

INSPECTION REPORT

ALL SAINTS RC SCHOOL

York

LEA area: York

Unique reference number: 121720

Headteacher: Mr W Scriven

Lead inspector: Mr J W Ashton

Dates of inspection: 1 – 4 November 2004

Inspection number: 268732

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	11 to 18 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	1161
School address:	Mill Mount Lane York
Postcode:	YO24 1BJ
Telephone number:	01904647877
Fax number:	01904 647877
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Campbell
Date of previous inspection:	19-23 April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

All Saints RC School is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic mixed comprehensive school close to the centre of the city of York. It is a larger than average secondary school with 1161 pupils on roll, 252 of whom are in its expanding sixth form. Split between two sites a short walk away from each other, its main buildings are old but there are modern extensions on each site. A very large majority of the pupils are white and speak English as their home language. Almost all of the small number of pupils from minority ethnic heritages speaks English fluently. The school, which is always over subscribed in the main school, draws from a wide geographical area and far outside of York. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average and 15 have statements. These are largely for moderate learning, specific learning, social and emotional, and hearing difficulties. Pupils are from a wide range of backgrounds although, overall, the socio-economic profile of pupils is above average. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is well above average overall. The school has specialist language college status.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
4492	Mr J Ashton	Lead inspector	
9092	Mr R Elam	Lay inspector	
10209	Mr V Gormally	Team inspector	Design and technology
31850	Mr D Nevens	Team inspector	Music
20629	Mr J Bryson	Team inspector	English
10361	Mr F Evans	Team inspector	Citizenship
31838	Mr M Williams	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
27082	Mr G Henshall	Team inspector	Business education
22849	Dr R Catlow	Team inspector	History
15407	Ms M Harrison	Team inspector	Geography
25748	Mr R Moyle	Team inspector	Physical education
8361	Mr M Burley	Team inspector	Science
17015	Mr L Denholm	Team inspector	Psychology
31879	Mr D Rhodes	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
8090	Mr F Turns	Team inspector	Art and design
14490	Ms S Jackson	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language
28028	Mr P Wood	Team inspector	Mathematics

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates

Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet *'Complaining about Ofsted Inspections'*, which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	10
Standards achieved in subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	15
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	22
OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES	25
Work related learning	
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26
SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4	
SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	56

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

All Saints RC School is a very good school. Standards of attainment and behaviour are high. Progress is very good. Teaching and learning are truly excellent. Leadership and management are very effective. The pupils respond with very positive attitudes and a strong work ethic. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses:

- The Catholic ethos of the school permeates everything it does, ensuring that pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural needs are very well cared for and that relationships are excellent throughout the school.
- Well above average academic standards are maintained as pupils pass through the school.
- Teaching and learning are mostly very good and almost never less than good, which is excellent overall.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- Some aspects of the accommodation, and the quality and availability of learning resources, need improving.
- Whilst being strong in most curriculum areas, the school has particular strengths and expertise in modern foreign languages, English and the arts.
- Work related learning, although satisfactory, is at an early stage of development.
- Areas for improvement in the sixth form include common room and study provision and the courses in general studies and law.

Improvement since the last inspection in April 1999 has been very good. Standards are higher, teaching, learning and achievement better than they were. Information and communication technology (ICT) provision is much better although there are problems still of aging machines and difficult access to them. Middle management now takes much more responsibility for monitoring teaching and learning. Teaching time has increased to 25 hours. There have been improvements in the accommodation on both sites, even though there is still much to do. Performance management arrangements now meet statutory requirements. Assessment of pupils in order to inform teachers' planning is better than it was. The deployment of senior leaders is more strategic. Development planning has improved. The school is now a specialist languages college and is expecting its additional status as an arts college to be confirmed very soon.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Performance compared with:		all schools			Similar schools**
		2001	2002	2003	2003
Year 11	GCSE/GNVQ examinations	NA	A	A	A
Year 13	A/AS level and VCE examinations	B	A	A	

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 pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 9. 2004 results are not yet validated nationally, but reference is made to them below and in the full report. Although religious education was not inspected (as this is subject to separate inspection under Section 23 of the 1996 School Inspection Act), GCSE examination results in this subject, which is taken by all students, are included in the calculation of grades shown above.*

Overall, boys and girls of differing potential and from a range of social, religious and cultural backgrounds make very good progress and achieve very well throughout the school.

Standards are well above average in Year 11 and by the end of the sixth form. Pupils enter into Year 7 year-on-year with well above average standards overall. The school sustains these well above standards through to the national tests in Year 9, on through to the GCSE examinations in Year 11 and finally through to A level in Year 13. National test results at the end of Year 9 are in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Girls and boys of all backgrounds and levels of previous attainment make very good progress and achieve very well. It is 'cool' to be seen to work hard at your studies at this school. Boys match girls in most subjects and they outperformed them in the GCSE examinations in 2003, though not in 2004.

Pupils' personal development is very good overall. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. They have very positive attitudes to school and behave very well. Relationships are excellent. Attendance is good and punctuality is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides pupils with a very good quality of education. Teaching and learning are excellent throughout the school. Assessment of pupils' work is very good. The school's curriculum meets well the needs of its pupils. There is a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall but there are weaknesses in both. The arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety and guidance are very good overall. Links with parents are very good. Links with the local community and other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good, overall. The leadership of the senior team is very effective, including that of the headteacher, who has been in post for just over one year. The school runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis, despite the split site. Governors continue to show considerable strength and drive in the informed and challenging support they bring to the school. Financial management is very good and funds are spent wisely.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the school. They assured inspectors that their children were well cared for, happy and well taught at the school. Pupils like the friendliness and the environment of the school. They think that they are well taught and expected to work hard. Years 10 and 11 are thrilled to be trusted enough to go out into the city at lunchtime. Many pupils expressed irritation at the manner in which the school uniform regulations were tightened up recently.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Improve the accommodation and the quality and availability of learning resources, as funds permit.
- Improve the work related learning aspects of the curriculum.
- Improve sixth form common room and study provision, and review the course arrangements for general studies and law.

OVERALL EVALUATION

The sixth form at All Saints is very successful. Happy, well adjusted students achieve well above average standards in advanced level and vocational courses. Excellent teaching results in excellent learning and very good achievement. The students have a mature and responsible attitude to learning, which contributes significantly to their success. Those students with special educational needs achieve equally well. An increasing number of international students do well at the school. Leadership and management are very good at ensuring that high standards are maintained. The sixth form is very cost effective.

The main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards achieved are high.
- Teaching is excellent and promotes very good achievement.
- Students are mature, hard working and responsible young people who are enthusiastic about their learning.
- Students flourish in a warm and friendly community.
- Very good provision for the care, guidance and support of students.
- The sixth form is very well led and managed.
- The present provision for law and general studies needs reviewing.
- Common room and study provision is inadequate.

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	Provision is good in English language (and even better in literature). Very good teaching and assessment leads to very good learning. Provision is very good in French . The very good, enthusiastic and informed teaching communicates a love of the language, lifting learning to the highest levels.
Mathematics	There is very good provision in mathematics . Very good, stimulating teaching contributes to very good learning.
Science	Provision is good in biology (and even better in chemistry and physics). Teaching and learning are good overall.
Information and communication technology	ICT provision is very good . Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers have high expectations and students are mature and well motivated,
Humanities	Provision in history is good . Teaching and learning are good. Provision in geography is very good . Teaching and learning are very good, based on excellent subject knowledge. Provision in psychology is very good . The successful AS and A Level programmes attract good numbers. Results have been consistently good. Students respond very well to teaching which is supremely well organised and based on materials and professional competence of the highest order

Design and technology In **textiles**, provision is **very good**. Teaching and learning are very good. Students are mature and responsible and produce work of individuality and character.

Visual and performing arts and media In **art**, provision is **very good**. Standards are well above national averages. Teaching and learning are very good.
Provision in **music** is **very good**. Recent examination results are above the national average and achievement is good. Very good teaching and learning is attracting more students, increasingly of high capability, including a growing number from outside the school.

Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel Provision in **physical education and sport** is **good**. Good specialist teaching means that students achieve well.

Business In **business studies**, provision is **very good**. The high quality of teaching and learning enables students to achieve well.

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

Advice, support and guidance in the sixth form are very good. Students have access to very good advice about their futures, whether in higher education or elsewhere and are considerably helped by their teachers. The careers department and Connexions service work well together to ensure that all students' individual needs are met. Students value this aspect of the sixth form.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM

Leadership and management of the sixth form are very good. There is a clear vision for the development of the sixth form, a determination to sustain high standards and a warm and trusting relationship with the students. Assessment and monitoring are very good. There is a family atmosphere in which students grow and flourish academically and personally, knowing that their views will be listened to and respected.

STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Students are happy in the sixth form. They like the atmosphere, the Catholic ethos, the high standards, the very good teaching they receive, and the excellent relationships they enjoy with their teachers and each other. They enjoy all their courses, except for general studies and law. They feel that their common room is too small.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Overall, boys and girls of differing potential and a range of social, religious and cultural backgrounds make very good progress and achieve very well throughout the school. Standards are well above average in Year 11 and in the sixth form.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- National test results at the end of Year 9 are in the top five per cent of schools nationally.
- GCSE results at the end of Year 11 and A level results at the end of Year 13 are well above national averages.
- Results compare very well with those of similar schools.
- Boys` GCSE results exceeded those of girls in 2003 though not in 2004.

Commentary

1. Data from end of Year 6 national tests, and from tests commissioned by the school itself, show that when pupils enter Year 7, their attainment year-on-year is well above average, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
2. Results in the 2002 and 2003 National tests in Year 9 were well above average in comparison with all schools. The 2003 results were in the top five per cent of schools nationally when compared with similar schools. (*Similar schools for Year 9 are those whose pupils attained similarly by the end of Year 6.*) In recent years, boys' results have matched those of girls which is contrary to the national trend. The overall results in 2004 are similar to those of 2003 and are likely again to be very high compared to national results when these are validated.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 9 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	37.8 (36.8)	33.4 (33.3)
Mathematics	39.0 (39.1)	35.4 (34.7)
Science	37.8 (36.5)	33.6 (33.3)

There were 171 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year. Results for 2004 are not yet validated nationally.

3. Overall GCSE results in 2002 and 2003 were also well above average compared with all schools and with similar schools. (*Similar schools for Year 11 are those whose pupils achieved similarly at the end of Year 9.*) The trend in overall results for at least the last five years matches the increasing national trend. Boys' results in 2003 were higher than those of girls by a considerable amount, against a national tendency for girls to outperform boys at this age. Girls` results are slightly higher than boys` in 2004.
4. Standards observed during the inspection are also well above average in most subjects in Years 9 and 11. The notable exception is citizenship where standards are average but improving rapidly under the guidance of new and more effective co-ordination. Standards were also found to be rapidly improving in German where in 2003 only a third of pupils

obtained GCSE grades A*-C, whereas nationally around one half of candidates did so. The school's subsequent actions to deal with the complex causes of this situation ensured a significant improvement in 2004, when about half the candidates obtained grades A*-C.

5. The school did not reach the very demanding targets that it had set itself for attainment of five or more grades A* to C in GCSE examinations in 2004, although it nearly did in 2003, the latest year for which nationally validated results are available. It fell short of the target for an unusual reason. Some of the higher attaining pupils in the school are in a different age group because they join the school in Year 10 having followed an alternative course to the National Curriculum in their previous school. They repeat Year 10 before going on to GCSEs in Year 11 and their results do not count towards the school's total GCSE point scores.
6. Achievement throughout Years 7 to 11 is at least good for pupils of all backgrounds in every subject except citizenship where it is satisfactory and improving. In most subjects, including all three of the core subjects English, mathematics and science and, as befits a languages college, in modern foreign languages, achievement is very good. The school manages to sustain the pupils' very high standards as they make progress through the school. Progress is now judged very good throughout the school on the grounds that sustaining high and well above average standards is very hard work and counts as very good achievement.

