. Even so they represented better than satisfactory progress from Year 9. Results in all three subjects were broadly similar in 2003 to 2002. GCSE performance was also above average in 2002 in drama, history, ICT and physical education; however, results fell in the latter in 2003.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	54 (64)	50 (48)
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	88 (95)	91 (91)
Percentage of students gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	91 (96)	96 (96)
Average point score per student (best eight subjects)	35.0	34.2

*There were 270 students in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. Good attendance, the students' very positive approach to their studies, good and often very good teaching and a curriculum that is designed to meet the needs and aspirations of all students are the major reasons why achievement is good overall in Years 7 to 11. Inspection evidence is that overall standards by Year 9 and GCSE are broadly similar to the most recent test and examination results.
5. There is no evidence to show any difference between the achievements of students of different capabilities. Higher-attaining students are challenged and stretched, while others are given good support when needed. Good provision is made for the students with special educational needs. As a result, they achieve well overall, although some achieve very well. Students know how well they are doing and want to improve further. Many of the students who have a Statement of Special Educational Need achieve very well in relation to their specific objectives. The school has also identified and provided effective programmes of extension for students who are gifted and talented, through funding from Excellence in Cities. These students also achieve well.
6. The attainment of students when entering the school has risen to be close to average. However, there are weaknesses in writing. The school has devoted considerable teaching resources to providing small groups for English in Years 7 and 8 and for some intensive literacy teaching through humanities for targeted groups of students. This has been particularly successful. The consistent promotion of literacy in other subjects is also paying dividends. Students achieve well in English throughout the school. Standards in English are average in Years 7 to 9 at this early stage in the school year and are above average in Years 10 and 11. The effective introduction of the Key Stage 3 strategy has supported the school's drive to raise achievement. Its implementation has been particularly effective in mathematics where standards now are above average throughout the school. Stable staffing is now also having a beneficial effect in this subject, although teachers do not pay the same attention to promoting numeracy in other subjects as they do to literacy. The ICT Testbed project is providing a considerable boost to teaching and learning, and is already having a positive effect on achievement. However, the use of ICT by students in subjects is patchy, partly because of difficulties of access. As a consequence of this, and because not all students in Year 11 follow an ICT course, the students' competence in using ICT in subjects is only average overall throughout the school.
7. Provision for students who speak English as an additional language is satisfactory. Few students arrive in the school at an early stage of English acquisition and for those who do, specialist help is sought from the local education authority. Their progress is monitored and help is provided in lessons for those who need it. Records show that students whose first

language is not English make satisfactory and often good progress. Two senior students interviewed spoke of the support they had received, both in lessons and in the after-school sessions which the support teacher had offered. One student said he found it quite easy to speak his home language with groups of fellow students in school but to revert readily to English with other groups. This has presented no problems for him or others in a school which welcomes diversity and variety.

### Sixth form

8. The attainment of students when they enter sixth form courses is broadly similar to the picture nationally. Most students gain results by Year 13 that are commensurate with predictions based on their entry levels. Their achievement is satisfactory overall, with performance in some subjects being better than this.
9. The average point score per A Level entry has generally been close to the national average in recent years. Subjects such as business studies, biology, history and sociology have been particularly successful, with results regularly better than average. Standards in English have improved considerably from below to well above average. Because of the range of courses studied (some not being at A Level) and the fact that several students do not take the traditional three courses (over one-third in the last Year 13), the total average points score per student has been at best average and was below average in 2002. Students did particularly well in business studies and design and technology, where results were well above average. Results were also above average in English, history and sociology. As a consequence of considerable staffing difficulties, results were below average in mathematics. Grades were well below average in art and geography. Overall 2003 results were similar to 2002 and generally represented at least satisfactory progress from GCSE.

### **Standards in GCE A/AS level and VCE examinations at the end of Year 13 in 2002**

	School results	National results
Percentage of entries gaining A-E grades	95.5 (93.8)	94.8 (89.8)
Percentage of entries gaining A-B grades	38.6 (43.8)	39.4 (37.9)
Average point score per student	218.3	263.3

*There were 103 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

10. Inspection evidence shows that achievement is broadly satisfactory, but in several subjects, most notably English, biology, ICT, sociology, design and technology and business studies, the students achieve well. The achievement of students on the BTEC course in physical education is very good. The one major area of weakness is in chemistry where there is a wide variation in the quality of teaching. This is resulting in students not achieving as well as they should in some lessons and is leading to only satisfactory achievement overall. As in Years 7 to 11 the students have insufficient opportunities to use their ICT skills, and for those who did not take an ICT course in Years 10 and 11 this is a significant weakness.

### **Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Attitudes and behaviour are very good, despite the difficulties of the site. Moral and social development are very good and cultural development is good. Although some opportunities are missed for spiritual development, this is still sound.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students are mature, positive and enthusiastic about learning.
- Attendance has improved in recent years and is now good.
- Moral and social values are very strongly promoted.

- Opportunities are missed to celebrate spirituality and the diversity of cultures in the school.

## Commentary

11. Students are happy to come to school and look forward to the many activities on offer, such as physical education and music. They are particularly positive about relationships, they make good friends and teachers are always helpful and supportive. The many different races, ethnic and faith groups mix well and there is a high level of harmony and tolerance. Although there is some bad behaviour around the school on occasion, staff are very quick to identify and sort out problems. Students themselves feel strongly that, with a very few exceptions, this process is administered fairly.
12. Despite the inherent problem of the site, which has much sub-standard accommodation, narrow corridors and cramped facilities, students behave very well when moving around between lessons and at break times. Behaviour in lessons is usually good or better, even when teaching is occasionally pedestrian. By a constant focus on achievement, the school encourages students to raise their expectations and work hard. For example, a mixed ability Year 7 English class looking at empathy were very attentive and gave some good responses to the moral dilemmas they were presented with. Physical education lessons in particular generate tremendous enthusiasm and excellent attitudes from students. They are confident, mature and articulate; the head boy and head girl are terrific ambassadors for their school.
13. The school is very good in promoting personal development through moral and social values, although teachers do not often consciously plan to build this into their teaching. Codes of conduct are well understood by all and outsiders frequently comment favourably on students' behaviour, for example on work experience placements. Religious education lessons make good use of empathy to learn from the situations of others. In geography, group work in class and field work trips out of school give students plenty of opportunities to work and learn co-operatively. In physical education the huge range of sports and activities with peers, both inside and outside the school, helps students learn to co-operate with others and take responsibility. Design and technology too encourages students to be independent, yet responsible, while working in teams. Charity fundraising plays a large part in personal development, much of it organised by school and year councils.
14. There is, however, little systematic cultivation of spiritual awareness other than in art. Assemblies are competent but often lacklustre, with no singing, music or worship. There is little planning in lessons for reflection or self-awareness, although students become mature and responsive young people because of the nature of the school's ethos. Although a diversity of cultures work and learn harmoniously within the school community (often in stark contrast to the locality) opportunities are missed to celebrate this. For example, there was no evidence during the week of the inspection of Black History month or the festival of Diwali. A notable exception is in art, especially in Years 7 to 9, where students investigate, for example, the work of Amnesty International or 'things that bother me.'

## Attendance

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence	
School data	6.2
National data	7.8

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.7
National data	1.2

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

15. The attendance figures have been slowly improving in recent years and are above average. Students are mostly punctual to school and to lessons, although sixth formers are hampered

by not always hearing the bell in the common room. Exclusion figures are in line with national figures. The school analyses excluded students by ethnicity and gender, and all evidence suggests the procedures are fairly applied.

## Exclusions

### *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	797	95	1
White – Irish	2	2	
White – any other White background	103	2	
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	19		
Mixed – White and Black African	2	1	
Mixed – White and Asian	7		
Mixed – any other mixed background	5	1	
Asian or Asian British – Indian	182	4	
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	214	12	
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	33	1	
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	4		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	21	6	1
Black or Black British – African	172	12	
Black or Black British – any other Black background	7	2	
Chinese	17		
Any other ethnic group	14	3	
No ethnic group recorded	14		

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

## Sixth form

16. Attitudes, behaviour and attendance in the sixth form are also very good and students are largely very positive about their experiences. Most feel they have had good guidance about their courses and plentiful help and advice if they want to change options. They enjoy sixth form life and say teaching and assessment are rigorous. They feel challenged and encouraged to succeed by the emphasis on high expectations for all. Like younger students they appreciate very good relationships with teachers and between themselves, and those who participate benefit greatly from the enrichment activities, such as working with younger students. There are, however, a few areas of dissatisfaction, notably the lack of an adult to turn to in the case of a personal problem, although the pastoral structure itself is very good. This may well be connected to the difficulties in continuity caused by tutors having to move from one site to the other and not always being available for the students. Some students who are not intending to move on to higher education justifiably feel somewhat sidelined during the extensive preparation for university entrance. Although the range of enrichment activities offered is good, participation rates vary, meaning that some students do very little outside their course areas.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education provided by the school is **good**. A significant proportion of the teaching is very good or better. The curriculum is carefully designed to meet the needs of all students and is considerably enriched by extra-curricular sporting activities. Through the sports college, the school plays a pivotal role in the community and has developed productive links with partners, including other schools, colleges and higher education institutions.

## Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. The assessment of students work is secure in the sixth form and good in Years 7 to 11.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A senior team, including a deputy head teacher and the advanced skills teachers, has established a coherent approach to learning, with plans for ensuring it is applied consistently.
- Teachers establish a very good climate for learning and students apply themselves to their activities and work very productively as a result.
- Teachers plan lessons well and develop and use a good range of strategies and resources to achieve their objectives.
- Homework is used well, especially in Years 10 and 11, to reinforce and extend the good learning taking place in lessons.
- Assessment is used effectively to identify how well students are doing and in planning future lessons, but sixth form students have too few opportunities to assess their own progress and set future targets.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 200 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4 (2%)	51 (26%)	85 (42%)	52 (26%)	5 (2%)	2 (1%)	1 (0%)

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

17. The school's developing approach to improving teaching and learning is driven by the advanced skills teachers (ASTs). The work of the five ASTs centres around an innovative programme, aimed at developing learning and teaching throughout the school, based on the very good principles that learning should be motivating, engaging and challenging and that it should encourage curiosity and creativity. It is too early yet to make a valid evaluation of their work, but there is emerging evidence to show that they are starting to have an impact on those with whom they are working.
18. Students are expected to conduct themselves with self-discipline and to demonstrate a mature approach to their work and to their behaviour. Their contributions to lessons are encouraged and welcomed and they are positive and very enthusiastic about their learning as a consequence. This enables teachers and students to engage in discussions about quite sensitive or difficult areas, such as in a Year 8 history lesson when talking about poverty and homelessness. This positive response is maintained even in the small proportion of lessons where teaching is less than secure.
19. Teachers plan well and lessons have clear and explicit learning objectives. Planning in the most successful lessons is very securely based upon a thorough evaluation of the students' current positions and the strengths and weaknesses of the class. For example, good learning

took place in a Year 9 geography lesson with a lower-attaining class because the teacher had carefully planned activities that challenged and extended the students despite their low levels of literacy and self-confidence. The teaching strategies used are frequently wide ranging, enabling students with a variety of preferred learning styles to engage fully and to maintain their involvement and concentration. The resources used by teachers are generally matched well to the intended learning and teachers are increasingly taking advantage of the recent influx of ICT. A good example of this was a Year 11 music lesson where the teacher's own expertise was demonstrated successfully through a computer presentation that was available to students on-line and the students went on to use the computers and keyboards available around the classroom. Teaching for students with special educational needs is good. This is because skilled support assistants are used well, teaching styles support learning, students' needs are well known and their difficulties are understood. However, some teachers do not yet plan well enough to meet all of the individual needs evident within some teaching groups.

20. The combination of high expectations from teachers and a mature response from students also results in homework playing a significant part in learning and the achievement of high standards. There is a balance across the school in using activity outside of the classroom to complete pieces or sections of work, to apply ideas in lessons to new contexts and to research ideas and to prepare for subsequent lessons. Support for the completion of GCSE coursework to a high standard is a feature of work in many departments in Years 10 and 11.

### **Sixth form**

21. The positive characteristics of teaching and learning are also present in the sixth form to a very large degree and continue to be good. Here, however, there are occasional examples of a teacher not having sufficient command of the subject to the level required so that teaching sometimes lacks accuracy and is not sufficiently skilled to remove uncertainties for the students. Also there are some gaps in the provision of specialist equipment and the development of resources so that teachers are unable to support learning quite as effectively as in the main school on occasions. Marking and feedback about work are also effective in the sixth form, but not enough is done to build upon the students' increased maturity and responsibility by involving them further in evaluating their progress and setting future targets

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is good. It meets the broad statutory requirements, although there are some exceptions. Enrichment is good with excellent provision in sport. Accommodation is unsatisfactory overall, being of variable quality, with some outstanding and some poor.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The statutory requirements for religious education in Years 10 and 11 and the sixth form are not met.
- Excellent provision exists for physical education and music and many opportunities for enrichment occur beyond the school day.
- Very good procedures for reviewing and developing the curriculum ensure that it meets students' needs.
- Many links with other institutions promote the sharing of good practice.
- A recent focus on skill development in Years 7 to 9 encourages independent learning.
- Significant shortcomings in accommodation in some areas reduce the effectiveness of learning for all age groups.
- Provision for PSHE has deteriorated since the previous inspection.

### **Commentary**



22. The curriculum is broad and balanced with excellent provision in physical education and music and a good range of options in design and technology. The statutory requirements for religious education in Years 10 and 11 and the sixth form are not met and students do not make sufficient use of ICT in some subjects. Many links with other schools and colleges, including a neighbouring secondary and several primary schools, complement the work achieved by the school through its participation in national projects such as ICT Testbed, Beacon Schools and Sports College. The school takes care to review arrangements regularly in order to provide an appropriate path for every student. As a result, all students of every age group and ability level receive an individual programme, tailored to enable them to learn well.
23. Procedures for developing the curriculum and innovating are very good. All initiatives are coherent and procedures for tracking the progress of individual students are secure. By ensuring that the needs of individual students are known, the school can guarantee that intervention will occur, if required. The school has recently attached particular priority to the importance of developing independent learning skills, especially for the younger students, and has focused on skills rather than content in Years 7 to 9. In addition, students in this age range with low reading scores follow an alternative and highly effective curriculum in the humanities area, providing special opportunities for them to make rapid progress with literacy.
24. The school's specialist status as a sports college has a significant impact in many areas. However, one area in which it has caused some decline indirectly is in PSHE which was previously a strength of the school. In changing to two periods each week of physical education, PSHE lost its timetabled slot. The current arrangement of teaching aspects in 20-minute tutorial times is recognised by the school as totally inadequate. For this reason, plans are in place to introduce a new timetable pattern from September 2004.
25. The school recognises that a traditional diet of ten subjects at GCSE does not suit all students in Years 10 and 11 and works with other local agencies to provide alternatives. One such arrangement enables selected students to learn part-time in school for three days each week and spend the rest of the time taking part in work-related learning outside, gaining experience of the world of work. Guidance provided to students as they move up to the next stage of learning at the ages of 14 and 16 is very good. The school organises individual meetings for many students and their parents, including all cases where the choices prove complicated or problematic. The desire to ensure that every student pursues courses of particular interest to them occasionally causes some to follow an unbalanced programme, but this is exceptional. It only happens after consultation and the school ensures that students and parents are aware of any restrictions which particular decisions might impose upon future choices.
26. The school provides well for students who have special educational needs. They have access to the whole curriculum and the flexible approach ensures that adaptations are made for students with specific needs. The work of the learning development team focuses strongly on building confidence, which is underpinned by setting arrangements and individual instruction. There is frequent monitoring of progress and updating of provision. Very good information, focused on the development of independent learning, is incorporated into individual support plans and enables teachers to plan adapted teaching strategies and resources. There is very good involvement of a wide range of specialist outside agencies and the school acts on advice and suggestions provided.
27. There are good opportunities for enrichment outside school hours that enhance significantly the students' achievement in several areas. The physical education department offers an excellent range of activity, catering for all levels of ability, and monitors the rates of participation, which are very high. Other departments also offer a wide range of activity. These include visits abroad, local excursions and after-school clubs. The latter are particularly successful in areas of the school where accommodation is very good or excellent. Some activities are targeted at specific groups, such as the gifted and talented, but most are available for all students. Most students in the school are involved, but there is no monitoring of overall

rates of participation.

28. Staffing is satisfactory, with specialist teachers available for most areas of the curriculum, except for some vocational courses in the sixth form, and a good match of support staff to the curriculum. The accommodation available to students varies considerably between subject areas and is unsatisfactory overall. It is excellent in physical education, music and drama, and good in some other areas. However, several subjects are taught in poor accommodation and, while the school has plans for improvement and is working hard to reduce the impact, it is impossible to avoid some effect on students' learning. Examples include small classrooms and no office space in English, unsuitable layout of some rooms in design and technology and leaking roofs. The difficulties are compounded by the fact that staff are obliged to move from one site to another at times during the school day. The provision of resources also varies, reflecting the quality of accommodation, but is satisfactory overall.

### **Sixth form**

29. The sixth form curriculum provides appropriate pathways for most students. An induction programme for all sixth form courses, occurring at the end of Year 11, provides good preparation. A good range of courses is available at advanced level, including general and vocational qualifications. Provision at intermediate level is more limited, despite recent efforts to expand it, but the school is determined to improve this when suitable staffing is available. Students can take GCSE examinations again in the sixth form if necessary. The school enables students in Years 12 and 13 to take qualifications in the key skills associated with literacy and number, but uncertainties with staffing have delayed the introduction of similar qualifications in ICT. The PSHE programme provides access to the wider key skills as well as encouragement, support and preparation for higher education; it is well supported by enrichment activities such as university visits, Saturday schools and master classes, many of which are funded by Excellence in Cities. Speakers from other providers often attend school to speak to students and offer information. These activities have raised students' aspirations and, therefore, standards. The school provides insufficient guidance for students who are not planning to move into higher education.
30. Subject staff are generally suitably qualified for the courses that they teach. While the new leisure centre and music/drama/media studies block provide excellent facilities, there are serious shortcomings in some areas. For example, shortcomings in design and technology rooms that are not suitable and English rooms that are too small for the sizes of most groups are similar to the problems experienced by younger students. A further shortcoming is that the students do not have suitable study areas with ready access to ICT. Not enough learning resources and equipment are available for some courses, such as sixth form physics.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school has a very strong and effective pastoral system which sensitively co-ordinates a range of help and support for its students to enable all to achieve well. Arrangements to ensure students' care, welfare and health and safety are good. Students receive very good support, advice and guidance and the school involves them well in its work and development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a very wide range of help and support available to students causing concern for any reason.
- Careers education has greatly improved.
- Students' views are actively sought and they feel that the school listens to them.
- The use of tutorial time is inconsistent, especially in the sixth form.

## Commentary

31. Child protection procedures are sound and any concerns quickly picked up by the network of teachers and form tutors. Despite the difficulties of the site, staff have evolved sensible daily routines which mean that movement around the school and the various public areas is all carefully supervised. There are safe working practices in practical subjects, such as science and design and technology, and an awareness of everyday hazards. However, students have some justifiable complaints about the canteen queues and state of the toilets, which are on occasion used for smoking.
32. The pastoral support system is very strong, because it is flexible enough to cater to a range of needs in diverse ways. A well-understood system of rewards and sanctions are linked to very high expectations of behaviour by all staff, working as a team. Pastoral staff, such as year co-ordinators, move up with their year group and students causing concern for any reason are referred to them. Underachievement may result in attachment to a learning mentor or a period in the learning support unit. Booster classes are offered to those falling behind or needing extra help, and there are homework clubs and out-of-hours learning to help students who cannot easily work at home. Those with behavioural problems are given individual support plans and gifted and talented students offered enrichment activities. This is particularly noticeable in physical education. Students are unanimous that teachers will always help anyone having difficulty with a subject or area of study. However, tutorial sessions every afternoon are variable in quality. In the best examples, students read for a concentrated period or discuss matters such as homework; in less well regulated sessions students pretend to read by turning over pages or simply chat aimlessly.
33. Careers guidance is now much improved since the last inspection, with a regular programme of consultations and information sessions, as well as outside advisors such as Connexions. Preparation for choosing options in Year 9 and for work experience in Year 10 is thorough and also involves parents and carers. The school has extensive connections with the local community through the Education-Business partnership, which in turn raises students' aspirations and makes the whole experience meaningful.
34. The school does a great deal to seek students' views and to act on them. Most students are confident they are listened to and that their opinions count, although a significant number feel that this is not the case. For example, on his appointment two years ago, the headteacher consulted widely about the future of the school. Regular meetings of year and school councils and the recently-formed learning council allow students the opportunity to comment on school life. Several changes, such as allowing the quadrangle areas to be used at break times, have come about through council meetings. In Year 10, one student researched and co-ordinated views about pressure from coursework deadlines, which were changed once staff could see they were not well managed.

## Sixth form

35. Support and guidance in the sixth form are good. Sixth form students come into tutorial periods with Year 11 students, to help advise them on career choices. Partly as a result of this, the staying-on rate is good. There is a good induction to sixth form life through 'taster' sessions in subjects, a study skills lecture and whole-day introduction at the beginning of the year, which includes a comprehensive handbook and study guide. All Year 12 students complete a 'Course Finder' which helps to guide them into higher education, if appropriate, and considerable time and energy are spent on visits to higher education fairs and institutions, and applications to university. In general, careers advice is very good and well targeted through a variety of activities such as interviews, 'Insight into Management' and research in the careers library. Tutorial sessions vary in effectiveness. In the best examples, students spend time profitably on producing their curriculum vitae or completing university application forms, but

quite often nothing much is planned and students simply chat or catch up with homework. With a strong focus on going into higher education, those who take a different route, for example directly into employment, can feel sidelined during these sessions.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The links with parents, partner institutions and the community are very strong and contribute greatly to the students' very good personal development and good achievement.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has developed a very good partnership with parents, who are kept fully informed about their children's progress.
- Highly productive links have been established with other school. These are outstanding in physical education.
- Links with the community are very good and again are outstanding in physical education.

### **Commentary**

36. Parents are extremely positive about the work of the school. There is a good range of printed information, such as lively newsletters and a professionally-produced prospectus, as well as home-school contracts, even in the sixth form. Parents are given progress reports every term, with standardised grades awarded for effort and achievement; this allows them to compare progress across all subjects using a comprehensible format. Final reports also include comments on how students can improve their work. The parents and carers of students with special educational needs are particularly well catered for through regular meetings, both formal and informal, and the respect given to their opinions. Parents in general are very supportive of the school and feel their views are listened to. On his appointment, the headteacher consulted them extensively about changes to the school, and they believe the staff are open and approachable should they have any concerns.
37. Links with the community are further strengths of the school and they cover a wide range. The excellent new sports and arts facilities encourage community use, such as children's drama and music groups and regional netball championships. The school also reaches outwards through, for example, business and work experience contacts with the local motor industry. In physical education there is an especially wide range of links and partnerships, which in turn offer opportunities for enrichment and interest as well as developing very good social attitudes, responsibility and self-reliance amongst students.
38. Links with local schools and colleges are also exemplary. Barking Abbey School shares the site with infant and junior schools and an impressive range of contacts has developed through the Excellence in Cities and technology partnerships. There is two-way traffic; for example, infants come across to concerts and physical education staff teach junior school pupils. In one dynamic lesson, staff worked with primary teachers to teach Year 6 a 'Haka' or Maori war dance, which ended with the whole class performing their own version. This generated terrific enthusiasm and enjoyment. As a result of this collaboration, and a thorough induction programme, Year 6 students have no fears about transition to secondary education. They move smoothly into a welcoming school whose buildings and staff are already familiar to them. There are also strong curricular links in a variety of subjects such as science, art and mathematics; the school's Beacon status and sharing of Advanced Skills Teachers ensure strong and fruitful links. At the other end of the spectrum, there are good links with institutions of higher education, which give students an insight into university life and encourage them to pitch their expectations high. It is clear from previous sixth form yearbooks that gaining professional qualifications, working hard and gaining money and respect are high on many leavers' agendas.

## Sixth form

39. In the sixth form there are many and varied links with community and partner institutions. For example the Community Sports Leader Award is undertaken by sixth formers, and together with local primary schools they recently organised a 'mini Commonwealth games'. Other events such as 'Insight into Management' and master classes for selected students at the University of East London all reinforce high expectations and opportunities for personal development.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. The headteacher is providing very effective leadership. The leadership of other key staff is very good, sharing the headteacher's commitment to raising achievement for all students. Management overall in the main school is also very good although there is inconsistency among departments in some key areas and in the implementation of recent initiatives. The governing body fully understands its role and plays a significant and supportive role in the life of the school.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides a clear vision and sense of purpose which inspires and motivates staff and students.
- There is a very clear management structure which effectively drives forward the school's aims to raise achievement for all.
- The headteacher and senior staff are beginning to make very good use of the Advanced Skills Teachers to improve teaching and learning throughout the school.
- Community links and extra-curricular activities are impressive and actively promoted by the headteacher and senior staff.
- The excellent leadership in physical education ensures that the school benefits fully from its Sports College status.
- The use of assessment and the implementation of some recent initiatives are inconsistent among some departments.
- The principles of best value are clearly understood by the headteacher and governing body and are fully embedded in the work of school.
- Leadership and management in the sixth form are good with effective systems in place for monitoring and supporting student progress.