Standards in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11 in 2003

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	71 (61)	52 (50)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	93 (96)	91 (91)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	96 (98)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	41.5 (39.6)	34.7 (34.8)

There were 180 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year. Results for 2004 are not yet nationally validated.

Although religious education was not inspected (as this is subject to separate inspection under Section 23 of the 1996 School Inspection Act), GCSE examination results in this subject, which is taken by all pupils, are included in the calculation of grades shown above.

7. Standards of literacy are high and enable pupils to achieve very well in English and related subjects. Pupils are fluent speakers and thoroughly enjoy discussions. They read accurately with good comprehension and make effective use of higher order reading skills such as skimming and scanning. Their writing is organised and clear. Written style is well suited to audience and purpose. Pupils' standards in the use of number across the curriculum are very good and more than sufficient to support the mathematical demands in other subjects. Pupils at all stages are competent and confident users of ICT, although lack of access to adequate facilities is preventing more effective development in many areas.
8. All Saints is a thoroughly inclusive school. Pupils of both sexes, differing academic potential, and a range of social, religious and ethnic backgrounds make very good progress overall and achieve very well. The school is particularly successful in creating a climate which enables boys to flourish academically (an area for development two inspections ago). Its more able pupils and those who are either gifted or talented achieve very well at the school, because there is such a wide range of strategies and provision for supporting and challenging them.

Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because the special educational needs co-ordinator and teaching assistants know them so well and understand their needs. The school's inclusion centre is very successful in ensuring that pupils with particular behavioural difficulties achieve success. The very few pupils at the early stages of English acquisition are particularly well monitored and supported and are all making good progress.

Sixth form

- The school operates a policy of open access with guided choice in order to encourage students to stay on into the sixth form as part of its mission to all its pupils. In September 2004, the first ever students with statements of special educational need entered the sixth form. In practice, students' attainment on entry to courses in the sixth form varies from subject to subject. Students enter with relatively high GCSE grades for many subjects such as mathematics and physics. Those with a wider range of GCSE grade enrol for some other subjects such as biology. In addition, an increasing number of international students join the school's sixth form, with a whole variety of different qualifications and educational experiences from schools abroad, and they usually achieve well. Overall, A level results in 2003 were well above average. Results for 2004 look to be as good, although there are no validated national results with which to compare them as yet. Students from all backgrounds achieve very well because they are so very well taught and their attitudes to learning are so positive and mature.

Standards in GCE A/AS level and VCE examinations at the end of Year 13 in 2003

	School results	National results
Percentage of entries gaining A-E grades	97.1 (98.8)	89.4 (92.6)
Percentage of entries gaining A-B grades	41.5 (40.5)	32.6 (35.3)
Average point score per pupil	319.0 (320.3)	258.2 (263.3)

There were 94 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year. 2004 results are not yet nationally validated.

- Students achieve well and reach at least above average standards in almost every one of the 13 subjects reported in depth in part C of this report. In business studies, textiles, French, geography, ICT and art and design they achieve very well and reach well above average standards. In biology, achievement is good and standards are average. There has been a recent increase in the number of students studying biology and it has attracted some, many of them male, with modest levels of earlier attainment, who have not appreciated the rigour required for an A level course.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Overall, pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are very good. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good overall. Relationships are excellent. Attendance is good and punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils behave very well, have very positive attitudes to work and enjoy being at school. These findings are similar to those at the time of the last inspection.
- The school's very good provision for spiritual, social, moral and cultural development leads to excellent relationships around the school and very good social awareness.

- Students have very positive attitudes in the sixth form: they benefit from excellent working relationships with their teachers.

Commentary

11. In the school year shown in the table below the level of attendance was very high. It fell last year to around 93 per cent, a level similar to that at the time of the last inspection. Pupils like the school and almost all parents ensure their children attend regularly. Nevertheless, punctuality is a minor problem. Last year a third of the pupils in the main school were late on more than ten occasions. In part, this reflects the large distances many pupils have to travel from home and the special difficulties with traffic in the York area. The school properly recognises this and makes allowance for it, though only a quarter of the pupils arriving late have this dispensation. During the day, lessons generally start on time. The school is starting to use the information available in the recently introduced computerised system to impose sanctions such as detentions to ensure pupils appreciate the need for a punctual arrival. The school is also using other technology such as automatic telephone calls home on the first day of unexplained absences.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.0	School data	0.4
National data	7.2	National data	1.1

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

12. Pupils are attentive in lessons. They are interested in what happens in school and they enjoy their work. They listen carefully, follow instructions well and settle quickly to the tasks given. They have confidence in their own abilities and are often eager to contribute their ideas. These positive attitudes reflect the quality of teaching and the variety of interesting activities built into the lessons. Nevertheless, in a few of the lessons seen, pupils were passive and needed encouragement to take an active role.
13. Pupils with special educational needs are positive in their response to lessons and work cooperatively. Pupils in the withdrawal groups work productively, as they also do in the very well run Emmaus Inclusion Centre. Teachers develop pupils' motivation and inculcate a sense of self-esteem in them through effective feedback and a culture of celebrating their achievement.
14. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good.
15. Pupils' spiritual development is very good, an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils pray in assemblies and in form periods. Parents strongly approve of the religious education programme because it 'makes children think' about what they believe and what they are taught. Staff are very aware of the importance of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural insights that can occur in a lesson. In English, this provision was found to be excellent. It is very good in modern foreign languages and notable in science, music and psychology. The overall pastoral care and support provided by the Emmaus Centre and by the Chaplains, make a further and significant contribution.

16. Pupils' moral development is very good. They have a very good understanding of right and wrong and are aware of how their behaviour affects others. They behave well in the classroom and around the school. They are self-disciplined and are justifiably trusted by the staff. At the end of the day, staff do not need to supervise queues at bus stops. The older pupils do not abuse the freedom to leave the site at dinnertime. They are open, well mannered, polite to adults and to each other and welcoming to visitors. These excellent relationships and the sense of enquiry that pupils develop while at the school, shows pupils developing an interest in learning and a care and concern for each other. Pupils with behavioural needs are well supported by the staff and by people from outside agencies. No pupils have been permanently excluded in recent years.
17. Pupils' social development is very good. They share the values and ideals on which the school is based and are able to flourish in this community. There are very good opportunities for group work and discussions. Large numbers of clubs and extra-curricular activities enable pupils of all ages to work together. Pupils' awareness of the wider world is enhanced by work experience, community service, inter-school sports and other events and talks by representatives of charities. Their relationships with their peers and with adults have improved on the high level at the time of the last inspection. These relationships contribute to the quality of work in lessons and to the progress the pupils make, especially by giving them the confidence to ask and to answer questions.
18. Cultural development is good because pupils are learning to value justice and diversity and to respect difference. Pupils explore their own culture through the curriculum in English, history, art and music in particular, and by visits to galleries, theatres and museums. Modern foreign languages offer a rich programme of visits and exchanges and support for International days. Friendships with the international pupils in the school widen understanding of other cultures. Through their work for Fair Trade and CAFOD, pupils come to understand problems of poverty and trade in the world today and through the Holocaust Memorial Day, they learn about the evil that can exist in the world.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	885	40	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	109	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0

Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	12	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	74	0	0

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

Sixth form

19. Students have very good attitudes to work. They enter the sixth form with above average skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. This enables them to cope well with advanced level or vocational courses. Because they are fluent and articulate speakers, the standard of discussion in the sixth form is high because students quickly master and use the precise vocabulary of the subjects studied. They are very well motivated and apply themselves to their work with enthusiasm. Punctuality to lessons and overall attendance is good although some students can be late to registration because trains or buses are delayed.
20. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students in the sixth form is very good. Students appreciate the Catholic ethos of the school, which fosters openness, friendship and a spirit of enquiry without being oppressive or intrusive. They feel free to think and to ask questions, knowing that different opinions are respected. They feel trusted by the school and are adamant that they will be listened to should they wish to raise an issue. Students are happy, responsible and mature young people who very much enjoy being in the sixth form for its atmosphere, its social life and the very good teaching they receive. They are involved in the various voluntary activities.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides pupils with a very good quality of education. Teaching and learning are excellent overall. The school's curriculum meets well the needs of its pupils. There is a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall but there are some weaknesses in both. The arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety and guidance are very good overall. Links with parents are very good. Links with the local community and other schools are good.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is excellent. Assessment overall is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently strong across all subjects and all year groups, resulting in prolific learning and very secure achievement as pupils move through the school.
- Teaching enables boys and girls of differing potential and a range of social, religious and cultural backgrounds to learn very successfully.
- Examples of teaching and learning that were at least very good were observed in every subject inspected.

Commentary

21. So much of the teaching across the school is very good and so little of it less than good that it must be judged overall as excellent. There was no unsatisfactory or poor teaching during the inspection. This much improved picture, even when compared to the positive description of teaching at the last inspection, is the main reason for the excellent learning, very good achievement and high standards across the school.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 161 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (2%)	82 (51%)	67 (42%)	9 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (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. Lessons in religious education were not inspected. Percentage figures do not total 100 because of rounding up or down.

22. Teachers generally have very secure subject knowledge and a thorough understanding of their subjects. They create a positive and supportive climate for learning; use a wide variety of teaching strategies; concentrate upon promoting effective learning rather the transmission of facts to be assimilated. They have effective systems of target setting which encourage pupils to become more involved in their learning. Peer assessment, whereby pupils actively evaluate each other's work in a diplomatic and constructive way, is a regular feature of the work of a number of departments in the school. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work and, as a result, pupils are well motivated and keen to learn. Homework is very well used to reinforce and extend pupils' learning. The teaching in some subjects, geography for instance, is in mixed ability groups, and teachers competently develop a variety of well resourced tasks for lessons which ensure work is accessible to all pupils whilst also challenging the more able pupils. ICT is increasingly being used to support learning, the only problems being the difficulty of access to computers and the datedness of some machines and much of the software. Most pupils' attitudes to their learning are very good, although this takes skilful teaching to sustain, and pupils at All Saints, as elsewhere, are seen to become restless when the pace of a lesson flags or teachers 'take their eye off the ball'.

The very best teaching is particularly notable, for example:

- In English, for the quality of the relationships and very high teacher expectations, as in an excellent Year 10 lesson where the teacher demonstrated outstanding specialist subject knowledge which enabled her to plan and deliver a lesson that encouraged pupils to work at a challenging pace, to develop their confidence to explore new learning, and to produce writing which was both coherent and controlled, with ambitious vocabulary and precisely constructed sentences.
- In modern foreign languages, for well-qualified and experienced linguists who use the target languages for all aspects of lessons and expect pupils to do the same; who build up pupils' skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing in a balanced way, and use language games so effectively to introduce essential points of grammar, keeping the learning enjoyable as well as rigorous.
- In business studies, for the teachers' profound knowledge of their subject, the planning, pace and timing of their lessons, their use of "games" elements with a competitive edge as a very good way of enhancing pupils' motivation, and for their constantly challenging pupils to think beyond the facts, and to provide detailed examples of business situations which support theory.

23. The result of this good, very good and excellent teaching is prolific learning, secure achievement and well above average standards by the time the pupils leave the school. For example, pupils were seen to work well independently in mathematics. In science, during a well organised Year 10 lesson, pupils did not just learn about the human kidney but were helped to show empathy with kidney failure patients. Learning in design and technology is

positively influenced by very good pupil behaviour and the very good quality of teacher-pupil relationships.

24. In a few lessons, only nine out of the 161 observed, the teaching, whilst satisfactory as a stimulus to pupils' learning, fell short of being good. For instance, in a Year 11 English class the teaching was safe and lecture-like, in contrast to the usual more imaginative and stimulating organising of pupils' learning found in other English lessons. In a Year 9 geography lesson, the most capable pupils were not challenged as well as in other geography lessons seen. In a Year 11 physical education lesson, there was too much pressure too early in the lesson and insufficient time spent consolidating work at an early stage before moving on to the more difficult work.
25. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are very well taught and make very good progress in their time at the school. Teachers are well aware of their pupils' Individual Educational Plans and modify their teaching strategies and the resources used in lessons to accommodate them. The range of information relating to strategies and approaches is good. There is good liaison between subject teachers and teaching assistants. The teaching assistants understand the needs of the pupils they are supporting and provide the help and challenge required to enable the pupils to become more independent in their learning. There is a good level of planning for lessons between subject teachers and learning support staff. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) holds weekly meetings with teaching assistants, as a result of which they are well integrated into the life of the school. For instance, they attend staff meetings and whole school in-service training sessions and provide input to pupil reviews.
26. Assessment overall is very good. Much effort has been put into the development of assessment and it is seen by staff, pupils and parents as being very important in raising achievement. The whole school policy of assessment for learning and comment marking is the central feature. All assessment data is held centrally and can track each individual pupil from entry to exit. Departments assess work thoroughly and set regular realistic targets and feed this information back into the central system. Teachers use the process of assessment to help plan their lessons effectively. Marking of the work is very good, using constructive comments and often well explained examples to show pupils how work can be improved. Pupils have profile tracking sheets in each exercise book and can see how they are doing and what they have to do to make progress. There are individual and group pupil reviews to discuss progress across subjects. Self and peer assessment is encouraged and is well developed in many departments.

Sixth form

27. The quality of the teaching and learning in the sixth form mirrors that of the main school. In all but two lessons it was at least good. Almost six in every ten lessons were at least very good, which is truly excellent. Worthy of particular note was a Year 13 government and politics lesson where very good use was made of an excellent episode of *The West Wing* to illustrate the crucial role of presidential debates in American elections. Of equal note was the Year 12 geography lesson where the teacher's planning and organisation were so very effective that neither the special educational needs of one student nor the need of a recently arrived international student for additional help with English prevented the lesson on suburbanisation of an area of York from being judged excellent.
28. Assessment in the sixth form follows the pattern in the main school. It is thorough, detailed, informative and a strength of the very good teaching. Numerical data and other information are effectively used to inform students of their progress and how they can achieve more. Targets are regularly set and monitored against previous attainment. Marking of the work is very good using constructive comments and often well explained examples to show students

how work can be improved. Individual and group reviews are held with students who recognise the benefits and appreciate the positive effect that the assessment systems have on standards.

The curriculum

The school provides a curriculum that meets well the needs of all its pupils. It provides some vocational courses but its work related provision is at an early stage in its development. The sixth form experiences a wide range of courses. There is a very good range of extra- curricular opportunities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have an especially increased opportunity to study foreign languages.
- The broad and balanced curriculum meets the needs of all pupils.
- There is a very wide range of extra- curricular activities, which enhances learning.
- The work-related curriculum, though satisfactory, is an area for further development.
- Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall but there are some weaknesses in both.
- Sixth formers benefit from a wide range of courses including psychology, media and theatre studies.

Commentary

29. The school provides a balanced curriculum which meets well the needs of all its pupils and fulfils statutory requirements. All the National Curriculum subjects as well as personal, social, health education, and religious education are included. The time allocation is now the recommended 25 hours of lessons per week. In this specialist languages college pupils have greater opportunities to study more than one foreign language. In Years 10 -11 the school provides a number of pathways to external examinations and, as a result, pupils benefit from the range of courses which are organised to meet their needs. Drama is a strength of the school. GCSE courses are enhanced by a growing range of vocational courses, including health and social care and business education that cater well for those pupils who opt to study them. Citizenship and work related learning are recent additions to the curriculum and both have areas for improvement. Careers provision is good.
30. The school provides satisfactory programmes in personal, social and health education (PSHCE). There are close links between personal, social and health education, religious education and citizenship. Statutory requirements for drugs and sex education are met. The form tutors teach PSHE in Years 7 to 9 and it is taught by a small team of experienced teachers in Years 10 and 11. The distinctive ethos of the school supports well the work of PSHCE.
31. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum, apart from some short-term withdrawal from lessons for pupils who require specific programmes - for example, for hearing impaired pupils to work with an external specialist during modern foreign languages lessons. There has been considerable focus in recent years upon the school's provision for the most able pupils, including those who are either gifted or talented, to very good effect as the school's test and examination results show.
32. The school is very well staffed with qualified teachers, senior and middle managers. The number of teachers leaving and joining varies from year to year but the school successfully recruits sufficient staff to match its needs.
33. Accommodation is satisfactory overall but there are some weaknesses. Physical education has no sports hall and games are played on a separate site which is very costly and time

consuming to travel to. These factors affect curriculum planning and limit the activities available to pupils. Art has no storage area for materials related to three-dimensional studies. Art classes are large and the rooms small; both these factors affect the curriculum and pupils' learning. Other weaknesses include cramped textile rooms, workshops inadequately insulated, and insufficient specialist rooms in science, mathematics and English. Libraries on both sites are small. Provision for modern foreign languages on the lower school site is good and music provision on the upper school site is also good. An ongoing programme of decoration and maintenance enables the school to function in its old buildings. Immediate plans for 2005 include badly needed refurbishment of a lower school laboratory, the building of a new art room, and one extra classroom.

34. The level of resourcing in the school is satisfactory overall, but there are several areas of weakness. In English, lack of funds limits the choice of examination texts. The upper site library is inadequately stocked and too small for the large number of pupils it has to serve. The lower site library has too few books and its use as a form base detracts from its helpfulness. In textiles, lack of replacements for very old sewing machines is having an adverse impact on attainment in Years 7 to 9. There is a funding issue in physical education for the replacement of major equipment. There are numerous personal computers available for use by pupils (ratio about 5:1), but they are rapidly becoming obsolete and increasingly unreliable. There is a wealth of application software available to departments, but the operating system software is out of date and the network servers are operating at the limits of their capacity.
35. The school provides a very good range of activities to support pupils' learning outside the school day. The overall participation rate of pupils is high. Provision for sport and the arts is very good. Significant numbers of pupils, across all years, are involved in workshops, concerts, festivals and productions. Pupils are successful in a wide-range of sporting activities; sometimes at national level. Sporting successes are achieved despite the lack of a sports hall and on-site playing fields. The curriculum is enhanced by visits to galleries, theatres and museums and the contribution from visitors, including outside agencies. There is a range of lunchtime and after-school activities, including GCSE revision and homework clubs. The school fully meets the requirement of its language college status, by providing excellent opportunities for large numbers of pupils to experience the language and culture of other nations. The school provides a wide range of liturgical activities and retreats for pupils.

Sixth form

36. Curriculum provision is very good in the sixth form. A wide range of courses are available to students, including a good vocational component. The curriculum is enhanced by the inclusion of philosophy and ethics, psychology, media studies (now in its second year), theatre studies and government and politics. PSHCE is taught through the religious education programme and general studies. Very good provision is made for those students who have special educational needs. The present provision for general studies and law need to be reviewed – the general studies because of its relative unpopularity with students, who question the lack of link between the taught courses and the examination at the end of Year 12. The issue in law is to do with the method of learning which relies heavily upon video linkage, and its shortage of contact with a tutor led to dissatisfaction and a high student drop out rate in 2003 /2004..
37. Enrichment activities are very good and participation rates are closely monitored. There are strengths in sport, the arts and, as befits a language college, in visits to other countries, which help students to improve language skills and raises their cultural awareness. Insights into higher education are provided by visits to universities, contributions from visiting speakers, and by the efforts of the students themselves trawling the relevant internet sites. Students are also involved in working with other pupils in local primary schools and acting as mentors of younger pupils in this school.
38. There are good opportunities for further work experience, including placements abroad for those students who wish to do so. Students are encouraged to relate their own part-time jobs to their learning, and many work at the lower school site as paid lunchtime supervisors, or voluntarily supporting literacy and numeracy in Years 7 to 9. The careers and Connexions schemes support those Year 12 and 13 students wishing to move into employment. Potential higher education students have access to a wide range of information and advice.

Care, guidance and support

The arrangements for pupils` care, welfare, health and safety and guidance and support are very good overall. The involvement of pupils in the school's work through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school develops and maintains a very thorough knowledge of pupils as individuals and provides very good support for those pupils with additional needs.
- The pupils trust the teachers and other staff and know there is always someone to whom they can turn.
- The school has good arrangements to enable new pupils to settle in quickly.
- Students in the sixth form are very well guided and supported.

Commentary

39. A committee of governors and staff meet regularly to discuss the health and safety arrangements in the school. It oversees, for example, inspections of the site and reviews of accidents. Teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety matters during such lessons as science and design and technology. Risk assessments are in place for visits out and the recently appointed business manager will be ensuring that written risk assessments are in place for activities within the school including, for example, movement around the site. She will also ensure that all staff have guidance on good practice; the governors are already intending to invite the local authority safety advisor to provide training. The procedures for child protection are good. The school follows the local procedures and

staff have guidance on how to deal with any concerns that may arise. The arrangements for first aid are good, with several trained staff on both sites, records kept of treatment and letters for parents after head injuries.

40. As at the time of the previous inspection, staff show good concern for the needs of the pupils and provide good role models to encourage development. Parents are pleased with the level of support in the school, seeing it as a caring community where staff are approachable if there are any problems. In particular, parents agree that their children are well supported when they first come into the school. Pupils also confirmed that they settled in well and made new friends within a few days. This is because of the visits and other preparations made by the staff to meet pupils before they arrive and the especial support, including the use of Year 9 pupils as listeners, when they do start. Pupils throughout the school consider that the staff support them very well and know whom they would go to if they needed help. They also consider that the teachers generally listen to their ideas. This takes place more formally in year councils with class representatives meeting each term. The pupil questionnaires highlighted concerns about school uniforms which the school has already undertaken to review.
41. The school's approach to monitoring progress of the pupils is derived from regular testing and assessments in each subject area collated to produce an overall view. This information is passed to the heads of year and tutors. Formal national testing and other tests enable the school to predict what the pupil should achieve overall during their time in the school. Subject teachers decide on targets to help the pupils to improve in their area and these are recorded in the pupils' planners. Tutors and heads of year review each pupil's progress at various points during the year and provide the pupil with relevant general guidance to ensure they know how to improve. The limited time available to tutors to provide structured one-to-one support to their pupils is overcome in the lower school by the involvement of the heads of year. However in the upper school, tutors provide such support at lunch and break times. A written summary of each pupil's progress is provided to parents during the mid-part and the end of the school year. The pupil's personal development is also monitored well. Their pastoral needs are supported, where necessary, by trained staff such as the school home support worker and chaplains, together with expertise available from outside agencies. This includes good careers guidance from a member of staff supported by the Connexions careers service.
42. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are very well cared for. Relationships are secure and warm. Members of the special needs department offer pupils a very good level of personal and academic support. Emmaus Inclusion Centre staff co-ordinate a cross-curricular approach for pupils so that there is consistency in strategies used by teachers. They observe pupils in lessons and use their observations to set targets for them. The Emmaus Centre runs a programme of emotional health and well-being. Groups of Year 9 and sixth form pupils are trained in 'active listening'. The peer listeners are available to talk every day of the week at lunch times. Any pupil with an anxiety or problem can make an appointment, through a confidential system. The Centre also provides a games club for those who are bored at lunchtime, or tend 'to get into trouble'. A number of sixth form pupils volunteer to be mentors or role models. This involves them in weekly meetings with pupils to discuss concerns and support with homework. The mentors receive regular support from the Emmaus team.

Sixth form

43. Students are very well cared for, guided and supported in the sixth form. The school's open access policy and its outstanding results are attracting students from the main school and from a growing number of other schools. The complex make up of the student body, which

includes students from overseas and from other specialist schools who have differing faith and academic backgrounds, presents a challenge that the school meets very well. It is a

testament to its success that students are happy and content with their courses and with the support they are given. The very good relationships evident in the sixth form, and the trust between students and teachers, means that communication is very effective.