### Commentary

40. The headteacher provides strong and vigorous leadership, promoting a school ethos based on high expectations, the development of student-centred teaching and learning and the provision of an impressive range of opportunities for all students to achieve their full potential. He provides a clear vision and sense of purpose which pervade all that the school is attempting to achieve. This vision is clearly communicated to staff and students and embodied in the school motto 'I belong'. Of particular note is the sharing of the school's ambitions with students by listening to and acting upon their views. The headteacher consults widely, delegates responsibly and fully embraces change and curriculum innovation. For example, participation in the ICT Testbed project is enabling the school to extend ICT provision significantly, and benefits continue from the school's Sports College status. There are many examples where the headteacher has promoted an inclusive environment, for instance in providing a Muslim prayer room for students.
41. A very strong management structure has been established where middle managers have specific, clearly defined areas of responsibility. They provide particularly effective management

in the key area of improving teaching and learning, most significantly in the use of the Advanced Skills Teachers to spread good practice. Heads of year have a clear vision of what needs to be done to raise achievement and they know the students very well, for example in Year 11, where students who are predicted to achieve 10 A\*-Cs are known and their potential celebrated. The very enthusiastic and effective deputy headteachers have a good understanding of what is working at the school and what is not. For example, strategies to improve literacy are becoming embedded throughout the school but specific target setting is not as developed as it ought to be. Management of the Learning Development Team is also very good, providing information and advice to staff to enable them to support students with special educational needs.

42. While the leadership of the departments is generally at least good, there is some inconsistency among departments in implementing all the recent school initiatives, for example in making full use of the enhanced ICT provision and in embracing changes to teaching and learning strategies. The use of assessment data is similarly inconsistent where there is a lack of clarity as to what exactly is expected of departments in terms of analysis and evaluation. However, leadership is excellent in physical education, where the Director of Sport provides the vision which promotes high expectations of students in terms of performance, participation, behaviour and kit. The Sports College requirements are managed very effectively and the required targets are invariably met ahead of schedule, for example in terms of GCSE results and in the participation of girls in physical education. Leadership is similarly very good in subjects such as geography, sociology and English where the heads of department set high expectations and have a sense of purpose and direction for their respective departments.
43. The governing body is well led. It has adapted its procedures to very good effect since the last inspection. Governors operate using a committee structure with clearly defined roles which allows the close monitoring of, as well as support for, school initiatives. Their relationship with the headteacher is positive and supportive of all he is trying to achieve. The challenging targets set by the governing body ensure that the school and the headteacher continue to strive for excellence and promote high achievement for all students. The principles of best value are embedded in the work of the school and comprehensively embraced by the headteacher and the governing body. This was evident in the extensive analysis and consequent revision of arrangements for students' dining at the school. In spite of these strengths, the governance of the school is deemed unsatisfactory because there is no daily act of collective worship and religious education is not studied by all students beyond Year 9 as detailed in the locally agreed syllabus.
44. The impact of the Sports College status at the school is seen in many areas, for example in the impressive range of extra-curricular activities, liaison with the local primary schools and the fostering of close links with the local community. Community links are impressive and actively promoted by the headteacher and the director of sport. There are close links with the local primary schools where teachers deliver lessons to Year 6 students, local sports clubs make extensive use of the school's sports facilities and students from the University of East London study at the school as part of their teacher training.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003*

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	6,661,650
Total expenditure	6,679,537
Expenditure per student	4,043

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	17,887
Balance carried forward to the next	0

## Sixth form

45. Leadership and management of the sixth form are good overall, with the two separate heads of year providing the necessary strategic direction to continue to raise achievement. The headteacher's vision and sense of purpose for the development of the main school are having a good effect on the work of the sixth form and are evident in the support, guidance and tracking of student progress which the two heads of year are implementing. Systems for monitoring the work of students, including analysis of data and the setting of targets, are firmly established, although there is some inconsistency among form tutors in providing appropriate and rigorous support and guidance to their students. There is also some inconsistency between the heads of year and subject heads in terms of providing appropriate strategies to raise the achievement of individual students. Nonetheless, students themselves feel well supported and value the access to subject staff, tutors and the headteacher.
46. Overall, the two members of staff with management responsibility for the sixth form work harmoniously in providing an educational environment and support system which students appreciate. The comprehensive development plan for the sixth form fully embraces the key areas identified by the headteacher as important in raising achievement throughout the school, for example in developing students' independent learning and in the use of assessment analysis to aid learning and curriculum planning. The governing body fulfils its role well in supporting the work of sixth form, but governance is deemed unsatisfactory because statutory requirements in religious education are not met because there is no daily act of collective worship.

# PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

## SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4

### ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

#### English

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results in GCSE English and English literature examinations have improved since the last inspection and remain close to or above the national average.
- Results in the national tests at the end of Year 9 have been above the national average over the past five years apart from a drop in 2001.
- There is good subject knowledge, experience and enthusiasm in the department and students respond well and are keen to learn.
- Provision for students with special educational needs is particularly good.
- Some current work in Years 7 to 9 lacks variety and challenge, and students are not producing enough regular sustained writing.

#### Commentary

47. Teaching and learning in English are good overall. Attainment at the end of Year 9 has remained above the national average since the previous inspection, apart from a drop in 2001 when results were still close to the national figure. Students are achieving well. Results compare very well with those in similar schools and with those in mathematics and science. There was no significant variation in the performance of students from different backgrounds. However, in 2003 there was a marked drop in higher level attainment at Level 6 in English compared with mathematics and science. The department is wisely reviewing some of the planning of work at this stage.
48. Students show good levels of understanding of the novels they are reading and can consider characters and themes. They answer teachers' questions readily, although in some lessons there were few opportunities for them to talk at any length, in discussion, improvisation or prepared presentations. Strategies, such as the role-play which worked well in a Year 7 class and the personal anecdotes which made a good introduction to the reading of a story in Year 9, are particularly effective. In less successful lessons, although teachers followed a plan conscientiously they did not always recognise when pace and content needed adjustment to keep students alert and interested.
49. Writing was identified as a weakness in the previous inspection report. The school has responded with an excellent whole school initiative, ensuring that all departments recognise the responsibility they share for developing students' writing. Standards and achievement in writing have improved across the curriculum. The English department has contributed well to this and has also benefited from it. Currently, writing skills in English are being well developed in Years 10 and 11 but not as successfully at this stage of the term in Years 7 to 9. Exercise books indicate that students are not yet being required to write regularly and at sufficient length. Little sustained writing appears to be set for weekly homework, with the expectation that it will be carefully presented and marked with the thoroughness which helps students to see the strengths and weaknesses in their work.
50. Results in GCSE English were well above the national average in 2002 and in English literature they were above. They were higher than those in either mathematics or science. In 2003 there was a drop, although this year showed a good increase in the numbers attaining A\* and A



grades, particularly in literature. The department had made higher level attainment a special focus and now is considering ways to improve the achievement of those students in the middle ability range whose results have been disappointing. Girls do better than boys in English, as they do nationally. However, the gender difference is less at this school and boys are doing better in English, and particularly in literature, than they are nationally. There is no significant difference in the attainment of students from different ethnic backgrounds.

51. In Years 10 and 11 students of all ability levels do well. There is a high expectation that all students who take GCSE English will also be entered for literature. Students with special educational needs include some who come into the school with unusually low levels of previous attainment. The work being done to enable these students to have access to the full English curriculum is one of the strengths of the department. The GCSE results, with a 100 per cent pass rate, reflect the determination and skill with which teachers in both stages have developed students' aspirations, confidence and self-esteem. Excellent liaison with the learning development department is a key factor in this work. Throughout the school, good relationships between teachers and students at all levels are a feature of lessons, contributing much to students' motivation and ability to learn.
52. Work seen during the inspection showed teachers making good use of the new facilities provided by the ICT Testbed project, for example to give students another means of sharing and reviewing their writing. Students are working steadily to develop their language skills and their knowledge and understanding of the literature texts. Written work includes some good creative writing and essays which show a range of attainment in literature, from very detailed and perceptive analysis of texts to simpler commentary on theme, plot and character.
53. Despite the use of the ICT Testbed in classrooms, the department is unable to fulfil the statutory ICT requirement as it has virtually no access to the computer rooms for lessons. Nor is there a computer in the subject stock room. Accommodation for English is poor. The head of department has no office, teaching spaces are often unsatisfactory, there is limited access to drama space, and room for storing books and resources is inadequate.
54. It is a tribute to the department and its good leadership that these difficulties have not had a serious impact on progress and attainment. A strong sense of commitment is evident in a team which is stable, experienced and enthusiastic. English teachers have responded very professionally to the inspection, willing to discuss their lessons, open to suggestions and eager to evaluate and develop their work. The head of department's careful analysis of results and progress is being used to shape target setting and planning, and minutes of meetings show that these are being discussed by the core team.
55. A good effort is made to ensure that the teachers from other departments who teach some English lessons are kept informed and involved, though they cannot normally attend departmental meetings. An immediate requirement is better monitoring of work in Years 7 to 9, to ensure that students are writing enough and that written homework is regularly set and well marked.
56. The English department, with major examination responsibilities, is making a significant contribution to the work and success of the school. Progress since the previous inspection has been good.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

57. A policy for whole-school language development was established by the previous head of English. As deputy headteacher she now remains in charge of this area, working closely with the English and learning development departments. Initial training was given to all teachers when the Literacy Strategy was introduced and texts and exercise books were examined to assess marking consistency. Updated guidelines were circulated in 2002. These identify the particular areas for development and focus and include specific examples of ways in which

teachers can develop students' literacy skills in their subject areas. There are also whole school policies on handwriting and presentation of work.

58. Departments have responded well to the initiatives, although not all have included language policies in their schemes of work. Practice noted by subject inspectors was satisfactory in all areas and often good. Subject specific vocabularies are well developed. There is good emphasis on writing skills in science and mathematics, and opportunities for reading and discussion were seen in design and technology. The modern foreign languages department has identified reading as a key area for development and is working with the local education authority on strategies for this. Some particularly good practice was noted in geography; students write for a range of purposes and teachers are consistent in their approach to the correction of errors. However, this is not the case in all subjects where marking is currently the aspect of language development needing most attention. All subjects benefit from the good work being done by the Learning Development and English departments with students who come into the school with below average language skills.

## French and German

Provision in both French and German is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in Years 10 and 11, with some excellent lessons in French, and results at GCSE have improved.
- A focus on developing the students' skills in literacy in Years 7 to 9 has brought about significant improvement.
- The department provides good opportunities for educational visits abroad.
- The numbers choosing to continue with languages in Years 10 and 11 have fallen recently.
- Planning for improvement has no timescales, imprecise criteria for success and not enough focus on assessment.

### Commentary

59. Standards in French are above national averages. The students entered for French in 2002 achieved broadly similar results in this subject as they did in the average for all their other subjects. The percentage who gained higher grades was above the national average percentage, with boys doing particularly well in comparison with the national percentage for boys. This broad trend continued in 2003, with girls doing better than before and exceeding the national average by a wide margin. The results of teachers' assessments in French for Year 9 students in 2003 were above national expectations. There has been no significant difference either at Year 9 or GCSE in the performance of students from different ethnic backgrounds.
60. Standards in German are above national averages. Students entered for German in 2002 achieved better results in this subject than in the average for all their other subjects. The percentage gaining higher grades was above the national average and boys' results exceeded those of boys nationally by a much wider margin than girls'. Even in raw terms, boys achieved better than girls in this respect. Results in both languages have improved in recent years, but in Year 9 in 2003, teacher assessed results in German were a little lower than national expectations.
61. Teaching is good in both languages in Years 10 and 11 and some excellent teaching occurs in French. Students learn well, especially when there is lively use of the foreign language, very good use of colourful resources and high expectations of what they can achieve. The accommodation for language teaching is unsatisfactory. Teachers are obliged to use different rooms during the week, often moving from one site to another, and this makes it difficult for them to look after and develop their regular classroom. ICT facilities are not easily accessible

and students do not use them often enough. In spite of recent good examination results, many students stop learning French or German at the end of Year 9. The numbers choosing languages have fallen from two-thirds of the year group in 2000 to just under half in 2003. While those who continue do well, achievement is only satisfactory overall.

62. Teaching is satisfactory in both French and German in Years 7 to 9. Students know their work will be marked regularly and accurately and they receive frequent praise and guidance. Teachers in the department have developed good procedures for improving students' skills in literacy, creating writing frames of high quality and a bank of engaging texts for students to read, together with strategies for enabling students to gain access to them. Students with special educational needs receive appropriate support as teachers are well informed about their individual needs. Those for whom English is an additional language make good progress, benefiting from their well developed language learning skills. Procedures for ensuring that all students understand the level at which they are working and can describe what they should do in order to improve, are not yet well established and the department's plans to develop this are not precise.
63. The leadership and management of the department are satisfactory. The departmental team works together in a mutually supportive and co-operative way and initiatives are well documented in a good handbook. While every teacher reports on their examination results, there is not enough statistical analysis to ensure that improvements will occur in future. Development planning is linked to the plans agreed for the whole school, but has insufficient impact on learning owing to a lack of specific detail, such as timescales, individual responsibilities and ways of measuring success. The plan does not mention the decline in numbers choosing languages in Years 10 and 11, so no action is planned to reverse this trend. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection: most issues raised last time have been resolved and standards have risen, but the poor condition and inconvenient location of some classrooms remain.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Lessons are well planned and there is very good consistency of approach to teaching and learning across the department.
- The new ICT Testbed resources are used well to extend and enliven teaching, but there is insufficient use by students of ICT to develop their learning.
- The national strategy for teaching mathematics to 11 to 14 year olds has been implemented well.