44. The induction programme is very good and much valued by the students. As they work their way through the sixth form, their tutors, careers staff and the Connexions service ensure that students have access to information about the next stage in their education. Great care is taken to match students to courses and to see that they have very good information. Students are very well prepared in terms of entry requirements and procedures, whether this be for university entrance or for other educational or employment opportunities.
45. The head of sixth form has a very effective overview of students' performance and all available data is used to monitor their progress. Any students causing concern are swiftly followed up through effective and well tested procedures. Marking and assessment is very good. Students value highly the support given by subject teachers. From their teachers' comments, students know exactly where they are and how they can improve.
46. Very good provision is made for those students in the sixth form who have special educational needs. They and their individual needs are well known to the teaching staff. Support assistants, who work with these students, know them very well. They give very good support to the students, balancing their needs for learning support with developing their independent learning skills.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are very good overall. Links with the local community and other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents hold the school in high regard and like what the school provides.
- The parents' support at home and in school makes a good contribution to pupils' achievement.
- The school provides an extensive range of information about the school and their children's progress.
- The involvement of different organisations and people in the community extends experiences for pupils' personal, social and academic development.

Commentary

47. In their response to the Ofsted questionnaire and at the meeting, parents showed that they are pleased with what the school provides. They assured the inspectors that their children were well cared for, happy and well taught at the school; that behaviour is generally very good, teaching is strong, standards are high, and the school is very well led. This reaction is similar to the views at the time of the last inspection. A few parents consider that they are not well informed about their children's progress though the inspectors conclude that good information is provided.
48. The school sends home regular news letters about general matters. The pupils' planners include comments from the subject teachers on what the pupils need to do to improve. There is further information at the front of the exercise books used by the pupils for homework about the learning intentions in that subject. The information sheet outlining the homework policy also gives guidance on how parents can help. The school expects both parents and

tutors to sign the planners each week and they are used, albeit sporadically, as a means of two-way communication. The upper school provides booklets on coursework and a parents' survival guide. Information on progress is sent home twice a year, around Christmas and at the end of the school year. These provide a helpful summary in each subject area.

49. The information provided helps parents to support their children. The consultation evenings in the spring term are very well attended, as are other events such as options evenings and concerts and masses. Pupils confirm that even if their parents do not help with the homework, they at least ensure it is done. Parents ferry their children to and from sports matches and other events resulting in the school not needing to hire coaches. Some parents also help at school with extra-curricular activities, social events and fund-raising.
50. The school maintains good links with parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs and almost all co-operate fully in the process of review and setting of targets. Parents of other pupils who may have problems with behaviour or relationships are also fully involved in the support the school provides.
51. The school actively uses its links with the community and other schools for the benefit of the pupils. Industry and public bodies not only provide a wide range of work experience placements, they also provide mentors to work with and support individual pupils. Pupils' understanding of society is enhanced by the contact with charitable organisations and various visitors and also through staging exhibitions in the town. Pupils undertake community work visiting old people's homes. Particular mention must be made of the church connections with the choir singing in the Minster, masses and liturgies and the residential retreats for all year groups. The contacts with the large number of primary schools who send children to All Saints ensure that pupils are well known and supported when they arrive in Year 7. Language teaching in the primary schools prepares them well for when they start. A large number of university students mentor individual pupils in the school. Pupils' sporting skills are enhanced by the competitions with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is very well led and managed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new headteacher is building very well on the standards set by the previous well respected leadership.
- The very experienced governing body provides very good support and constructive challenge to the school's leadership team.
- The maintenance of very high standards, especially through the continuous improvement of teaching and learning, is the successful key aim of all in leadership positions in the school.
- Pastoral and subject leadership are strong in depth throughout the school.

Commentary

52. Leadership is very good overall. The relatively new headteacher, previously an experienced deputy head at the school, sets a friendly, calm and positive tone but one which engenders respect throughout the school. He is well supported by a very effective senior team which includes representatives of middle management on a termly basis, and the most senior non-teaching member of staff. To say, as some parents do, that there was a seamless transition from the previous effective leadership to that of the new leader is to belie the value of some of the incoming head's initiatives. These include the revised and more strategic deployment of a reduced number of deputies and the use of 'new headteacher funding' to fund external consultants to review and develop further school self evaluation skills. Not all things went

smoothly for the new leadership team this year. A drive to tighten up on school uniform standards in Years 7 to 11, without first consulting at length those most affected, provoked an interesting minor backlash which the head himself was quick to admit contained lessons for the future.

53. The current school development plans are an improvement on those criticised in the last inspection. They clearly identify as priorities for the school: putting learning and teaching at its heart; pursuing excellence in leadership and management, in a climate of Catholic service, in order to achieve excellent standards and performance. These plans are to be reviewed regularly, but the inspection team's observations bear witness to the fact that the aims of strengthening teaching and learning and leadership and management are certainly successful so far.
54. Governance is very good overall. Governors continue to show considerable strength in the drive and informed support they bring to the school. They fulfil all their statutory responsibilities. They are actively involved as 'critical friends' of the school and well aware of the distinction between strategic overview and day-to-day management of the school. There are good examples of their intervention at key moments to both support and challenge the senior leadership team in, for example, how and when to make key senior staff appointments.
55. The leadership and management of subject teams in the main school is very good overall. It is excellent in English, very good in modern foreign languages, mathematics, science, ICT, psychology, music and business studies. In every other subject except citizenship it is good. The co-ordination of citizenship across the various subjects in the curriculum, and within the umbrella of personal and social education, is satisfactory and improving rapidly under new and well organised leadership.
56. Pastoral leadership and management are very good. Pupils are well known and very well cared for.
57. The split site allows younger pupils to learn separately from and not be dominated by the presence of older pupils. Pupils in Years 10 and 11, and students in the sixth form, have all the advantages and extra freedoms of a college type atmosphere, including the freedom to leave the site at lunchtime. This is a very civilised and thoroughly inclusive school where all staff, teaching and non-teaching, feel completely valued, and the vast majority of pupils achieve very well during their time at the school. This does not happen by accident. There are pupils at the school who, without clear guidance and careful managing, could be troublesome. At All Saints they are not allowed to dominate the ethos of the school.
58. The school runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis, the result of effective teamwork from dedicated non-teaching as well as teaching staff. The problems of having two small and restricted school sites, seven minutes walk apart from each other, and old buildings steeped in history but not always completely fit for purpose, are not allowed to detract from the success of the school.
59. Senior managers take great care over the appointment, welfare and career development of staff. A revised way of looking at performance management not only fulfills statutory requirements (an issue at the last inspection) but also provides teachers with realistic objectives that help move the school forward. New staff are very effectively supported. Administrative, technical and maintenance staffs are strong and efficient. Teaching and learning is enhanced by the presence of trainee teachers from several universities. They in turn receive training of quality. The management of this provision is excellent.
60. The co-ordination of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. The SENCO provides a good role model with her warm and positive outlook, and there is a good level of support from the link governor for special educational needs. There are clear guidelines for teaching assistants as to how support should be used in the classrooms and this has resulted in a good level of performance. Procedures are in place for monitoring classroom practice, pupil tracking and the analysis of value-added data. However, the department could

make better use of the school's electronic data to systemise pupil tracking and the analysis of value added information.

61. The co-ordinator for gifted and talented pupils has an impressive grasp of the issues surrounding these pupils and has instituted some fruitful schemes for challenging them further. The Emmaus Centre is well organised and very well led and managed by the Inclusion Officer
62. The school's financial management is very good and it uses the funding available very effectively.
63. The school employs a full-time finance officer and has recently appointed a new business manager; the financial systems are excellent and the school follows best value principles. The two most recent audit reports emphasised the high standard of the financial procedures and internal control. The budget setting process follows the priorities of the school. At the moment, the school improvement planning lacks financial costings but the business manager will be ensuring this is rectified in the future. The table below shows only a small amount carried forward at the end of the year, due to expenditure on urgent repair works to the roof. The school is aware that this sum is inadequate to be a suitable contingency for any further unforeseen expenditure. However, prudent budgeting this year has resulted in a higher sum forecast for the end of the current financial year.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	3,751,889	Balance from previous year	146,967
Total expenditure	3,875,275	Balance carried forward to the next	23,581
Expenditure per pupil	3,517		

64. The school applies very well the principles of best value. It makes close comparison of its results with those of other schools, and analyses standards carefully, to establish that achievement is as good as possible. It provides challenge to all its pupils with a broad curriculum and additional learning opportunities even to the extent of operating before and after school classes in modern foreign languages. Consultation with pupils and parents is good and improving in the light of lessons learned over issues to do with school uniform. The school's financial systems are very well managed to ensure effective competition for the services it buys. In general, the school is very effective in giving pupils a very good quality of education. It gives very good value for money.

Sixth form

65. The leadership and management of the sixth form are very good. There is a clear vision for the development of the sixth form, a determination to sustain high standards and a warm and trusting relationship with the students. Very good use is made of available data to track achievement, analyse trends and gather evidence of added value. Very good use is made of data and responses to gauge students' satisfaction with their courses. Relationships with students are very good and this, together with the unique ethos of this school, creates a family atmosphere in which students can grow and flourish academically and personally, knowing that their views will be listened to and respected.

WORK RELATED LEARNING

The effectiveness of work related learning (WRL) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is no formal work-related curriculum.
- There is excellent provision for pupils in Years 10 and 11 for whom a full GCSE curriculum is unsuitable
- Work experience is of good quality
- The careers department has a significant, if sporadic, input into pupils' awareness of the world of work

Commentary

66. The school has made an audit of the modules of work which currently offer opportunities for WRL, but has no formal work-related curriculum, but a carefully-constructed action plan is being implemented to ensure that a WRL programme is approved by the governing body, and in place by the end of the academic year. This includes the appointment of a WRL co-ordinator, staff training, and a clarification of the contribution to be expected of subject departments. The focus is principally on Years 10 and 11, where a two-week work experience scheme in Year 11, including mock interviews, further supports pupils' learning. An increasing number of vocational courses are on offer in the Year 10 options choices, and some pupils have further access through the Duke of Edinburgh award, GCSE ICT, GCSE business studies and local and national competitions which encourage enterprise. An Enterprise Day for Year 10 is being planned to help pupils recognise and apply their skills for enterprise and employability, and engage with ideas from the world of business.
67. A small number of pupils in Years 10 and 11 follow an alternative curriculum more suited to their individual needs. This excellent programme, managed by the school's inclusion officer, is very flexible, and offers three types of activities. One day per week placements, organised in conjunction with the local Connexions base, cover Key Skills and practical work experience in a placement reflecting the pupil's interests. Four days per week placements, operated through the local Trident scheme, offer different placements each half term, according to pupils' interests and aspirations. The local further education college, whose involvement with the school is constantly increasing, accepts pupils on NVQ and GNVQ courses. All these placements have been most effective in raising pupils' self-esteem and attitudes towards learning, and have ensured good progression. No pupils have dropped out, and some in the one-day scheme have even decided to return full time into school.
68. The careers guidance programme is based on group work, individual interviews, and research activities in the Connexions resource centre. Pupils from Year 9 onwards keep a progress file of their careers-related learning, which is delivered in PHSCE lessons, and based on a scheme produced by the local education authority. The Connexions scheme supports Year 9 pupils and those with special educational needs, who need particular guidance, as well as parents' meetings and option choice evenings. The main focus is, however, on Year 11 careers interviews.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

All references throughout the report to 'average', 'above average' or 'below average' etc refer to comparisons with national standards. 2004 results are not yet validated nationally, but reference is made to them below.

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- National Curriculum test and GCSE examination results are high.
- Leadership and management of the subject are excellent.
- Teaching is very good and produces very good achievement for all pupils.
- Assessment procedures are thorough and constructive.
- Pupils have few opportunities to develop information and communication technology skills.

Commentary

69. Year 9 National Curriculum test results in 2003 continued the established trend of high performance. They represented outstanding achievement by pupils. Although the performance of girls was better than that of boys, the gap between boys and girls was reduced. In 2003, Year 11 GCSE examination results were well above average, demonstrating very good achievement for pupils. Results for 2004 show that the proportion of pupils gaining A* to C grades declined slightly.
70. Achievement in lessons is currently very good. Standards are well above those expected for Year 9 and reflect the high results of previous years. This represents very good progress for pupils. Pupils show perception when responding to a wide range of literature. They express themselves clearly when speaking and writing. Pupils are keen to do their best and their positive attitudes are an important factor in their very good achievement. Standards remain high throughout Years 10 and 11. Year 11 pupils achieve very well. Analysis of coursework shows that pupils have extended the skills acquired earlier in their school career. They are able to write accurately. For example, a Year 11 class confidently explored themes and language in *Lord of the Flies*. The achievement of higher attaining pupils is well matched to their abilities. This is because their teachers provide intellectual challenge and assessment criteria so that they can contribute to the management of their own learning. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make very good progress because teachers match activities and demands to their needs. There is no difference in the achievement of pupils from different religious or social backgrounds. Teachers have planned activities to develop pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Restricted access to ICT rooms has limited opportunities to turn these plans into action.
71. Very good teaching is a departmental strength; it leads to very good learning. An excellent Year 10 lesson demonstrated the outstanding features of the department. The teacher was a specialist. Her excellent subject knowledge enabled her to plan and deliver a lesson that encouraged pupils to work at a challenging pace and develop the confidence to explore new learning. Very good use was made of the four-part lesson technique to stimulate pupils, develop their learning and check their understanding. Teaching and learning are monitored by the head of department so that teachers and pupils receive guidance on how to improve. Planning, curriculum and assessment processes have been reviewed and improved. Marking

and assessment consistently support improvement for all pupils. The department has an excellent system of target setting that encourages pupils to become involved in their learning. Homework is used very effectively to support learning.

72. The head of department is dedicated to providing a rich learning environment. Her strategic thinking and planning for improvement have helped the department to produce policy documents that are clear and well focused on raising standards. Consequently, the teachers sharing her role during her maternity leave are continuing to provide excellent leadership and management.
73. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good. In Year 7, activities and demands are now well matched to pupils' needs. A comprehensive scheme of work has been introduced to guide the work of the department. Assessment procedures are thorough and constructive.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

74. Standards of literacy are high and enable pupils to achieve very well. Pupils are fluent speakers and thoroughly enjoy discussions. They read accurately with good comprehension and make effective use of higher order reading skills such as skimming and scanning. Pupils' writing is organised and clear. Written style is well suited to audience and purpose. The literacy framework is in place in English classes. The school has an effective strategy for teaching the basic skills of literacy across the curriculum.

Modern foreign languages

Provision in modern foreign languages is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in French, Spanish and Italian and do well in German by Year 11.
- Teaching and learning are very good, assuring well above average standards, especially in Years 7-9.
- A very good curriculum broadens pupils' horizons very well.
- Very good leadership and management and strong teamwork make sure that all pupils have challenges which closely match their needs.

Commentary

75. GCSE results in French were well above average in 2003, the latest year for which valid comparisons are available. The proportion of pupils attaining A*-C grades was equally high in 2004 and inspection findings confirm that these standards are being sustained. The picture in Spanish and for the small numbers taking Italian is similarly strong. In German in 2003 only about a third of pupils obtained grades A*-C whereas nationally around one half of candidates did so. The school's subsequent actions ensured a significant improvement in 2004 when about half the candidates obtained grades A*-C. Standards continue to rise: inspection findings indicate that pupils in the current Year 11 are working above average standards and that Year 10 are achieving even better, matching the standards in other languages.
76. Teachers are well-qualified and experienced linguists who use the languages for all aspects of lessons and expect pupils to do the same. In consequence, learning is brisk and pupils build up their skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing in a balanced way. Grammar is often presented in the form of language games, enjoyed by everyone and encouraging communication very well. Occasionally the pace of some lessons slips a little, especially if

English comes into explanations more than is strictly necessary, but in general it is the foreign languages which predominate.

77. All pupils start off learning one language, the vast majority begin a second from Year 8 and a smaller number of enthusiasts take a third from Year 9 thanks to "early bird" and "twilight" sessions outside the normal working day. The strengths in teaching and learning are consistent in all languages. A particular strength of teaching is the use of techniques which accelerate the learning of the second and third languages. These include taking advantage of pupils' understanding of the first. Many teachers speak two or three languages themselves. Their own skills and very good example help pupils to make the necessary connections more readily.
78. The study of up to three languages is enhanced by an expanding range of links with European countries. There is also a South American connection thanks to a Peruvian language assistant. Extra-curricular clubs include Salsa. All these elements help to give pupils a better understanding of the languages and of other cultures. Links with Morocco and the possible introduction of both Arabic and Japanese are being considered. Opportunities to enhance pupils' personal development are securely built into planning throughout the school.
79. Teamwork is a strong feature of management, and in addition to classroom activities all teachers have a role which makes use of their particular skills or talents. The delegation of tasks, the deployment of team-teachers and of teaching assistants all arise from careful monitoring of teaching and learning. This also includes very effective assessment procedures and their use. The setting of teaching groups, for example, takes into account pupils' different requirements, whether to provide support or greater stimulation. As a result all groups of pupils achieve as well as each other.
80. Since the last inspection minor inconsistencies in teaching have been addressed and overall standards have risen. Improvement has been good. The school remains in the vanguard of language learning as part of a pilot national strategy to improve standards in Years 7-9 and has additionally taken the initiative to bring languages successfully to primary school pupils in Year 6.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is well qualified and committed and has very high expectations of pupils.
- Pupils' attitudes to their learning are very positive.
- Very good leadership and management ensure a consistency of approach which results in pupils achieving to their potential.
- Assessment and target setting are strengths of the department.

Commentary

81. Standards of the pupils on entry to the school are well above the national average and, in 2003, the end of Year 9 national test results were well above the national average in relation to all schools nationally and similar schools. At this stage boys' results matched those of girls. This represents very good achievement overall in Years 7 to 9. The Year 9 results since the last inspection have shown a rising trend which is above the national expectation. In 2003, GCSE results were also well above the national average, representing very good achievement from earlier results in Year 9. Boys outperformed girls in 2003. Standards seen in lessons are

generally well above average. The very good attitudes of the pupils to the subject contribute to the overall very good achievement throughout the school.

82. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good. All teachers have high expectations in terms of work and behaviour in class. Teaching is stimulating and imaginative with good pace and appropriate levels of challenge. The very well planned lessons using a range of teaching strategies ensure that pupils develop skills and understanding effectively. The consistency of approach, sharing aims of lessons with pupils and being considerate to their individual needs, linked with the effective use of praise, motivates and raises the confidence of pupils, resulting in the high levels of achievement and enjoyment. Pupils learn well and were seen to work well independently. The National Strategy for Years 7 to 11 is in place. Lesson starter activities are brisk, main sections stimulating interest and challenging, and lesson endings suitably evaluative, each part enhancing pupil learning opportunities. The very positive attitudes of pupils, seen across all ability groups, enable effective learning to take place. High quality work seen in pupils' books reflects their very good attitudes to the subject; the books are marked using informative constructive comments.
83. Leadership and management are very good. The head of department has clear vision for further improving its work. Ensuring that each individual pupil reaches their full potential is central to the work of the department. This is shared by the hardworking committed specialist teachers. A good ethos, high expectations, sharing of good practice and continually reviewing are a major part of their philosophy. New members are well inducted into the department then mentored on a regular basis.
84. The quality of assessment is very good. Teachers have assessment data available for all pupils in each group. This shows entry levels, targets and current assessment information and it is shared with the pupils. All exercise books contain a profile chart showing pupil progress. The pupils know what their targets are and what they have to do to reach the next level. Marking is consistent and good positive comments are made which inform pupils how they might improve. Positive feedback motivates pupils further to improve their work.
85. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The upward trend of external examination results is above that nationally. The National Strategy arrangements are fully in place and the use of ICT to aid pupil learning has increased. Provision for citizenship is now integrated into the scheme of work.

Mathematics across the curriculum

86. Provision is good. Management of the numeracy policy throughout the school is well coordinated. Standards are very good and sufficient to support the mathematical demands in other subjects. Good use of numeracy skills were particularly noticeable in science where velocity / time graphs were used to good effect; in ICT, well developed mathematical skills were used when working with formulae in spreadsheets; in music, pupils were using number skills well in rhythm patterns; and, in geography, pupils use data analysis, lines of best fit and a range of statistical diagrams to good effect.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment over the past few years both at GCSE and in Year 9 tests has been well above the national average
- Achievement is very good because of the enthusiasm of the pupils and the high quality of the teaching.

- Teaching and support staff work very well together under the very good leadership of head of department and are committed to high standards.
- Assessment and target setting are used very effectively to raise achievement.

Commentary

87. Standards are consistently well above average in Year 9 and at GCSE. In 2003, all pupils obtained a pass grade in GCSE and a very high proportion were awarded A* and A grades. In the Year 9 national tests the number of pupils reaching level 7 was commendably high. Pupils join the school with well above average standards in science and this maintenance of those high standards represents very good achievement. The unconfirmed results for 2004 are similar to those of the previous year. The performance of boys is better than that of girls, reflecting the ethos in the school and in the department which makes it acceptable for boys to achieve well.
88. Standards in Year 9 and Year 11 are well above national expectation. Year 7 pupils already show that they know how to work in a scientific way. Almost all pupils in a mixed ability group understood difficult ideas related to the phases of the moon. Very good progress continues through Years 8 and 9 and later in the years leading to GCSE. Pupils' use of ICT is good. This was demonstrated in a very well planned Year 11 lesson in which they simulated, very competently, an investigation into the factors affecting the resistance of a piece of wire. A Year 10 lesson had a significant spiritual dimension. Pupils improved their knowledge of the kidney and also showed empathy with kidney failure patients during a well organised series of video excerpts
89. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teachers have an excellent knowledge of the subject and prepare lessons very thoroughly. Learning goals are clear and are usually shared with pupils at the beginning of the lesson. Teachers make good use of praise, and humour is a feature of many lessons. Expectations are very high and constant challenge maintains interest. This, when accompanied by the enthusiasm shown by the majority of pupils, results in very good progress. Pupils have a positive attitude to work and behaviour is often exemplary. The national strategy for Years 7 to 9 and the department's involvement with a 'thinking skills in science' project have had a marked effect on the quality of teaching and learning, especially in Years 7 to 9. Much teaching makes effective use of ICT. Although pupils with special needs make good progress teachers do not make sufficient use of material specially adapted for lower and higher attainers.
90. Teaching and support staff work very well together under the very good leadership of the head of department. There is a shared commitment to high standards. Very good use is made of assessment to track pupils' progress and set targets. This is a strength of the department. There has been a good response to the last report. Good use is now made of ICT. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored more carefully and pupils receive good feedback on their progress.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- Standards are sustained at levels well above national expectations.
- Very good teaching and consequent learning ensure that pupils' achievement is very good.
- Resources, although plentiful, are rapidly becoming obsolete and unreliable.

Commentary

91. In 2003, almost eight in every ten pupils gained level five or above in their teacher assessments at the end of Year 8, indicating standards well above national expectations for pupils by the end of Year 9. The 2004 teacher assessments show the proportion of pupils reaching level five or above to have risen to nine in every ten - well above national

expectations. Pupils follow a challenging course with a suitable time allocation during Years 7 and 8 that enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to achieve very well. However, the lack of distinct ICT lessons for pupils in Year 9 is potentially a problem for continuity, and may very well disadvantage pupils when online assessment of ICT is introduced. Girls outperform boys by a significant margin.