### **Commentary**

64. The overall results of National Curriculum tests for Year 9 students in 2002 were close to the national average and to results in similar schools. They were not as good as either English or science because fewer students achieved nationally expected levels. Students' achievement is good. Results in the 2003 tests showed a considerable improvement and represented good progress when compared to the students' results when they entered the school. The boys did better than the girls. Results are higher than at the time of the last inspection. GCSE results in 2002 were also close to the national average and above results in similar schools. They also improved in 2003 and represented good progress for the students compared with their earlier Year 9 test results. Boys and girls performed at about the same levels over grades A\*-C. There was no significant variation in performance of different ethnic groups. There has been some instability in staffing over the past few years, leading to results now being not as high as in 2001. These staffing difficulties have now been remedied.

65. Inspection evidence confirms that attainment by the end of Year 9 is above average. Higher-attaining students have very good numerical skills and are confident in using a range of mental methods in their calculations. Their manipulative algebra skills are strong. Average-attaining students have good number and other mechanical mathematical skills. Some lower-attaining students, including those with special educational needs, are suitably challenged, and use calculators to support and check answers and mental calculations. They apply suitable numeric operations to solve simple problems.
66. By the end of Year 11, the standards the students attain in their work are above average. Higher-attaining students have very good problem-solving strategies and are able to use their algebraic skills well in finding generalisations. Some average-attainers can adopt an algebraic approach early in their investigative tasks but their notation is sometimes inaccurate and limits the quality of their work. Nevertheless, they have good numerical and data handling skills. Lower-attainers, as well as those with special educational needs, work systematically, breaking down their work into simpler steps, and tabulating their results. They make sensible predictions as to possible patterns, and to test their results. Although their basic number work is sound, they do not always fully understand the order in which to perform some calculations.
67. Teaching and learning are both good. The structure and guidance of the national strategy is used well. Warm-up and oral mental starter activities are used well to recap previous learning and practise recently acquired skills. There are clear expectations of what will be covered during a lesson and for the regularly set homework. Marking is good and follows department guidelines. Teachers use a range of good questions while working through examples of new topics. As a result, in some lessons students were curious and inventive, asking mathematical questions and wanting to know why something works. In others they were confident to explain their methods and solutions. Students contribute well and record the completed examples before embarking on exercises to develop their knowledge, skills or understanding. The final part of lessons is used valuably to assess learning. In all lessons, students offered possible solutions to problems set and discussed other ways of arriving at the same answer, students took turns to give possible answers to steps in a question, and small whiteboards were used where each student independently recorded an answer and showed the teacher. This practise was used with both high-attaining students and with students with special educational needs; immediate feedback was provided to the teacher for students who had not understood the objective of the lesson.
68. Targets are set for individual students based on forecasts of prior attainment. The mathematics sets include a top set where these students are expected to get A\* and A grades. These students have been entered for 'the mathematics challenge'; however, there is little other evidence within the department of work to promote the gifted and talented.
69. While the provision of ICT resources through the Testbed project is bringing about improvements in teaching and learning, there was no evidence seen during the inspection week of students' use of ICT. The elements of the National Curriculum in mathematics that relate to ICT are, therefore, not met.
70. The department is well led and managed, with responsibilities for mathematics shared among the department. The staff include many mathematics specialists but, over the past few years, difficulties in recruiting staff has meant teachers with related qualifications have been appointed. There has been good improvement since the last inspection and the issues raised relating to quality of teaching have been tackled successfully, although the use of ICT to support the students' learning is still a weakness.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

71. The provision for numeracy is satisfactory, although its development has been less of a focus than that of writing across the curriculum. The school has a very good policy for mathematics across the curriculum that relates mainly to students in Years 7 to 9. The document provides

very good examples to aid departments in developing number skills and has arrangements for monitoring and liaison with departments. It has been written by the mathematics department for the whole staff, who have had a limited amount of training. It includes mapping of subjects against specific numeracy topics and some suggested areas in subjects where numeracy could be used.

72. There is a mixed picture of the development and use of numeracy across subjects. Evidence was seen in English with a chart showing mood swings, and the use of graphs, tables and calculations in science. Most use was observed in design and technology where there was work on scale, plans, and portion control in food technology using weights and measures. Other subjects are less well represented with little evidence of the suggestions made in the policy being incorporated into the subject teaching. This slows the rate at which the students learn how to apply their number skills.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students achieve well in response to the good teaching and attain above average standards.
- The students have good attitudes to their work and behave well in lessons. This also helps them to achieve well.
- In some lessons there are not enough opportunities for students to discuss, explain and extend their thinking about science.
- Work is marked regularly but the marking is inconsistent and does not always make clear enough what the students need to do to improve.

### **Commentary**

73. Results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for students at the end of Year 9 were above average and well above the average for similar schools. The results were similar to those in English and above those in mathematics. There was no significant difference in the standards attained by boys and girls, or by students in different ethnic groups, when compared with national results. The standards attained in the tests have risen steadily over the last six years. The 2003 test results were below those of 2002 but the proportion of students gaining higher levels increased. Inspection evidence shows that, by Year 9, the students attain above average standards in their knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and physical processes. They generally have good recall of the work they have done in the past and they understand the basic science concepts that underlie the work. Most students are able to give accurate answers to questions about work they have done recently, although their ability to discuss and explain their work is less secure because they are not given enough opportunities to develop these skills in lessons.
74. Results in the 2002 GCSE examinations were above average and continue a rising trend. There were some differences in the standards attained by boys and girls but there was no consistent pattern and the differences were not significant in comparison to national results. The standards attained in the single award GCSE course were well above average. The overall 2003 GCSE results were maintained at around the same level as 2002. By Year 11 the students maintain above average standards in their knowledge and understanding of science, although their ability to explain their work and predict outcomes is still weaker than their recall of facts and understanding of basic concepts.
75. The overall quality of teaching is good, although opportunities for the students to discuss, explain and develop their thinking about science are limited in some lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge, plan their work effectively and manage their classes well. This

ensures that the students behave very well and have very positive attitudes to their work so that they make good progress in their learning. The teachers assess the students' progress regularly and set targets based on these assessments. This encourages the students to do their best. However, standards of marking are inconsistent and the teachers' comments do not always give students enough guidance on how to improve their work. The support provided for students with special educational needs is concentrated mainly in Years 7 to 9 and is effective in these classes. No investigational work was seen during the inspection but the evidence from the students' notebooks and from their assessed practical work shows that standards are average throughout the school in this aspect of science. The students have the necessary skills in mathematics to undertake their work in science and their skills in English are generally good because they are given suitable opportunities to develop these in science lessons. The students do not have enough opportunities to use computer equipment to help them learn and this aspect of their work is below average, with little evidence in their notebooks. A good start has been made in using the newly installed computer equipment to support teaching.

76. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection. Standards throughout the school have continued to rise and the issues raised have been tackled successfully in the main. The day-to-day management of the department is good and the temporary head of department has provided satisfactory leadership in the absence of the permanent head of department. Suitable priorities for development have been identified and they are focused on raising attainment.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in GCSE ICT continue to improve and results are well above average.
- Teaching on the examination courses in Years 10 and 11 is good and often very good.
- The learning resources produced by the department for use via the school network are very effective.
- The regular and often imaginative use of ICT in physical education, music and design and technology has a very positive impact upon teaching and learning.
- The co-ordination and monitoring of ICT use across the curriculum are insufficiently developed; the use of ICT in the core subjects, English, mathematics and science, is unsatisfactory and it is underdeveloped in several other subjects.

### **Commentary**

77. Standards in GCSE examinations have improved and have been well above the national average for A\*-C grades and above the school average in recent years. They continued to improve in 2003. This represents very good achievement for many students. There has been no consistent pattern in the difference in attainment between girls and boys in recent years.
78. In Years 7 to 9, the students are following the National Strategy for ICT. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but there is some inconsistency. In the best lessons, teaching is very good. The pace is brisk and challenging activities are clearly explained and well executed. However, less effective teaching resulted in unsatisfactory progress by students. Standards in lessons and work seen by Year 9 are consistent with national expectations. Examples of good and very good work were seen in some lessons. In Years 7 to 9 students' achievement is satisfactory overall, although there is some inconsistency, reflecting the quality of teaching in a minority of lessons.

79. In Year 10, all students are improving their ICT skills and knowledge in a GCSE course where standards are good. Courses are very well planned with very good attention to detail in the production of coursework assignments. Students are well aware of examination requirements and assessment criteria. They receive very good support from teachers, which includes the use of well-produced learning resources made available on the computer network. Monitoring and assessment are good; students know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further. Talented students are given opportunities to use their abilities to the full in most ICT lessons. Only a minority in Year 11 follow the current GNVQ course where standards are often very good. For those in Year 11 who are not taking the examination course in ICT, opportunities to use and develop their ICT skills in subject departments are very inconsistent.
80. The increase in the provision of discrete ICT lessons has resulted in several non-specialists teaching ICT. These teachers are effective and well supported by the ICT department. Responsibilities in relation to ICT have been reallocated with the recent arrival of additional experienced ICT teachers to take on key roles. Curriculum changes are being very well managed and are having a very positive impact upon the breadth and balance of the curriculum as well as on standards in ICT. Both leadership and management are satisfactory. Improvement since the last inspection has been good within the ICT department, but the use of ICT across the curriculum, which was weakness at the last inspection, remains unsatisfactory in key subjects.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

81. Across the curriculum there are good, challenging opportunities to use ICT in physical education, design and technology and music. The use of computers by students in some other subjects is still underdeveloped as access to machines has been limited in the recent past. There has been an increase in the use of ICT by teachers using new projection facilities, which are now available in all classrooms. However, the use of computers by students across the curriculum has not yet improved sufficiently since the last inspection.
82. The externally funded ICT Testbed initiative is very well managed by a member of the senior management team and is now enabling the school to extend significantly its ICT provision in all curriculum areas to the benefit of students, teachers, parents and the wider local community. The libraries on both sites and several other rooms have been refurbished with new ICT equipment which has improved access to computers. All classrooms now have a computer and excellent projection facilities enabling staff to adopt a wider range of teaching approaches. However, the use of ICT is still unsatisfactory in the core subjects. These departments do not make sufficient use of the growing ICT resources to enhance teaching and learning and ensure that National Curriculum requirements are met appropriately. Cross-curricular provision is not yet planned or monitored effectively at a whole-school level.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography**

Provision in geography is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards of teaching are good overall, although there are some inconsistencies in quality.
- Independent learning is well-developed.
- Very good management and leadership provide a strong framework for learning.
- Fieldwork provision is very good.
- Citizenship themes are not made sufficiently explicit by teachers.

## Commentary

83. In 2002 GCSE results at all levels were above the national average, and were significantly above the results of other subjects in the school. However, results fell in 2003, after two years when none of the examination groups had the same teacher for the whole course. There is no significant gap between the results of girls and boys or between students from different ethnic backgrounds. Work seen during the inspection was of an average standard. By Year 11, high-attaining students have completed some good fieldwork and case studies, and have a good understanding of how to collect and analyse data. The work of some lower-attaining students is poorly presented, showing a lack of interest that leads to incomplete understanding of the course material.
84. Teachers' assessments at the end of Year 9 showed that standards were below national expectations in 2002 but improved sharply in 2003. The standard of work in Year 9 seen during the inspection shows clear development of skills and knowledge from Year 7, and present Year 9 work is in line with expectations. High-attaining students have produced some very good assignments about tourism based on personal research and internet use. Lower-attaining students have also produced good work but with less depth of information and analysis. Every opportunity is taken to develop literacy and numeracy skills, so that by the end of Year 9 no students are held back through weaknesses in these areas. No students at this stage are held back because of weak literacy or numeracy skills.
85. Students with special educational needs are provided for by special worksheets and by extra support in group work, and high-attaining students are given extra activities to challenge them. Overall the achievement of these groups of students is in line with that of their classmates. Special classes are provided for some Year 7 students who need additional support and the achievement of these students in learning about earthquakes was satisfactory, although their literacy skills are developing slowly.
86. Teaching and learning are good across Years 7 to 11 with no unsatisfactory lessons observed. Student achievement is satisfactory as a result. The best lessons were based on very good planning and organisation that made very good use of the time available. Students learn well from group research and making presentations to the rest of the class. This gives them personal confidence and contributes well to their social development. Teachers have high expectations and they assess students' learning through questioning and through regular projects based on National Curriculum levels. However, there are some inconsistencies in the planning of lessons, which sometimes lead to students not being sure of what they have to do, so learning opportunities are wasted. On occasions the pace of lessons slows and students become restless and lose concentration. Teachers use the new "visualiser" equipment well to enrich their lessons. However, at present there is not enough use of ICT as a tool for learning in Years 7 to 9 because, although it has been well planned for, there is not enough access to computers.
87. Very good management ensures a good curriculum, with a particularly rich programme of fieldwork that develops both geographical and social skills. An audit has been done to identify citizenship topics, many of which already exist in the geography curriculum, for example the exploitation of the waters of the Colorado River. However, these themes are not yet developed in such a way as to make them an explicit part of the citizenship curriculum. Leadership is also very good, with steps taken to bring about good improvement since the previous inspection, particularly in standards of teaching and independent learning. A commitment to raising standards ensures that the department has a good capacity to thrive in the future.