92. Results at GCSE in 2003 were well above national averages, with almost nine pupils in every ten gaining grades A* - C, and all pupils gaining grades A* - G. These standards have been sustained in 2004 representing very good achievement. Girls outperform boys by a considerable margin. The GCSE course in ICT enables pupils to acquire a wide variety of skills, knowledge and understanding, relevant to the modern world of work.
93. Teaching of ICT is very good. The teachers have in-depth knowledge and understanding of the subject and are very well led. Curriculum and lesson planning is very good. Lesson aims are generally clear, and pupils know what is expected of them, although the use of 'pulling the threads together' sessions at the end of lessons is still being developed. Pupils are given good-quality support material that helps them to become more independent, and are set targets for completion of tasks. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work and, as a result, pupils are well motivated and keen to learn. The consistently very good teaching features energy and enthusiasm, giving pupils the clear message that ICT is well worth the effort. Homework is very well used to reinforce and extend pupils' learning. Assessment during lessons is very effective and formal assessments are accurate and thorough with feedback which points to ways to improve. Pupils of all backgrounds and capabilities are well challenged and consequently learn very well.
94. Very good leadership and management of the department have ensured that pupils receive teaching of very good quality and their progress is constantly monitored against their individual targets. Teachers work well as a team and support the ethos of innovation and continuing professional development. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

95. The cross-curricular provision of ICT is good overall. ICT is planned for in schemes of work and there are examples of outstanding practice in several subjects. Pupils at all stages are competent and confident users of ICT. For example, they use video and performance analysis software in physical education; desk top publishing to enhance their written work in most subjects and the internet effectively for research in many other areas. In some subjects they make high quality presentations using presentational software such as PowerPoint®.
96. Teachers in all departments have a high level of capability in the use of ICT and many use ICT extensively in their teaching. However, lack of access to adequate facilities is preventing more effective development in many areas. The arrangements for access are too inflexible to allow proper equality of opportunity for all pupils.
97. The school is well resourced in terms of the number of computers available for pupil use, but these computers are rapidly becoming obsolete and are increasingly unreliable. There is a wide range of application software for pupil use but the operating system software is out of date, and the network servers have insufficient capacity. The communication link between the two sites is subject to the vagaries of the weather. The technical manager and his assistant do very well in keeping the systems operational. The ICT rooms are well equipped with networked computers, printing facilities and interactive whiteboards, but they are very cramped and there is no space for the pupils to work away from the computer keyboards. On entering the school, pupils are made aware of the requirements for responsible use of the

computer systems, including the internet. There are appropriate protection measures in place and access rights can be withdrawn in the rare event of inappropriate use.

98. There is extensive use of the computer systems out of school hours. Pupils have a computer club and pupils are able to access the facilities outside lessons to enhance their work, and to pursue their own interests.

HUMANITIES

The focus was on geography and history. Religious education was inspected as part of a separate inspection under Section 23 of the 1996 School Inspection Act and will be reported separately.

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE results were well above average in the last three years.
- Very good teaching and well planned lessons promote very good learning.
- Schemes of work need updating to ensure key skills are fully developed.
- Very good fieldwork provision in Year 10 develops very good independent learning but there is insufficient fieldwork provision in years 7-9

Commentary

99. Attainment on entry in Year 7 is above average but pupils come to the school with very variable geographical skills and knowledge. In Year 9 standards of work in lessons are good, assessed work is very good, and this represents good achievement for pupils. GCSE results in 2003 and over the last three years were always well above average, with little difference between boys' and girls' results. Standards in lessons are always above average and coursework standards are very good. This is very good achievement for Year 11 pupils compared to their earlier attainment.
100. Current standards are above average in Years 7-9 and pupils progress well in lessons, and develop good geographical skills with maps, graphs and diagrams. By the end of Year 11, standards are well above average and pupils have acquired knowledge and understanding of a broad range of geographical issues. This reflects the very good attitudes to work seen in most lessons. There are very good relationships between pupils and teachers, and between pupils in lessons. Low attaining pupils make good progress and more able pupils produce high quality detailed work in lessons.
101. Teaching and learning are very good overall and better in Years 10-11 than in Years 7-9. Enthusiastic teachers use a wide range of teaching strategies to motivate and support pupils' learning. In a Year 7 lesson using Ordnance Survey maps of the York area, pupils' fascination with, and enthusiasm for, learning was intense. All teaching is in mixed ability groups and teachers competently develop a variety of well resourced tasks for lessons. This ensures work is accessible to all pupils and also challenges the more able pupils. The result is well motivated, confident pupils, with the knowledge and understanding to discuss ideas, respond to questions and to complete consistently good work in lessons. When learning support is available it is well used to support pupils. Modular assessment is good, pupils understand their targets, but other marking is inconsistent and irregular.
102. Leadership and management of the department are very good, as a result of which the department works as an effective team. There is very good preparation and follow up for

pupils' examination coursework. Progress is well monitored through assessment at both key stages. Innovation in teaching strategies, to develop pupils' thinking skills, is reflected in examination results.

103. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Since the last inspection, teaching has become very good in Years 10 -11, oral work in lessons is good, assessment is good in all years and GCSE results are now well above average. Schemes of work need updating. Marking could be improved and the use of ICT, though improved, still needs more provision.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and this is bringing about good achievement.
- Leadership and management of the subject have improved under the new leadership.
- The results at GCSE are above the national average.
- The marking of pupils' work needs to show pupils more often how they can improve.

Commentary

104. In 2003 the rising trend of results over recent years led to 100 percent gaining A* - C. In 2004, this wasn't sustained but results are still probably above average. The boys reached slightly higher standards than the girls at the higher grades.
105. Current pupils enter the school with varied historical skills but very soon make good progress. By the end of Year 9 standards are above those gained nationally. Pupils' achievement relative to earlier attainment is good. They achieve well because of positive attitudes, good support from other pupils and the teaching they receive. Many pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of events over time. Most pupils can handle source material well and many are clear about interpretation and bias. Pupils can analyze well from the sources they are given and discuss historical issues both with their teacher and in their pairs. Higher attaining pupils can write well when challenged but need more extension work so that this can happen more often. Other ability levels make good progress in their writing. Literacy skills and the use of historical language also improve significantly from Years 7 to 9. Numeracy also improves but it was not much in evidence during the inspection.
106. Pupils are working at above the national average by Year 11. Their achievement relative to standards at the end of Year 9 is good. Most pupils are confident in the use of source material and this greatly helps them in their understanding of developments over time. They have developed good note-taking skills and use these to inform their written observations; their presentation skills are well developed, particularly with in depth longer studies.
107. The quality of teaching and learning is good with some that is very good, particularly in Years 10 and 11. Teachers have a very good command of their subject. Well-planned lessons with learning objectives sometimes shared with pupils encourage them to work at a challenging pace. Lessons draw on a range of activities and resources; this together with skilful questioning and oral assessment helps pupils to understand and reinforce their learning. ICT is increasingly used to support learning. There were good examples of learning independently, particularly in pairs, but the level of work and text does not always meet the needs of the different levels of pupils' ability in some groups. The very small number of pupils with special educational needs made good progress particularly when supported in class. Homework is set regularly and is sometimes used in subsequent lessons to check progress. Marking has some very useful comments on how pupils can improve but needs this more

often so that pupils can take the opportunity to use such comments to improve their future work.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good.
- Pupils gain good results in GCSE examinations.
- The behaviour of pupils in lessons is very good.
- Resources for the teaching of textiles in the lower school are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

108. In tests and assessments, at the end of Year 9, pupils gain a higher than average proportion of National Curriculum Levels 5 and above. This represents good achievement through Years 7 to 9 from the average levels attained in baseline tests on entry to the school. In GCSE examinations in the most recent years, pupils gain above average results overall, with well above average results in textiles, food technology and child development. GNVQ results in health and social care are also well above average. These results constitute sustained above average attainment and continuing good achievement. Textiles' results represent very high attainment in each of the most recent two years and exceptional attainment by girls. Standards and achievement seen in lessons during the inspection reflect these results.
109. In Years 7 to 9, pupils show imagination and skill in textiles and food technology and produce good quality artefacts showing cutting and shaping skills alongside original design in resistant materials. In graphics, work is well researched and well presented and, in structures, pupils show good understanding of basic forces. In Years 10 and 11 very good quality design is evident in textiles with skills in research and in generating original ideas by such devices as 'mood boards'. Work in food technology shows good understanding of nutritional factors, hygiene and food processing. The relative attainment of boys and girls varies from option to option with no consistent pattern. Against a background of good attainment generally in GCSE options, there are some comparative weaknesses. These include a failure to recognise the importance of lettering in presentation and a lack of attention to detail in workshop practice. Knowledge of colour and its function in design is also, in many cases, sketchy.
110. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good and, in some instances, very good. A common element in the teaching is thorough and imaginative preparation. Good use is made of a three-part lesson structure in Years 7 to 9. Learning is positively influenced by very good pupil behaviour and a notable feature in all the teaching is the very good quality of teacher-pupil relationships. Most lessons contain a significant element of individual help and tuition. This is delivered from a versatile base of subject expertise and sensitivity to individual pupil need. As a consequence, pupils with special educational needs, and those with special talent, are able to reach their full potential. Assessment is very thorough and is used well to record and promote progress.
111. The management of the subject is shared by two members of staff who are responsible for separate areas within the department. This arrangement works effectively and helps provide good subject leadership across the full range of options.
112. Since the last inspection standards have improved significantly. The lack of a baseline assessment, noted at the time of the last inspection, has been remedied. Some problems, however, persist. Accommodation is poorly insulated in the lower school causing excessive

heat in summer and a cold environment in winter. Resources for textiles in the lower school are unsatisfactory, much of the sewing equipment being worn and outdated. Overall, however, improvement since the last inspection is good.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

113. The main focus was on art and design and music. Drama was sampled.
114. In the Year 11 drama lesson seen in **Drama**, good teaching enabled pupils to learn well. The teacher had a subtle but directive presence that helped pupils to build on their knowledge, understanding and skills to present coherent and meaningful dramas. Pupils showed good understanding of movement, voice and of how to build dialogue. Some groups made effective use of space and movement to convey feelings. They all used skill, imagination and effort to shape and produce good improvised pieces. Their final performances conveyed the solemnity of bereavement and the nastiness of bullying. The school's results show that seven out of ten pupils gained GCSE drama grades A* to C in 2004.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- The achievement of pupils of all abilities is very good.
- Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology.

Commentary

115. Standards on entry to the school vary considerably but are generally in line with the national average in art and design. Teacher assessments carried out at the end of Year 9 show the percentage of pupils achieving level 5 and above to be above the national average. Standards of current classroom work seen support these results. Achievement of all abilities from Years 7 to 9 is therefore good. Although girls outperform boys the gap is similar to that experienced nationally.
116. Pupils are able to carry out thorough research and investigation. They develop good use of the basic elements of art and much finished work makes effective use of tone and colour underpinned by average standards of drawing skill.
117. GCSE results are generally in line with the national average for the percentage gaining an A*-C grade but below average for A*-G grades achieved. The gap in performance between boys and girls is similar to that experienced nationally. Recent results, however, show girls dominating the top two grades.
118. Standards seen in Year 11 were generally above the national average. Work contains high levels of personal research and purposeful experimentation with new media and technique resulting in highly individualistic work. Much finished work shows a confident use of a range of media. General standards of drawing and pupils' use of art terminology match national expectations.
119. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. No lessons were judged to be less than good. Lessons are characterised by teaching methods that place prime importance on

creating a relaxed but lively environment. This is achieved by continuous individual support where pupils are given every encouragement to express their personal ideas. Teachers have good subject knowledge including a very comprehensive knowledge of famous artists, which is effectively incorporated into lessons. Some lessons however would have benefited from whole class demonstration of technique. There is insufficient reference made to non-western artists and cultures. Opportunities for pupils to use ICT in the art making process are also limited.