## History

Provision in history is **good**.



## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Years 10 and 11.
- Teaching is good and as a result the students learn well.
- Standards in Years 7 to 9 are below average and there is an imbalance in the proportion of time spent on different studies.

## Commentary

88. Standards have risen since the last inspection. Standards achieved in the 2002 GCSE examinations were above average and were at a similar level in 2003. Students did better in history than in the average of their other results in 2002.
89. Students from all backgrounds achieve well in Years 10 and 11. For instance, in Year 10 more able students analyse aspects of the Battle of the Somme and less able students explain the outcomes of the event. More able Year 11 students use sources of evidence well to analyse developments in 16<sup>th</sup> century medicine. In Years 7 to 9, achievement is satisfactory. More able students reach expected achievement levels so that by Year 9 they evaluate sources of evidence and explain the consequences of change arising from developments in Britain between 1750 and 1900. Less able students make sound progress and in Year 9 describe some of the changes during the Industrial Revolution. There is insufficient understanding of cultural, religious and ethnic diversity and of the links between local, British, European and world history, which limits students by Year 9 reaching the higher levels of history attainment.
90. Teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers explain clearly what students are going to learn and how they will be expected to learn. Teaching is supported by good visual and textual sources. Good questioning extends students' thinking. In a Year 11 lesson on 19<sup>th</sup> century health, teaching was encouraging and students responded very well with lengthy and perceptive oral explanations. In Year 9 more able students were excited by a mystery exercise and the good resources and planning enabled the students to make very good progress. Less able Year 9 students sustained concentration on working conditions in the 19<sup>th</sup> century because of good visual resources and good questioning. Teachers assess well in Years 10 and 11 and students are given good guidance on how to improve. The level-related formative assessment in use in Years 7 to 9 is beginning to provide students with a better indication of what they have achieved and what their next learning steps should be.
91. Leadership and management of history are both good and have led to good improvement overall since the last inspection. The GCSE course is well planned and so standards were maintained during the difficulties caused by high staff turnover. Staff are enthusiastic and take responsibility for leading developments. The curriculum in Years 7 to 9 conforms in most respects with the National Curriculum. However, a very disproportionate amount of time is spent on Britain 1500-1750 (two terms) compared to the world study - Islamic Civilisations (half a term). Not all students have opportunities to develop historical enquiry using information from museums, buildings, sites and ICT-based sources which restricts their achievement.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **unsatisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school does not meet the legal requirements of providing religious education for all students.
- There has been a steady rise in standards, especially in learning from religion.
- The very good attitudes of the students contribute to the good achievement.
- Data is not analysed to identify and focus on areas of improvement

## Commentary

92. Students join the school with knowledge; skills and understanding that are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education that the school uses. They come from a number of schools and, although their skills are in line with expectations, the body of knowledge covered varies greatly from school to school. At the end of Year 9 the students reach standards that are slightly above the expectation of the Agreed Syllabus although there is no formal data to make a comparison. They are stronger on the learning from religion than in giving their own views on topics. Students following the GCSE course gained results above the national average in 2002 and the results in 2003 were even higher from an entry of 60 students, where 82 per cent gained A\*-C grades. Students do significantly better in religious education than in their other subjects. There is no core course for students in Years 10 and 11 and in this regard the school does not meet the legal requirements for the subject. Achievement is good for all groups of students. The students make good progress, moving from broadly in line to above expectations by the end of Year 9. The achievement of the students following the GCSE course is also good when compared to their attainment in other subjects and the level from which they started.
93. Teaching is good with several very good aspects, particularly in Years 10 and 11 where it is very good. Teaching is challenging and has good pace and vitality that stimulates the students' interest and encourages them to express their views, give reasons for their answers, apply their knowledge and give examples to show their understanding of issues. The good planning and, in many cases, good knowledge and understanding of the staff are used to stimulate and maintain interest in lessons. Teachers devise a variety of ways of approaching topics, and in the best lessons support materials are available for students with weaker literacy skills. There is an attitude of inclusion for all and the good teacher-student relationships ensure that the students feel confident in expressing personal views. This contributes to the students making good progress, although in a number of cases the discussion is teacher-led and this limits the amount of student contribution. In all years the marking of the students' books gives positive encouragement, but the use of constructive comments to enable the students to have a sharp focus on what is needed to raise their attainment level, is variable. A number of comments are not followed up. The teaching of the subject in a number of rooms inhibits teaching and learning, resulting in a lack of subject-based display work for use in the lessons as exemplar or for factual information sources. Numerical concepts are not used within the subject. ICT is not used by students in lessons, but is for homework tasks. The curriculum has not been enhanced by visits to places of worship or by speakers sharing different faiths, an area identified as an entitlement by the Agreed Syllabus.
94. The leadership of the subject is unsatisfactory as the subject does not meet legal requirements, but the management of the department at subject level is good. There is a clear vision for improvement and the impact on students of the difficult staffing situation over recent years has been minimised. However, data is not analysed to identify areas of weakness and improvement has been focused by whole-school issues and general knowledge of the students' performance. Since the last inspection all the positive aspects have been maintained and standards are rising; however, because the legal requirements have still not been met, improvement is unsatisfactory.

## TECHNOLOGY

### Design and technology

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The positive and enthusiastic role models of teaching and non-teaching staff who work very hard to create a stimulating environment in exceptionally poor accommodation.
- Interesting and challenging assessments drive the students to improve their achievement, but there are missed opportunities to consolidate the whole department's procedures.
- ICT has always been well used; now it is totally integrated and exceeds National Curriculum expectations.
- The department's proactive approach to the alternative curriculum in Years 10 and 11 helps to match courses to the needs of all students.

## Commentary

95. Students enter the school with very limited design and technology skills. Previously good links with primary partners have diminished; however, by the end of Year 9 students achieve well and attain standards that match national averages.
96. The diversity of courses in Years 10 and 11 cater for the range of students' particular needs and requests from parents. Accumulated results across areas of electronics, engineering, food, graphics, textiles and resistant materials are above the national average, indicating overall achievement is good. In contrast child development results are below national averages. Despite the range of opportunities, the school has a low entry rate at GCSE for design and technology. Students express concern over staffing problems over the past two years and unhappiness with working in very poor, overcrowded conditions which influenced their option choices in Year 10. Students with special educational needs and students from different cultures match the achievement of their peers because of the thorough assessment strategies that identify individual need. Although the average point scores compared with national results are better than average at GCSE, school data shows that the students are achieving slightly better in their other subjects.
97. Teaching and learning are good overall from Years 7 to 11, including some outstanding teaching. Teachers have a passion for the subject and bring additional skills from other career avenues to extend students' learning. Confident, regular and demanding use of a full range of ICT, not only enriches the design and technology process, but also enhances students' life skills. Very good planning integrates practical uses of literacy and numeracy, further extending the students' communication skills. A wide range of teaching styles, with very good use of probing assessment strategies, creates realistic opportunities for creative and divergent thinking and inspiring design solutions. Students in Years 10 and 11 they gain a clear understanding of sustainability and their personal responsibility for conservation of resources – a design and technology contribution to citizenship, and community responsibility. Strong links with the local college gives access to a good building course. Exciting extensions to the curriculum through visits and activities including 'Techno-Games' and 'adopt a chef' generates an enthusiasm for learning in the students. The unsuitable environment in design and technology often compromises independent learning, health and safety.
98. Leadership in the department is satisfactory. The staffing difficulties of the past two years have fragmented aspects of the subject; however, management is good because the department has successfully dealt with the problems highlighted by the previous report. Improvement in design and technology has been good since the last inspection. Staff have taken up the challenge to provide a diverse alternative curriculum (including building, catering, child development and engineering), which is a window on the world of work and gives the students valuable life skills for their futures. Accommodation has an all pervasive impact on teaching, learning and, on occasions, safety. The leaking roofs, lack of space for circulation of students, storage difficulties and location of the classrooms at opposite ends of the school and the lower site reduce the impact of teaching and impedes the students' learning and commitment.

## VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

99. **Drama** is taught in Years 7 and 8, and is a popular GCSE option in Years 10 and 11. During the past five years the subject has developed rapidly. In 2002, 71 students took GCSE attaining A\*-C results that were well above the national average. In 2003 there was a higher entry figure, the largest cohort in the history of the department. These students attained a comparable A\*-C rate.
100. The drama department is now provided with excellent accommodation and the facilities are being well used. In a good Year 10 drama lesson, very effective teaching and learning were observed. Drama is an important part of the school's extra-curricular programme, with regular productions of plays and after-school drama clubs. The subject makes a valuable contribution to the life and work of the school and to students' social and cultural development.

## **Art and design**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching motivates students to be enthusiastic learners.
- Art makes a very good contribution to the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Students have very good attitudes towards their art studies, enabling them to achieve well.
- Work does not always meet the different needs of students.
- The department development plan has insufficient detail to ensure its effectiveness.

### **Commentary**

101. Most students arrive at the school with ability in art generally below that expected nationally. By the end of Year 9, students reach a standard in line with expectations, confirmed by work seen during the inspection. Students' progress is good between Years 7 and 9 and is similar for all abilities and backgrounds. Those with special educational needs achieve similarly to others in their class. They gain an understanding in the basic skills of drawing, using colour and pattern and making three-dimensional forms in a variety of media. They relate their work to that of artists and craftspeople in Europe and abroad. Some higher-attaining students in Year 9 demonstrate their sensitive use of coloured pencil and watercolour paint in studies of the school striped tie, while others design striking CD covers inspired by the artist Roy Lichtenstein.
102. By the end of Year 11, students are working at a level above national expectations. GCSE results in art and design have been consistently above the national average since the last inspection. Results in the recently introduced graphics course started low but now, with a change of teacher, have reached the same high standards as in art and design and are now also above the national average. Students of all abilities achieve well in Years 10 and 11 as a result of high quality individual care from teachers. High-attaining students demonstrate considerable skill in tonal drawing of still-life groups, using both monochrome and colour. Experimentation in work journals is supported well by references to the work of famous artists.
103. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The quality of relationships between students and teachers is good. Teachers make learning aims clear and use visual material effectively to ensure that the students fully understand. Practical demonstrations are used well by confident teachers, but underused by others, resulting in students achieving less than expected in one lesson observed. Opportunities are offered for students to contribute orally in lessons, and they listen well to one another. Explanations of work are thorough, but on occasion considerably reduce the amount of time left for practical work. Lesson planning does not always ensure that there is sufficient challenge for high-attaining students, who do not achieve as well as they could as a consequence.

104. The department is well led and managed and progress since the last inspection is satisfactory. ICT is now well integrated into courses and good opportunities are provided for the development of students' literacy and numeracy, mainly the application of measurement and proportion and through learning specialist vocabulary. Students learn to consider spiritual and moral issues that encourage them to examine their own feelings and to empathise with others. For example in Year 9, students discuss something that bothers them to inspire artwork about themselves. The course includes many opportunities to study the work of artists from other cultures, such as Australian aboriginal, African, American and ancient Egyptian, as well as European. Visits are made to the Tate Modern in Years 10 and 11. Graphics has been introduced and is proving instrumental in improving the achievement of boys. An effective team has been created and a successful system of assessment has been put in place. Schemes of work have been revised but less experienced members of the team are not given sufficient guidance when planning their units of work.

## Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good overall and very good in Years 10 and 11.
- Leadership and management of the subject and the highly effective rapport between the teachers are major reasons why standards are improving.
- The accommodation and resources are excellent at the upper school.
- Extra-curricular bands and choirs considerably enhance the curriculum.
- Students sometimes do not concentrate totally through their work when the teacher is advising others.

### Commentary

105. Many students at the beginning of Year 9 are already reaching Level 5 of the National Curriculum for music, the standard expected by the end of the year. As these students came to the school with a very mixed experience of music, this represents good achievement. At GCSE in 2002, the proportion of students gaining an A\*-C grade was below the national average. Results improved in 2003 and all students gained a grade between A\* and G. Boys achieved better results than girls. Current standards in Years 10 and 11 show an improving trend with the potential for the students to achieve more highly.
106. Teaching and learning are good overall and very good in Years 10 and 11. In the five lessons seen, one was satisfactory, two were good and two were very good. Teachers know their subject very well not only as musicians but as music technologists. ICT is used in lessons for composition from Year 9 onwards. Throughout the school, teachers use computer presentations for lessons which students can access to help their learning. The setting up of this has been and continues to be, a massive undertaking for the teachers in the department. They have also introduced a new programme of units for students to study in order to raise the level of students' musical skills further. A system for assessment enables students to know which National Curriculum level they are reaching and how to achieve better, but this is not sufficiently embedded for all students to benefit yet. Lessons were very well planned in nearly all lessons seen. Tasks are challenging at all levels and work designed to extend the more able is appropriate. Teachers give very good advice and support to individual students, particularly in a Year 10 lesson where this not only improved current work but helped lay down good habits for the future. Students with special educational needs are well known and well supported in class, as this lesson also proved. These students make good progress in lessons and achieve as well as others, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds. Students use correct vocabulary in their speaking and writing and there are opportunities to

write about topics that they research. Students in Year 9 make good progress when the teacher works with them, but if support is withdrawn not all students learn as well as they could. The last section of some lessons are not used beneficially to promote students' reflection on what they have achieved, and for students to share their work, enabling them to learn from each other.