120. Leadership and management are good. The department gains strength and is guided by a clear philosophy of how the subject should be taught. The head of department communicates this philosophy most effectively to colleagues by example and support. Well-produced departmental action plans describe clearly how overall provision needs to be improved. Teaching is regularly monitored and staff benefit from regular in-service training.

121. Opportunities for pupils to work in three dimensions are limited. Pupils do not get opportunities to interact with practising artists and there are too few visits to galleries. There are numerous opportunities for pupils to continue their work at lunchtimes and after school. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection although overly large class sizes remain a problem and limit what can be taught.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership and management have improved pupils' provision, opportunities and standards.
- GCSE results continue to be well above average because of very good teaching and learning and pupils' mature attitudes.
- Achievement by Year 9 is good and is improving because of more stable staffing and better ICT development.
- Music promotes very good personal development and good enrichment opportunities.

Commentary

122. Standards on entry are close to the national average overall, although pupils' musical skills and experience vary more widely than usual because of the large number of partner primary schools from which they are drawn. Standards by Year 9 are above average and improving. Teachers' own assessments in 2003 indicate that although a higher than average number of pupils gained National Curriculum level 5 and 6, approximately thirty percent of pupils failed to do so. In the 2004 assessments this percentage below level 5 was halved, a definite improvement. Achievement by Year 9 is good. GCSE results are well above average, with a hundred percent A* - C grades and an increasing proportion of A* and A grades. Attainment of pupils' work seen in Years 10 and 11 confirms well above average standards and represents very good achievement.

123. Pupils with special educational needs generally achieve as well as other pupils, because teachers take great care to provide levels of work that can be adapted to their capability and the support for realising it well. Highly able pupils are stretched well by extension material, by helping others in group activities and in the opportunities they have for enrichment.

124. Teaching and learning are good in Years 7-9 and very good in Years 10 -11. The best teaching makes rigorous demands on pupils by providing them with a good range of activities, including subject specific ICT, promoting their good development in technical language, musical skills and knowledge. Pupils' learning is strongly reinforced and consolidated by probing questions, and by problem solving. While very good teaching promotes high

standards and good levels of pupil productivity it does not stifle their creativity or enjoyment. Teachers are confident in using assessment to inform individual pupils' needs and curriculum planning. Teaching develops particularly good learning skills, mature attitudes and independence for pupils in Years 10 -11. Now that staffing is stable, wholly specialist and experienced, after a period of changes, more consistency in teaching which matches the best seen, should continue to improve both learning and achievement in Years 7-9.

125. Music makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development through the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the subject. Pupils' awareness of other cultures is promoted well by studying aspects of world music. A higher than average number of pupils has good enrichment opportunities through instrumental tuition and performances within and outside the school.
126. Leadership and management are both very good. Ambitious leadership and determined, effective management have ensured the success of many aspects of subject development indicated in the previous inspection report. Most of the strengths it recorded are maintained and the improvements in standards and achievement, assessment, enrichment and in the focus, status and popularity of the subject are good. Accommodation still has weaknesses which restrict some aspects of the work of the department.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of Years 9 and 11.
- Teaching and learning are good; teachers plan lessons using a range of activities that allows all groups of pupils to learn well.
- The very good extra-curricular programme provides opportunities for all pupils to extend their learning.
- The lack of on-site playing fields and a sports hall restricts curricular activities and wastes curriculum time travelling.
- There is a lack of ICT resources within the department to support teaching and learning.

Commentary

127. Standards in lessons and in work of Year 9 and Year 11 pupils are above average. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Pupils are achieving well across all years, given their average attainment in physical education on entry in Year 7. Specialist provision in the subject, in partner primary schools, is variable. Year 11 pupils' GCSE examination results are consistently well above average and are better than those in their other subjects. Low attainers, pupils with special educational needs and the talented, achieve well. High attaining pupils are successful in a range of sports at area, county and sometimes, national levels.
128. The quality of teaching and learning is good in all year groups. Lessons are challenging and teachers' expectations of pupils are demanding, but realistic. Work is planned to suit all pupils. In a Year 9 football lesson, lower attaining pupils made very good progress, because the teacher modified tasks and used demonstrations very effectively. The learning of higher attaining pupils in the lesson, was accelerated by extension tasks and grouping. Since the last inspection, far more opportunities for independent learning have been introduced. In a Year 10 dance lesson pupils planned routines, evaluated peer performance and performed to an audience. Learning is less effective in a few lessons when there is less technical input from teachers and when teaching becomes more prescriptive. The very good extra-curricular programme provides opportunities for all pupils to extend their learning.

129. The subject contributes well to the improvement of pupils' numeracy and literacy skills, but makes limited provision for the development of their ICT skills. Pupils' learning is enhanced by their very positive attitudes. Participation rates are high and relationships very good.
130. Leadership and management are good. The recently appointed subject leader has a strong commitment to improvement and success and is ably supported by a dedicated team of specialists. Good procedures are in place to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality of teaching and pupils' standards. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. The department works hard to minimise the effects of off-site playing fields; the lack of sports hall provision and below average curricular time in Year 11. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

Business education

Provision in business education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE examination results are high.
- The very good quality of teaching and learning enables pupils to achieve well.
- The leadership provides clear vision and direction.
- The curriculum is very well supported by links with industry.

Commentary

131. In 2003, results in the GCSE business studies were high, with eight out of ten pupils obtaining grades A*-C. In 2004 the results were very high, with nine out of ten pupils attaining those grades.
132. The standard of work in the current Year 11 is above average, owing to the good progress of middle-attaining pupils, over time, in the skills of analysis and evaluation. In the major case studies there is a high standard of literacy, and good application of business theory to practical situations. The standard of note taking and presentation is also high. Achievement is good overall. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress alongside their peers. Year 10 pupils following the newly-introduced applied business course are developing good investigation skills, and generally recall and use key terms well. Some lower attainers, however, experience difficulty with spelling, and do not explain key terms and concepts with sufficient clarity.
133. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers have a profound knowledge of their subject, and the planning, pace and timing of the lessons are a particular strength. Their use of "games" elements with a competitive edge is a very good way of enhancing pupils' motivation, and hence their learning. They constantly challenge pupils to think beyond the facts, and to provide detailed examples of business situations which support theory. Pupils are actively involved in lessons through questioning and discussion, which promotes good learning, and develops higher skills of presenting, analysing and justifying arguments. Assessment is based on clear criteria, and pupils are very much aware of their current attainment and what is required to achieve higher grades.
134. Leadership and management of the department are very good. The close-knit team is committed to high-level teaching strategies, which have resulted in the impressive raising of standards at GCSE. Good planning ensures that the department's strategies are constantly under review. Very good links with industry enhance the curriculum, with visits, visiting

speakers and support for case studies. Gifted and talented pupils are involved to good effect in the Young Enterprise scheme. The access to computers is well organised and supports pupils' learning and the curriculum well, particularly in consolidating knowledge of the essential elements of the course topics. There is regular, effective monitoring and evaluation of teaching, and sharing of good practice.

135. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good. The firm leadership of the head of department, and the stability that has brought, have enabled the department to achieve the present high standards. The greater involvement of local and national businesses has enhanced the delivery of the business courses.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

136. The school provides programmes in **personal, social and health education** (PSHCE). Citizenship is taught as part of this provision. Citizenship was inspected in depth. There are close links between personal, social and health education, religious education and citizenship. Statutory requirements for drugs and sex education are met. The Form Tutors teach PSCHE in Years 7 to 9 and by a small team of experienced teachers in Years 10 and 11. The school has rationalised the PSHCE provision by appointing a separate head of department, who took up post at the beginning of this term and is now giving the subject the close overview it needs. Pupils enjoy PSHCE lessons because they learn useful things about life. The very good behaviour of the pupils, their courteous and mature composure and their willingness to talk about what they are learning, points to PSHCE making a valuable contribution to their development as aware, informed and responsible young people. The unique ethos of the school supports the work of PSHCE very well. Many opportunities are provided by the school to enable pupils and pupils to exercise responsibility and to be involved in making a personal contribution as young people. Their work for Fair Trade, Amnesty International, attendance at residential retreats and fund raising for charities helps them not only to support important initiatives but also to empathise with other people and understand more about themselves as well as about their fellow human beings.

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are some good links with other subjects, adequate coverage of citizenship overall.
- The school's ethos supports well the development of the subject.
- Teaching is satisfactory but some lessons could be more challenging.
- Some classroom discussions could be more focused on the pupils' questions.
- The new Development Plan is very good and should move the subject forward.

Commentary

137. Standards in citizenship are average in Year 9 and in Year 11. Achievement is satisfactory for all pupils. Citizenship is taught as part of an integrated programme with personal, social and health education. In Years 7 to 9, citizenship is taught by form tutors: in Years 10 and 11 by a small team of teachers. During the inspection, while only one discrete lesson of citizenship was observed, other PSHCE lessons along with lessons in other curricular areas contained many elements of citizenship. There are good links with religious education and other subjects. For example, the English department identified lessons, which addressed citizenship issues. In modern foreign languages, one lesson was observed that had a clearly recognisable citizenship component.

138. The work seen and discussions with pupils in various classes shows that they have a sound understanding of what citizenship is and what it is to be a responsible citizen.
139. Achievement is satisfactory because the lessons are carefully planned with useful learning materials. Pupils do enjoy what they are taught. Their very good attitudes to learning and their confidence as speakers lead to informed and interesting discussions. For example, in a good citizenship lesson, Year 8 pupils discussed the dangers associated with playing near railways. They showed a lively interest and a well developed moral sense. They were aware that it was a citizenship lesson.
140. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There are examples of good and very good teaching, which really involve pupils in their own learning and promote the development of communication skills. Teachers make good use of pair work to stimulate interest and discussion. In some lessons pupils could make more progress if the learning materials were more challenging and the discussions more focused on the pupils' questions. The school's rich and unique ethos and the varied opportunities provided for the pupils to become active citizens supports well the development of an awareness of what it is to be a citizen.
141. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Much very good planning work has been done on establishing the subject and the content of the curriculum. Good links have been established with other subject areas and teachers are aware of the opportunities to develop the citizenship content of a lesson.
142. The curriculum is being reviewed and a new approach is being piloted in Year 9. However, the subject has lacked a consistent overview and the provision for monitoring and developing it was not firmly in place. The school recognised this and a new head of department, with sole responsibility for PSHCE, was appointed from the beginning of the present term. Already this term, the new head of department, working closely with a new assistant headteacher, has produced a very good development plan, which should move citizenship forward. This is a subject that now has the potential to improve significantly.

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

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

The table below shows entry and performance information for courses completed in 2003, the latest year for which national comparisons are validated.