107. The new accommodation is magnificent and students rightly named this as one of the reasons why they were making good progress in music. The leadership and management of the subject are very good and the vision for the subject's improvement is shared by all the staff. The bands and choirs are enthusiastically attended by many students in the school and these activities, as well as instrumental lessons and trips abroad, are providing very good opportunities to develop their personal qualities. This has led to good improvement since the last inspection.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

### **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **excellent**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- GCSE results are consistently above the national average.
- The quality of teaching and coaching is very good.
- The school provides a comprehensive and stimulating curriculum which allows students of all abilities and talents to achieve very well.
- The school, through its Sports College status, is an integral part of the local community and works productively with its partner institutions.
- The innovative and enthusiastic Director of Sport provides excellent leadership setting high expectations for students and staff.
- The extensive range of extra-curricular activities and excellent facilities provide further opportunities for all students to develop their skills and participate in sporting activities.
- Students are very well behaved and have a positive attitude to physical education.

#### **Commentary**

108. The striving for excellence through the setting of high expectations by the Director of Sport, the department heads and the enthusiastic subject team, permeates all that the department does. As a consequence of this and the very positive attitude of students, standards of performance, participation, behaviour and kit are very high. At GCSE, 72 per cent of students achieved A\*-C grades in 2002 compared to the national average of 54 per cent. Although results dipped in 2003 to 63 per cent, where a number of D grade students fell just short of the grade boundary, results are consistently above the national average and students do as well in PE as in other subjects. However, girls generally do better than boys and this is an issue for the department to pursue to ensure that boys are achieving equally well. Despite having excellent sports facilities, particularly for the promotion of the impressive range of extra-curricula activities, there is no dedicated classroom for teaching GCSE theory lessons to create an appropriate learning environment for examination students.
109. By the end of Year 9, most students are working at or above the level expected nationally with a wide range of ability which includes many talented students who have achieved success at local and national level in a range of sports. Students of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and from different backgrounds, benefit from very good teaching and as a consequence they achieve very well. For example, in a very good Year 9 football lesson, the teacher's clear explanations, brisk pace and praise for student performance meant all students made very good progress in developing their movement and passing skills. Girls in a

Year 8 netball lesson showed very good footwork and were developing good defending skills as a result of the teacher's expert coaching and well structured drills.

110. Students in Years 10 and 11 follow a range of courses all leading to an accredited sports qualification, either GCSE, including the new dance GCSE, level one coaching awards, the Certificate of Achievement or the Junior Sports Leader Award (JSLA). As a consequence of this range, the very good teaching and the positive attitude of students, students of all abilities achieve very well in physical education. There are similar successes at local and national level across a range of sports including football, basketball and netball. In a very good Year 10 games lesson all the teachers observed provided clear support, guidance and appropriate activities in football, basketball, table tennis and netball to allow students to develop their individual and team skills. In the JSLA football group students worked conscientiously to design a football game and students in the GCSE theory class were able to define and locate muscle groups. In a very good Year 11 dance lesson, the lively mixed ability group made very good progress in linking movements in a set sequence as a result of the excellent student-teacher relations and demonstrations. All lessons in the inspection were judged good or very good although in some cases learning objectives were not clearly expressed or linked to explicit teaching points.
111. Student progress is assessed thoroughly, is appropriately linked to the National Curriculum and informs both curriculum and lesson planning. The innovative physical education workbooks are an excellent way of reinforcing the learning of rules, hygiene and how the body works. The department makes a very good contribution to the school's citizenship curriculum through promoting individual responsibility in and out of lessons, for example in running competitions and coaching younger students. The Director of Sport provides excellent leadership with a clear vision for promoting sporting excellence, high participation rates and 'sport for all'. The department is characterised by high levels of commitment and teamwork. Having designated areas of responsibility for individual team members, including having joint heads of department, ensures that Sports College targets are always met.
112. Community links are extensive with many local sports clubs and residents making use of the excellent sports facilities. The department works closely with its partner institutions, particularly its feeder primary schools, where students benefit from the expert teaching and guidance. The recent mini Commonwealth Games was a resounding success giving many students the opportunity to develop their personal and organisational skills as well as promoting sporting achievement in the 20 primary schools who took part. This is a high performing department. There has been very good progress since the last inspection.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

Provision for **personal, social and health education** (PSHE) was a considerable strength of the school at the last inspection; however, discrete teaching was lost when the school fulfilled the requirement for two periods each week for physical education as part of its sports college commitment. The programme is now taught in 20-minute sessions by form tutors on days when there are no assemblies. The school has recognised the inadequacy of this arrangement and has plans to change its timetable from September 2004 to accommodate once again discrete teaching of PSHE.

### **Citizenship**

Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The timetabled provision for the teaching of PSHE and citizenship within the registration period is unsatisfactory.

- There are difficulties in monitoring and evaluating individual student performance in citizenship.
- The provision is well documented and mapped across the school.
- Although such experiences are limited there are some good examples of citizenship being covered in lessons in some subjects.
- Citizenship experiences are highlighted well around the school

### **Commentary**

113. As a result of limited evidence it is not possible to evaluate fully achievement in citizenship; however, that observed was at the appropriate level.
114. Citizenship is taught as a discrete subject in the registration periods three times a week, through most subjects and through assemblies and special events. The limited evidence of teaching within the registration period prevents a judgement regarding its overall standard; however, it is severely hampered by the short time frame for lessons. The use of the three short sessions also hinders the monitoring and evaluation of individual student progress, making it difficult for the school to fulfil its statutory duties with respect to reporting the subject. This deficiency has been recognised by the school and plans to remedy the situation for next year are underway.
115. Evidence of the citizenship programme being taught across the curriculum was found in science, music, physical education and English. In some instances the fact that this was a citizenship activity was stressed by the teacher. Additionally, some particularly impressive contributions to the programme were seen in Year 8 history, religious education and in child development. Complex issues such as tackling poverty, sex education and parenthood are approached in sensitive and sometimes innovative ways.
116. The school provides opportunities for the students to practise citizenship through the student council, in lessons - as with the use of teamwork in technology - and through encouraging participation in community links such as within the Duke of Edinburgh award in physical education. There is good evidence of student participation in events promoting citizenship, such as raising money for charity and organising a Christmas dinner for elderly people living in the vicinity of the school. The student council takes an active role and is currently considering whole-school issues such as revisions to the drugs and sex education policies. Notice boards dedicated to highlighting citizenship issues are clearly apparent about the school and cover topics such as promoting fair trade goods, resolving conflict and looking after the environment.
117. Citizenship was not reported on at the time of the last inspection. Operating under its present arrangement makes the leadership and management of PSHE and citizenship a particularly challenging task. It is, however, performed satisfactorily.



## SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

In the inspection, 11 subjects and courses were inspected and are reported on in detail. Work in other subjects and courses was sampled and contributed to the overall picture of teaching and learning in the school.

The table below shows entry and performance information for courses completed in 2002.

### *Level 3 GCE A level and VCE courses*

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art and design	6	100	96.1	33.3	100	70.0	85.1
Biology	16	100	91.6	31.3	36.3	81.3	74.1
Business studies	18	100	96.4	61.1	32.8	95.6	76.5
Business (VCE)	32	75.0	87.1	0	16.5	41.9	60.1
Chemistry	15	100	94.0	46.7	45.9	86.7	81.1
English literature	21	100	98.5	47.6	43.7	88.6	84.3
Design and technology	10	100	95.3	40.0	35.5	86.0	76.5
Geography	13	84.6	97.1	23.1	40.5	61.5	80.9
Health and social care (VCE)	6	100	90.1	0	16.3	63.3	62.5
History	21	100	97.1	33.3	41.0	86.7	81.2
Information technology	25	92.0	89.1	8.0	22.4	62.4	64.1
Mathematics	25	100	93.3	28.0	52.2	75.2	84.7
Physics	13	100	92.8	53.8	42.8	81.5	78.6
Sociology	33	87.9	95.4	57.6	39.6	86.1	79.1

## ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

### English

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is steadily increasing its popularity and improving its examination success.
- Teachers have a high degree of subject expertise and an enthusiasm for the subject which results in responsive and motivated students.
- Poor accommodation, unsuitable teaching rooms and over-large classes affect the quality of teaching and learning which teachers are working hard to achieve.
- Inadequate use is made of the school library as a resource for study.

#### Commentary

118. A Level English has gained steadily in its popularity and success rates since 1998. In that year only 18 students took the examination, with 17 per cent achieving an A/B grade. In 2003, 32 students entered and almost 50 per cent achieved an A/B grade. This was above the previous national figure and represented good achievement in relation to the students' previous attainment at GCSE. Currently, over 80 students are studying English in Years 12 and 13. This entry figure is matched by few other subjects. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.
119. Over the past five years the numbers of boys taking A Level English slowly decreased and in 2003 there was not one boy among the 32 candidates. This worrying trend appears to have been halted and, although they remain a minority, there are now more boys studying English in the sixth form than in any recent year. Boys do well in English in GCSE and they have produced some good results at A Level too, so there is good reason for their numbers to increase. There is no significant difference in the performance of students from different backgrounds.
120. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers know and enjoy the subject and prepare their material well. Teaching methods are constrained in Year 12 by classes which are too large and accommodation which is unsuitable, hampering the discussion and interaction which are the essence of good A Level work in English. Teachers do their best to overcome this, but are understandably frustrated by it.
121. In the lessons observed, good work was under way on two Shakespeare texts, students working on close textual analysis with growing confidence and understanding. In a Year 12 lesson on *Othello*, the work students had prepared showed intelligent response to the text and an understanding of how to handle the language of critical analysis at a simple level in this first term of their A Level study. The teacher elicited and developed their ideas skilfully and made good use of a short film clip to focus on the interpretation of a soliloquy. This illustrated the good practice of using film extracts to illuminate text already familiar and to generate argument, in contrast to the use of a film as an introduction to a play, which is of doubtful value. In a Year 12 lesson on *Wuthering Heights* the teacher worked hard to generate response in a very large group of students whose lack of wider background reading limited their ability to discuss issues raised in the novel. Her efforts were rewarded with evident interest and signs of growing confidence and willingness to venture opinions. The large size of the group made student interaction difficult. Year 13 students, working on Chaucer's *Pardoner's Tale* in a smaller class, worked well together and were able to take a lead in evaluating some critical views of the text.

122. Written work shows that students are tackling their assignments well and making good use of the support materials provided by teachers and by their own researches, usually on the internet. The school library provides little if any support for their work apart from computers. It is woefully inadequate for the work of a large sixth form in general and for students of English in particular, lacking even labelled subject sections.
123. The department is finding the new ICT Testbed technology useful for some sharing of materials and textual exploration. Teachers recognise, however, that overuse of the screen as a focus of study will inhibit the lively interchange which sharpens thinking and excites argument. They are right to be cautious and economical in their approach.
124. A Level study is enriched by appropriate theatre visits and some other excursions. At present there is little regular extra-curricular activity in school for sixth form students of English. There is now scope for considering ways in which debate and discussion or visits from outside speakers might enhance students' work and extend their range of interests. The problems of accommodation and split sites inhibit further initiatives at present. This strong team of English teachers is led with energy and commitment.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

125. The good practice in the development of language across the curriculum in the main school gives students a sound start to their work in the sixth form. The popularity and success of the A Level English Literature course are indications of students' growing pleasure in more demanding reading and writing. Newer subjects, such as sociology and business studies, have success rates which also show that students' research and writing skills are coping well with new vocabularies, ideas and arguments.
126. Thought and language at this level need the support of a good school library, well stocked to meet all curriculum requirements and with a sixth form trained to use it well. Unfortunately the school's library is totally inadequate for sixth form research and study. Computer resources are providing access to the internet and this is well used, but the lack of books and of good library presentation to inform, invite and reward study is now a serious weakness in sixth form provision.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Relatively few students achieve the higher grades at the end of Year 13.
- Some classes accommodate students studying for two different examinations at the detriment of the more able.
- The small number of teachers confident in teaching mathematics at A Level makes it difficult to cover for long-term absence when such an occurrence arises.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall and there are some examples of good practice.
- Relationships are well established which results in a pleasant atmosphere within the classroom.

### **Commentary**

127. Standards in lessons are in line with national expectations. Student achievement in lessons is generally satisfactory, with no significant variation by ethnic group. The progress made by the more able students in Year13 though is diminished through the arrangement of having two courses being taught in the same class. Although the teachers work hard to accommodate both groups of students their divided efforts are at the expense of the higher grades.

128. The mathematics department offers advanced courses leading to qualifications covering pure and applied mathematics and statistics. Although the school currently has teaching expertise sufficient to cover these three specialist aspects of the subject, the breadth of provision puts a strain on teaching resources when long term staff absences occur and when staff leave. Students who, at the end of Year 12, are unsuccessful in the external examinations are expected to remain in the class for Year 13 and retake the examination during that year. A limited provision has recently been introduced to help those students in Years 12 and 13 who wish to improve upon their GCSE grades and the member of staff delivering this aspect has established a good rapport with the group which is promoting sound achievement from a low base level.
129. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, although there are some examples of good practice and some of poor practice. Where the teaching is good, the subject is delivered with interest and enthusiasm. An example of this was observed in a lesson which introduced the students to the principles of logarithms. The good use of open-ended questioning resulted in a class dynamic based on the shared understanding of a new topic. In this particular instance, the teacher structured the lesson in such a way as to allow the students the opportunity to practice their recently acquired knowledge within the lesson with the use of timed exercises. In contrast, those lessons which were less successful often had the teacher resorting to a style of delivery which was more akin to lecturing, with the students being taken through the work in small steps and only having the opportunity to extensively practice new skills as a part of their homework exercises.
130. The quality of the assessment procedures is equally broad and is typified in the marking of the students' work. Where the marking is good the work is meticulously assessed and graded with advice provided for the student on how to improve. At worst the work is unmarked and the lack of monitoring has resulted in inaccuracies remaining unchallenged. Where the teachers' subject knowledge is secure they often manage to enthuse the students with their own passion for the subject. Although there was little evidence of the students debating mathematical concepts there were occasions when they were sufficiently stimulated by the teacher's enthusiasm that they responded positively and with confidence to questions.
131. An experienced member of staff has responsibility for sixth form mathematics under the guidance of the head of department. These two teachers work well together in planning the subject and in the monitoring of its delivery. The leadership and management of sixth form mathematics are both satisfactory.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

132. The provision for mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory. Students in Year 12 and 13 speak confidently and positively about their mathematical experiences within the school and how these have prepared them for their present courses and for entry into higher education. The school has recently introduced a limited provision for those students in Years 12 and 13 who wish to improve upon their mathematics GCSE grades.

## **SCIENCE**

### **Biology**

Provision in biology is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The students achieve well in comparison to their past performance and results at A Level are above average.

- The quality of teaching is good overall and very good in Year 13, where the work is challenging and students learn to think for themselves and to explain and question scientific ideas.
- The students have very positive attitudes to the subject and this helps them to make good progress.
- The teachers assess the students' work and review their progress regularly but routine marking is inconsistent.

## Commentary

133. Standards have improved and are now above average. The results of the 2002 A Level examinations were above average, with about one third of the students achieving grades A and B. The students' grades in biology generally compared favourably with the grades they obtained in their other subjects. The boys achieved a higher proportion of A and B grades than the girls, reversing the pattern of the previous year. Numbers are too small to show any discernible difference in the performance of different ethnic groups. The A Level results have been consistently above average since 1998. The results for 2003 improved further with around three-quarters of students attaining A and B grades.
134. Current standards are average in both Year 12 and Year 13 but they are in line with expectations for this early stage in the year. The standards attained in practical work are often above average. The students' recall of work done in the past is generally good and they have good understanding of the structure and function of major organ systems and key ideas such as cell structure and division. This is more clearly evident in their oral work in class than in the written work in their notebooks, where careless work sometimes costs them marks. They have the necessary mathematical and language skills to cope with work at this level and they communicate well when making presentations. The students were not observed carrying out practical work during the inspection but their practical assessment records are often above average, showing a good understanding of key ideas. Nearly all the students achieve the learning targets set by their teachers and most of them match or exceed predictions based on their past results, showing that they are achieving well.
135. The teachers have good subject knowledge, which they use to add depth and interest to the work and to make it relevant for the students. There is a clear emphasis on examination requirements and the students are told what they need to do to achieve good marks. The students respond very positively to this good teaching and they work hard and achieve well as a result. They are beginning to take advantage of the increased opportunities to work independently that they are now being given although some of the work in Year 12 does not fully stretch the highest-attaining students. Some marking is thorough and detailed, giving the students clear advice on how to improve their work, so that high standards are encouraged. However, this is not always the case and some of the marking does not promote high standards. The students do not have enough opportunities to use computers to help them to learn better because the department's ICT facilities are currently unsatisfactory. However, the teachers are making good use of the new computer equipment that has recently been installed although it is not yet fully functional.
136. The subject is well managed and well led. There is a clear focus on standards and achievement and the day to day organisation is good. Assessment is used well to set targets for the students and this helps them to achieve well. The students speak very positively of the subject and of the teaching they receive. Most of them continue the subject into Year 13 and a high proportion of them get good A Level grades and go on to university to study for degrees in related subjects. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection.

## Chemistry

Provision in chemistry is **unsatisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is considerable variation in the quality of teaching, some of which is good, but some is poor.
- Students are supported well in starting Year 12 and Year 13 through work set for summer study.
- Leadership of the department is new, but there is a commitment to high standards.
- Accommodation is poor and has a detrimental effect on achievement and standards.

## Commentary

137. Results at A Level have varied over recent years, sometimes above and sometimes below national averages. This variation has been as a result of differences in the group of students in each year. The school's own analysis shows that more students achieved above their expected grade than below in both 2002 and 2003. Students in both Year 12 and Year 13 are currently working at about the level expected nationally. This represents secure progress and achievement for students overall, with no significant variation by gender or ethnicity. The students' language and mathematical skills are sufficiently well-developed to meet the demands of the course.
138. In some lessons students do not make the progress expected and their knowledge and understanding of key chemical ideas remains uncertain or confused. This is because teaching sometimes lacks accuracy and is not sufficiently skilled to remove the uncertainties for the students. The teacher's own knowledge and understanding are insecure for the level of chemistry being taught. However, other lessons are taught well and all others have good aspects. The learning intentions are clear and made explicit to the students in these lessons. Focused and challenging questions require the students to provide responses with the accuracy and depth expected at A Level. This in turn demands that they use and develop language and vocabulary with understanding and accuracy. These are key elements to ensuring that responses to questions in examinations are more likely to demonstrate a higher level of knowledge and understanding. Good questioning also ensures that the students review their current ideas, sometimes taking them back to GCSE basics before building on this to take ideas to a new level or apply them to a new context.
139. The department has high expectations of students and their work and effort. This is established well before the students start Year 12 or Year 13 study through transition activities. These require the students to review some GCSE ideas, do some reading about key ideas, such as the mole concept, and do some questions to apply this to a range of contexts. This enables a smoother and quicker start to the next stage of learning. Support for students does not focus sufficiently on getting them to use their expected grades to review and evaluate their progress through the course and by teachers monitoring the quality and coherence of their files.
140. Leadership of the department is satisfactory, being very new, but is already establishing a sense of direction and future development. However, the work of the department is not sufficiently monitored so that some poor practice is eliminated. The developing vision has not been captured into a fixed plan of action with clear targets, outcomes and timescale. The quality of the presentation of some of the resources used with students, such as worksheets, also needs to be updated. The laboratory used for A Level chemistry is of very poor quality, limits the range of learning strategies that can be adopted and does not allow the full use of the new technology available through the ICT Testbed project.

## Physics

Provision in physics is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is some good teaching and there are good features in all lessons.
- There is a clear vision for the future development of the subject that is focused on raising achievement.
- The range of resources is insufficient to support the development of high quality teaching and learning.
- Students are not sufficiently engaged in assessing their own progress and setting future targets and some are not offered enough support in organising their work.

## Commentary

141. Results at A Level have sometimes been above, but also sometimes below national averages in recent years. This variation has been as a result of differences in the group of students from year to year. The school's own analysis shows that more students achieved above their expected grade than below it in both 2002 and 2003. Students in both Year 12 and Year 13 are currently working at about the level expected nationally overall, with some working at the highest level. This represents secure progress and achievement for students from whatever background. The students' language and mathematical skills are sufficiently well-developed to meet the demands of the course.
142. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but with all lessons having some good features and some being good overall. Questions are often used well to draw out the students' ideas and require them to build coherently on their existing knowledge and understanding. Teachers have developed a particularly powerful way of translating the students' own questions back to them and making them develop a successful response. This effective questioning also requires accuracy from the students that ensures a greater security in their understanding. The learning intended in a lesson is made clear to the students and usually reviewed at the end so that knowledge and understanding are developed steadily and coherently. Visual cues are often used well to enable the students to see or picture key ideas. However, there are insufficient opportunities to provide work of varying demands to a class, given the wide spread of attainment present. Those students who have developed a greater understanding or skill level, or finished more quickly, are not encouraged to work with and support their peers thereby engaging in the highest level of learning.
143. Leadership of the department is relatively new but has established a clear vision and sense of direction for future developments; there is clarity in what the highest quality of teaching and learning look like. Secure progress has been made in implementing some of this vision, including the development of schemes of work and sharing of resources between teachers. However, this is not formalised in a clear, phased plan of action, with specific outcomes, targets and timescales. The lack of suitable resources is a major impediment to consistently high quality teaching and learning. This includes resources to make best use of the new technology becoming available through the ICT Testbed project, as well more basic equipment such as data loggers and sensors and oscilloscopes that actually work.
144. Students are generally supported well in their studies, but there are some shortcomings to be tackled. Some marking of work is thorough, corrects mistakes and provides some feedback including an attainment grade. However, there are not enough opportunities for assessment to impact on teaching and learning. Students are not routinely involved in monitoring and evaluating their progress, based on prior attainment and projected targets. Some students also do not organise their work effectively as a secure basis for their future needs, such as revision and preparation for examinations.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in sixth form courses is a strength of the department.
- Assessment information is analysed in detail and used well to aid planning and raise standards.
- Good departmental teaching resources on the school computer network are accessible to students from home computers providing a valuable aid to learning.
- Female students are significantly under-represented on the AS Level ICT course.
- The school does not provide an ICT skills course to enable students who do not take an AS or A Level ICT course to improve their ICT skills.

## Commentary

145. In 2003 overall results at A Level improved significantly and there was a very significant improvement in the performance of male students at A/B grades. In 2001, examination results at A Level were consistent with the average for similar schools overall at A/B and A/E grades. In 2002 female students improved their relative performance and fewer male students achieved the higher grades. The latest results represent good achievement, particularly for male students and for the ICT department as a whole. No discernible difference is visible in the achievement of students from different ethnic backgrounds.
146. Year 12 students are coping well with the early stages of the AS Level course. Achievement is good and standards are average overall. Among the wide range of ability in both Year 12 groups are some strong candidates who, in one lesson, were tackling with confidence the construction of a challenging relational database. This was being well planned and effectively executed. They also provided some good support for other members of the group. Standards in Year 13 at A Level are above average. Achievement is good overall and for some students it is very good. They are building effectively upon the solid foundation established in the previous year. In an A Level theory lesson on the application and effects of ICT and the need for changes in systems, the majority of the class were able to respond confidently to challenging questions using appropriate subject-specific vocabulary. Many students were able to add their own contributions from previous work experience or part-time jobs, to the teacher's very good first hand knowledge of business ICT applications.
147. Progress is good or better as a result of teaching, which was never less than good and often very good. Challenging work is very well planned and good pace is maintained through good management in a productive and supportive working environment. Relationships between staff and students are very good. Assessment is thorough; students' performance is analysed in detail and the information used well to guide planning. Advice and guidance are both very well focused and enable the students to make good progress. Teachers provide a very good range of support material which is available to students on the computer network and it can be accessed from home providing students with a very flexible learning resource. The recent improvement in the level and quality of ICT hardware resources has had a beneficial effect on teaching and learning. Leadership and management are very good. The demand for these courses is increasing but the small proportion of female students taking ICT in Year 12 is unrepresentative of their number in the sixth form. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Successful advanced level ICT courses have developed and there has been a significant improvement in hardware and software which provide access to a wide range learning resources.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

148. Many students use ICT on a regular basis for coursework and homework, which usually includes effective access of the Internet for research. However, there are no formal opportunities for sixth form students who do not take the AS and A Level ICT courses, to develop ICT as one of their key skills. Some students do not have sufficient opportunity to develop research and data analysis skills further. The use of ICT by subject teachers to enhance teaching and learning in the sixth form varies significantly between departments, although most, but not all, departments are now making some use of new classroom



projection facilities which have a computer link. The use of a range of ICT applications in music and physical education is very good overall and sometimes excellent. The music department makes very good use of its excellent ICT facilities, particularly for composition. Some impressive use of technology was seen in a number of aspects of the physical education department's work, particularly video and digital images. Data logging equipment, in the form of heart monitors, is used very effectively. At an individual level, students use a range of ICT applications well, for their physical education coursework. The design and technology department make good use of specialist hardware and software, while students use ICT well for coursework and presentations. The use of ICT based work by staff to enhance teaching and learning in mathematics and practical activities in physics and chemistry is underdeveloped. There is more scope for the use of ICT in history and geography.

## HUMANITIES

149. History and sociology were inspected in depth and lessons sampled in geography and religious education.
150. Two lessons of **geography** were seen, one at Year 12 and one at Year 13. The teaching was very good in both cases, fostering independent research and learning skills so that students could take responsibility for their own achievement. Results at A Level have been in line with the national average, though they fell in 2002 and 2003. Work seen during the inspection suggests improving standards.
151. **Religious education** as an examination subject in the sixth form started this year. A good start has been made with the course; one lesson was seen which was very good. The students were coming to terms with various views on ethics and applying them to actual situations. The good achievement was supported by the work seen where students showed a deepening understanding of philosophical areas previously covered.

## History

Provision in history is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results have fluctuated considerably in recent years at A Level.
- Good teaching is fostering independent learning skills.
- Leadership is good with a good understanding of the issues for development.
- Very good student attitudes are leading to a positive learning ethos.

## Commentary

152. Standards overall are average. A Level results in 2002 were below the national average for all grades, though they were above in 2001 and well below in 2000. 2003 results show a slight improvement on 2002, but the overall picture resulting from these fluctuations, which may be due to several changes of staffing, is of below average results. In 2003 the majority of students performed in line with expectations based on their GCSE results, indicating satisfactory achievement whatever their background. The standard of work seen during the inspection was average.
153. Students are very well motivated and enjoy their history studies, which leads to a good atmosphere for learning. Many of them see the subject as providing a good background for their future careers.
154. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers have an excellent command of the subject matter and plan very well in such a way that most of the time students can take responsibility

for their own learning. For example, in a lesson focusing on the anti-corn law league, students were able to work co-operatively in pairs to research different aspects of this complex topic and to respond to the teacher's very searching questions. However, some of the teaching was less developmental, telling students what they needed to know rather than providing situations where they could discover it for themselves. Good assessment through questioning and discussion enables teachers to adapt students' further work to their previous learning.

155. The course is well led and managed by a comparatively newly-appointed head of department. The centrally-planned curriculum leaves teachers to develop the details of their own lessons for themselves, which allows them a personal stake in what they teach. Since the previous inspection the standard of teaching has improved. With more stable staffing than has been the case in the past few years, the department is well placed to develop further in the future.

## **Sociology**

Provision in sociology is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students achieve well, standards are above average with improving A Level results.
- Very good teaching and excellent student motivation lead to very good learning.
- Very good leadership and management are building a successful department.

### **Commentary**

156. Sociology is a very popular subject in the sixth form. There are currently 41 students at AS Level and 44 at A Level. Retention rates are high; last year all students completed the course.
157. Standards overall are above average. A Level results in 2002 were above the national average for the higher grades, showing improvement on below average results in previous years. This improving trend continued into 2003. Standards seen during the inspection were also above average, which indicates good achievement and good improvement since the previous inspection report. Girls tend to attain higher results than boys, but there are no differences between the standards of different ethnic groups.
158. Students are extremely well motivated and are exceptionally positive about the course, which led to a very good atmosphere for learning in all the lessons that were seen. They are developing independent learning skills, as was seen in a Year 12 lesson about the social construction of childhood where students were working in groups to research different sociological aspects of childhood which they reported back to the rest of the class.
159. Teaching and learning are very good overall. Teachers have an excellent command of the subject matter and plan very well, using resources very well and conducting lessons at a brisk pace. Very good questioning skills elicit high level responses from students and contribute to the development of their understanding and their ability to use specialist vocabulary fluently. Assessment through questioning and discussion is a regular part of the lessons and enables students to understand what they need to do to complete their work to a high standard.
160. The course is very well managed by a newly-appointed head of department who is also leading very well through being aware of the need to support other teachers. Assessment data is used to change the curriculum and teaching styles where necessary in order to raise attainment. For example, the students no longer take the optional coursework part of the course after some erratic moderation. The department is well placed to build on its strengths and to develop further in the future.

## **ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY AND MANUFACTURING**

## Design and technology

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in product design are very good.
- The students make innovative use of ICT for all aspects of their work.
- There are many purposeful links with higher education.
- Space for sixth form study of design and technology is not fit for its purpose.

### Commentary

161. The school previously offered A Level home economics. Staffing problems which led to well below average results in 2001 highlighted the need for a review. The school now offers health and social care as a more appropriate examination and a natural progression from child development GCSE.
162. Results in 2002 in product design were well above national averages. In 2003 results at A/B grade are slightly lower. In home economics, however, there was only a 60 per cent pass rate with no A/B grades achieved.
163. Students achieve well in product design, with there being no significant difference in the performance of students from different ethnic backgrounds. Standards from the work seen match national expectations and are an improvement on the previous year's results. During the inspection, Year 13 students were researching designs of original point of sale displays. Their research demonstrated innovation and a lively understanding of aesthetics, ergonomics and anthropometrics. Discussion illustrated empathy with the product and how to differentiate between the needs and wants of consumers through probing market research.
164. Overall, teaching and learning are good. Teachers have clear, high expectations of students. The very good use of individual tutorials and group feedback is establishing students' capability and confidence. Conversations show the students' ability to think laterally. Challenging the conventions in product design is promoting innovation and style.
165. Leadership and management are separated between the two subject leaders which has restricted the standardisation of approaches and procedures – leadership in product design is more established. Both team leaders monitor student performance closely. Clear strategies that give practice in preparing for examination drives up achievement. The very poor design studio for has a negative impact on standards in product design.

## VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

166. None of the subjects in this area was inspected in detail; however, lessons were seen in art, music technology, media studies and drama.
167. During the inspection one Year 12 lesson of **music technology** was observed. This is a new course making use of the excellent accommodation and resources in the school. In the lesson teaching and learning were excellent. Students' learning was enhanced by excellent attitudes. It is too early in this new course to assess standards.
168. The numbers of students studying **art** in Years 12 and 13 has been small therefore it is not possible to make valid comparisons with national standards. However, in the last three years around half of each cohort has not achieved grades as high as expected in relation to the grades they previously gained at GCSE and/or AS Level. From work seen during the

inspection, most students in both Years 12 and 13 are working at a level below expectation. There are some talented, high attaining students who are achieving as expected, and in Year 13 there are examples of very high quality painting and tonal drawing. The main weakness is not in the quality of technical competence but in the knowledge and understanding underpinning their ideas. Most work is pedestrian and lacks the depth and breadth of being highly developed and original.

169. **Drama** is offered in the sixth form as A Level Drama and Theatre Studies. A Level results are above the national average. Teaching in the Year 13 lesson seen during the inspection was good. The students' standards reflected the above average results in recent examinations.
170. **Media studies** has only recently been offered as a sixth form subject and is growing in popularity. The facilities are excellent and offer a highly stimulating environment for the students. In a Year 13 lesson where the students were preparing coursework assignments, the teacher gave valuable individual support in a tutorial format. The achievement of the students was satisfactory and standards were average.

## HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

### Physical education

Provision in physical education is **excellent**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching and high motivation of the students is resulting in high levels of attainment that are above the national expectation.
- Very good individual support is based on the strong relationships between students and teaching staff.
- The department is very well led and managed with a vision for constant improvement

### Commentary

171. The school offers the BTEC National in Sports and Exercise Science. Some students follow a full course which is the equivalent to three A Levels. Others take the single award, which is the equivalent to one A Level subject and combine it with other A Level subjects. The course has recently changed in that the students leaving in 2003 obtained a qualification equivalent to two A level passes.
172. Seven students completed the course in 2003 when the results were above the national expectation, although there are no national statistics against which to make a comparison. With the small number of girls following the courses a valid evaluation by gender is not possible. Numbers are also too small to show any significant variation in performance by ethnic grouping. The number of students following the course has varied from year to year with 14 in the current Year 13 and 37 in Year 12. The standard of work seen during the inspection shows the current Year 12 students have made a good start to the course and the standard of Year 13 work is above the national expectations. The quantity and depth of work completed by the students are very good. In lessons all students use a good range of ICT skills and in the presentation of their assignments. This allows modification to be made when work is resubmitted. Weaker aspects of the work seen in the students' folders are the skill of evaluation, the use of the bibliography and, in Year 12, the use of units on graphs. Taking into account the capabilities of the students, achievement is very good.
173. Teaching is very good overall and this is resulting in students making very good progress. Strengths include the good challenge that is given to the students and a wide range of methods

adopted by teachers. The school uses the course structure well and within lessons there is frequent use of question and answers to extend the students' understanding; however, the teacher sometimes tends to fill in the answer with more detail and so opportunities to develop the students' deductive skills are missed. Students have regular assignments to complete and the assessment system provides clear ways in which they can improve their work. The very good use of the ICT facilities enables students to quickly modify and resubmit work. All students are well motivated, attendance is very high and students are appreciative of the support that they receive in assisting them to reach their potential. There are a wide variety of opportunities for the students to participate in enrichment activities, many of which also offer a leadership role. Physical education is also available to students not taking an examination course but, due to timetabling constraints, the community sports leader award is not easily accessible to all students, limiting the overall progress that they make.

174. The leadership of the department is excellent and management very good. There is a vision and commitment to building on what has already been achieved and to improving standards. Where a need is identified, the school has aimed to provide a suitable course as with the Football School of Excellence where students can combine their love and skill in football with an academic qualification that can be used in a variety of situations. Since the last inspection standards have risen, the number of students taking the subject is continuing to rise and new courses have been introduced. This represents very good progress.

## **BUSINESS**

175. Business studies was inspected in detail and one lesson of **law** was also observed. Teaching in this lesson was satisfactory and the students were committed and motivated. They listened attentively and made careful notes.

### **Business studies**

Provision in business studies is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A Level results are consistently at or above the national average, sometimes well above.
- Most students achieve well whatever their gender or ethnic background.
- Teacher-student relationships are very good and, as a result, students' attitudes to the subject are generally positive.
- Teaching is good. Teachers prepare well and set clear learning objectives in lessons, although understanding of key concepts by all students is sometimes insufficiently challenged in lessons.

### **Commentary**

176. The good teaching in the department and the generally positive attitude of students ensures that the majority achieve results at least as good as, and often better than their GCSE results would predict.
177. In 2003, about one-third of students entered achieved either an A or B grade, approximating to the national average. However, this represented a significant fall in the proportion gaining the top grades in 2002, which was 58 per cent of entries. Nonetheless, all students usually gain at least a pass grade in the subject as they did in 2002. Current Year 13 students are attaining at least in line with national expectations. They have a sound grasp of basic business vocabulary and several are able to articulate and apply more complex business aspects, for example in using critical path analysis and in drawing out the key attributes of successful teamwork.
178. Very good teacher-student relationships were observed in a Year 13 lesson where students worked conscientiously on an exercise to explore the dynamics of teamwork and were then able to apply this to business scenarios. The teacher's pleasant but productive approach in a

good Year 13 lesson on critical path analysis included a student presentation where the basics of this difficult topic were clearly explained to the class. The teacher's authoritative approach to a Year 12 lesson on mass marketing ensured that the key concepts were clearly presented to students and many were able to explain concepts such as 'niche marketing' and 'primary research'. The most effective lessons are those which include a substantial amount of student-centred activities and where the understanding of key concepts by all students is repeatedly checked during and at the end of lessons. An excellent example of this was in a lesson on break-even analysis which included a student presentation on the topic. All of the class listened carefully and quietly to his presentation and learnt much from it.

179. The new head of department has made a satisfactory start to the role and has dealt extremely well with the term's early staffing difficulties. Students feel very well supported by teachers and appreciate the access to them. Student progress is tracked well, target grades are used and understood by students and they generally know what they need to do to improve. However, marking of student work, particularly when beginning the subject in Year 12, does not give clear feedback on its strengths and weaknesses. Accommodation is cramped for some classes, and generally does not provide a stimulating learning environment for students. Industry links have been enhanced with the reintroduction of the Young Enterprise scheme. In the lesson observed on this, the two link advisors provided expert guidance and encouragement to a very conscientious group who were able to explain how they were applying the fundamentals of marketing, finance and business development to their chosen business. There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

## **HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**

180. **Health and social care** was not inspected in depth. The subject is taught competently by three teachers and students respond positively, with good attitudes to learning. They show discipline and concentration in researching their topics. Year 12 found the challenge of their first presentation on community issues a mixture of excitement and nerves. Rigorous review of their presentations highlighted areas for improvement. The impact of teaching health and social care raises students' self-esteem and confidence because they are challenged to take responsibility and to be proactive about their research and feedback.

## **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND GENERAL PROGRAMMES**

181. Students in Years 12 and 13 follow a programme within tutorial sessions which includes such aspects as revision skills, careers, completing application forms and insight into management. The students value these sessions which further cement their bond with the form tutor. These older members of the student body take an active role in charitable activities and in helping maintain the smooth running of the school with the head boy and head girl co-ordinating the prefect system.
182. There are many and varied links with community and partner institutions which enhance the students' personal development. For example, the community sports leader award is undertaken and, together with local primary schools, students recently organised a mini Commonwealth Games. Other events such as 'Insight into management' and master classes for selected students at the University of East London all reinforce high expectations and opportunities for personal development.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Sixth form grade</i>	<i>School grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the sixth form and the school</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is		2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4	3
Cost effectiveness of the sixth form / value for money provided by the school	3	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>		<b>3</b>
Students' achievement	4	3
<b>Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>		<b>2</b>
Attendance	3	3
Attitudes	2	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2	2
Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>		<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3	3
How well students learn	3	3
The quality of assessment	4	4
How well the curriculum meets students needs	4	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities		3
Accommodation and resources	5	5
Students' care, welfare, health and safety		3
Support, advice and guidance for students	3	2
How well the school seeks and acts on students' views	3	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents		2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>		<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	5	5
The leadership of the headteacher		2
The leadership of other key staff	3	3
The effectiveness of management	3	2

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