Level 3 GCE AS level courses (results are of Year 13 students in 2003 only)

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art and design	18	100	80.1	72	23.7	52	29.9
Biology	30	83	65.2	17	11.1	28	20.6
Business Studies	4	100	69.6	50	17.9	43	63.7

Chemistry	15	93	72.7	27	13.9	35	24.1
Design and Technology	5	100	74.9	86	15.1	53	25.3
English Language	13	100	82.9	15	17.5	33	28.7
English literature	13	100	85.9	54	19.1	49	30.2
French	2	100	78.2	0	18.9	30	27.6
General Studies	63	89	73.9	33	17.8	36	25.7
German	9	100	81.5	33	19.3	39	28.9
History	16	94	80.7	19	19.5	36	28.6
ICT	23	87	67.0	30	10.9	33	21.4
Latin	5	100	68.6	40	14.4	42	22.7
Media Studies	8	100	N/A	74	N/A	49	N/A
Physics	6	83	68.6	67	14.4	43	22.7
Politics	14	100	N/A	43	N/A	41	N/A
Psychology	22	82	N/A	45	N/A	36	N/A
Spanish	3	100	78.5	33	17.7	40	27.3

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	13	100	98.6	92	50.2	112	87.5
Biology	13	85	96.4	38	39.2	69	78.6
Business Studies	8	100	98.7	88	36.8	111	80.1
Chemistry	10	100	97.6	40	49	84	84.9
Design and Technology	17	100	97.8	59	35.0	98	77.9
English Language	11	100	99.4	9	36.3	67	80.9
English Literature	16	100	99.5	50	46.5	89	86.5
Ethics / Philosophy	10	100	N/A	60	N/A	94	N/A
French	9	100	98.8	78	51.5	102	87.6
General Studies	63	79	94.7	27	31.0	49	73.1

Geography	19	100	98.7	47	44.5	57	84.0
German	5	100	98.4	40	47.9	72	84.8
History	7	100	99.0	29	44.6	60	84.6
ICT	23	100	95.6	57	24.6	90	69.5
Latin	1	100	99.5	100	55.9	120	90.9
Mathematics / Mechanics	14	100	96.7	57	55.6	94	88.8
Music	3	100	98.8	33	38.3	87	81.1
Physics	12	92	96.7	67	44.6	88	81.7
Politics	13	100	N/A	54	N/A	46	N/A
Psychology	21	100	86	24	43	80	83
Spanish	5	100	98	60	47	92	86
Theatre Studies	8	88	N/A	0	N/A	52.5	N/A

ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

143. English language was the focus but English literature was also sampled.

144. Results in AS **English literature** were well above average in 2003. A2 results were above average. Three out of ten students gained the higher grades of A and B. One Year 12 lesson was observed. Students have completed one term of the AS course. They achieved well because of their very positive attitudes and teacher's very good planning. Working in small groups students analysed two poems by Roy Fuller and Norman MacCaig. Their presentations, to the rest of the class, showed that they had started to develop the capacity to communicate clearly their knowledge and understanding of literary texts. The teacher set high expectations for the precise use of language and skilfully drew out learning points from students' assessment of each other's work.

English language

Provision in English language is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are excellent.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- A minority of students take a passive approach to lessons.

Commentary

145. Most students attain sufficiently well in AS examinations to continue their studies to A2. In 2002, GCE A2 English language results were average. Although all students entered for A2 examinations in 2003 gained grades A to D, results were below average. One out of ten students gained the higher grades of A and B. This represents good achievement. The proportion of students gaining grades A and B doubled in 2004.

146. The standard of work seen during the inspection was above the expectations for the course, and students achieved very well. Students in both Years 12 and 13 make significant contributions to oral work. They express their viewpoints and ideas clearly, explaining and illustrating them with evidence. However, a minority of students take a passive approach to lessons and make insufficient progress. The writing of most Year 13 students is evaluative and analytical. They understand, discuss and explore concepts and issues relating to language and its use. More able students write accurately and persuasively. The written work of less highly attaining students shows some flaws in expression and accuracy and their analysis of the author's use of language lacks detail. In Year 12, students make very good progress in developing analytical skills in lessons and are beginning to transfer these skills to their written work.
147. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers prepare and deliver challenging material. As a result, students rapidly improve their analytical skills and argumentative writing. Focused discussion is central to all lessons. Students are expected to work independently through research and delivering presentations, as well as through their note-taking and written assignments. Marking is very good. Target setting is very effective. The sharing of assessment objectives clarifies for students what they have to improve to achieve their goals.
148. The head and members of the department have a shared commitment to teach students a love of language and literature. Planning for success is at the heart of the department's work. Consequently, the teachers sharing the head of department's role during maternity leave are continuing to provide excellent leadership and management.
149. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good. Assessment procedures are now thorough and constructive. Teachers are developing further strategies to stimulate the minority of students who take a passive approach to lessons.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

150. Students' communication skills in writing and speaking are above average in all sixth form subjects. Their general expression is very clear. Research skills are very good. Many subjects expect students to give presentations. High expectations are set for coherent delivery and explanations. Students write well to communicate information, ideas and opinions to intended audiences.

Modern foreign languages

151. The focus was on French but one German and one Spanish lesson were sampled.
152. In **German**, Year 12 students discussed and wrote thoughtfully about different modern lifestyles. They achieved very well because of the teacher's challenging approach which blurred the line between a lesson and an authentic exchange of opinions. In consequence, tasks contributed as much to personal development as to language. Equally well, high demands through the use of genuine **Spanish** resources stimulated Year 13 students to explore real events and debate competently solutions to road rage and related social issues.

French

Provision in French is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good thanks to teachers' planning and expertise.
- Students respond very well to high expectations and achieve well above average standards.

- Language studies make a very strong contribution to personal development.

Commentary

153. More than twice as many students study AS-level this year than last. Of those who took AS last year, nearly all now take A-level. These very positive attitudes reflect the school's examination success. Results in 2003, the latest year for which valid comparisons are available, were well above average. In 2004, almost half the candidates attained grade A at AS and one in every four A-level students attained grade A.
154. This rising trend is due largely to a very good and consistent teaching approach which blends all strands of language learning into a carefully balanced whole. Teachers' command of the language, understanding of the culture it expresses, and enthusiasm to share their knowledge lift learning to a high level. Lessons become, in many cases, studies in history, politics, ethics, literary criticism or arts appreciation which happen to be conducted through the medium of French. Tasks involve speaking and writing for a variety of purposes, listening to and reading a wide range of authentic materials. Grammar points are usually explored and reinforced in ways which extend the range and accuracy of students' expression without disrupting the flow of communication. Only rarely does a language point or grammar focus cause the pace of the lesson to falter.
155. Students build up their skills in an atmosphere of discussion and genuine exchanges. There is very little English used at all so a constant exposure to French for real purposes means students develop and polish their skills very well. In general they respond reflectively, sometimes to profound questions, although their confidence in initiating discussion is not as strong. They use a wide range of often complex language but slips in pronunciation can take the edge off their fluency. Similarly, small errors spoil the quality of some written work. Even so, an example of outstanding spoken French featured in one Year 12 class; samples of written work contained original contributions by other students which were hard to distinguish from similar published articles.
156. The topics studied, coupled with the quality of discussion, mean that students gain much in their perception of an individual's role within Europe and the world. The concept of citizenship is a clearly planned element, testimony to a very good curriculum. This also reflects very good leadership and management which values the development of the whole person and demonstrates this in strong teamwork and the high quality of all relationships.
157. Since the last inspection, standards have risen from above to well above average and students now achieve very well. Improvement has therefore been good.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership is very good; the vision of high standards in a stimulating work environment has improved the popularity of the subject.
- Teaching is very good by well qualified and committed teachers
- Relationships and the very good attitudes of students are leading to very good learning.
- Students achieve well and attain above average standards
- Assessment of their work is thorough and central to students in understanding how well they are doing

Commentary

158. The department does well for its sixth form students. Standards attained at A level in 2003 were above the national average. Although this was slightly lower than in 2002 when results were well above the national average, it represents good achievement from their earlier attainment. In 2003 standards at AS level were high in relation to the national average and above the expected achievement for these students. In 2004, all four candidates achieved grade A at AS and four out of eleven A level students achieved grades A and B. Boys achieved better than girls, although the small number of entries make comparisons difficult.
159. In the work seen during the inspection, standards of attainment were above those expected nationally and show that students achieve well in lessons. The students' depth of knowledge was good. For example, in a Year 13 Statistics group students working in pairs explained to other students how they had achieved their results. This covered many aspects of the module. Students are able to select different methods to solve problems. They are confident and take responsibility for their learning. When lessons are teacher directed they ask questions, which display good analytical thought processes.
160. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and lessons are interesting, stimulating and insightful often providing very good learning opportunities from real world examples. Teachers know their students well and tasks provide appropriate challenge for all students. The high expectations of teachers mean that students are very productive and their work is of high quality. Students are expected to do a great deal of independent study outside the classroom. They have very positive attitudes to their work and the very good relationships between students and teachers enable meaningful mathematical discussion to take place.
161. Assessment for learning is very strong and marking is consistent, analytical and constructive. The written comments provided by teachers are well designed to further improve student learning. Students know how well they are doing at each point in the course. Testing is a regular feature. Progress is checked against previous work and target grades. Teachers identify the help that individual students need. Clinics are available and students attend when necessary for them to get extra help and instruction. Teachers give freely of their time to ensure that students succeed well. This is a key factor in the standards achieved. International students entering the sixth form are offered regular extra help, if needed, in both language and mathematics.
162. Leadership and management are very good. The clear vision of the head of department, the high expectations, stimulating teaching and individual support for students, has created an excellent working environment and led to increased numbers of students taking up the subject. To encourage high attaining students, further maths has recently been added to the range of courses.
163. Improvement since the last inspection is good; further mathematics has been added to the range of courses, examination results are above the national average, and increased numbers are taking up the subject.

Mathematics across the curriculum

164. Students' mathematical skills are above average overall and sufficient to support their learning in other subjects. For instance, in physical education, students displayed good use of their statistical skills, when collecting, analysing and representing data; in geography, they were well able to use a range of graphs to enhance their work; in physics, even the 'non mathematicians' were able to manipulate mathematical equations in order to define mathematically complex physics concepts; and psychology students are coping well with the quantitative aspects of their subject.

SCIENCE

165. The focus was on biology but physics and chemistry were also sampled.
166. In a Year 13 **physics** lesson students with a limited background in mathematics acquired a good understanding of some difficult concepts in electromagnetism. Achievement was very good because of the high quality of the teaching. Very good, thoughtful, teaching in a Year 13 **chemistry** lesson on esterification provided plenty of challenge for all students resulting in very good progress.

Biology

Provision in biology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and expectations are high
- Students enter the course with a wide range of attainment levels but all make good progress and achievement is good
- Students work competently during practical sessions but they are reluctant to initiate discussion or challenge concepts

Commentary

167. There has been a recent increase in the number of students studying biology. It attracts some students, many of them male, who may not appreciate the rigour required for later study. However, many students with modest levels of earlier attainment gain the lower grades and, overall, achievement is good. A-level results over the past two years have been in line with the national average but AS-level results in 2003 were well above the national average. The unconfirmed AS-level results for 2004 are lower than those for the previous year.
168. The standards of work seen during the inspection matched course expectations and were appropriate for the students' earlier levels of attainment. Year 12 students showed above average practical skills when investigating plasmolysis in rhubarb cells. They use microscopes competently and with confidence. A large Year 13 group was observed studying sensory receptors and on another occasion studying inheritance. The group contained students with widely varying levels of prior attainment but achievement was good. Higher attainers, for example, understood about the movement of sodium and potassium ions in a nerve cell and the concept of action potential. Many lower attaining students, on the other hand, were unable to recall the structure of the eye. Whilst the work in some students folders is good in both content and presentation, in others it lacks detail.
169. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers plan lessons well and they have a very good knowledge of the subject. Lessons are delivered with good pace, often with humour, and expectations are high. They employ a variety of teaching strategies, including the use of computer-projected material, but their enthusiasm is not shared by all students. Some remain passive and are reluctant to initiate discussion or challenge concepts. Teachers sometimes find it difficult to accommodate the wide range of attainment levels in the groups. There is little evidence to show that students have been engaged in many activities that provide opportunities for independent learning such as making presentations or engaging in debates

170. Leadership and management of biology within the science department are good. The department benefits from high quality technical support. Since the last inspection, improvement has been good. Examination performance varies from year to year but is now normally either in line with or above the national average.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The focus was on AS/A2 Information Technology

Provision in information and communication technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good; teachers have a thorough knowledge of the subject and plan lessons very well.
- Students respond very well to high expectations and challenge and achieve well above average standards
- Resources, although plentiful, are rapidly becoming obsolete and unreliable.

Commentary

171. Students continue to opt for information technology AS in large numbers with a good proportion of them continuing on to A2. Results in 2003 were well above average in both AS and A2, and provisional results for 2004 confirm this trend, with over three quarters of the students gaining A or B grades.
172. The standards of work seen during the inspection were well above expectations for the course and students achieve very well. Students in both Years 12 and 13 have well developed practical and organisational skills. In Year 12, students use MS Excel to produce complex models of real situations, which they analyse to very good effect. Students in Year 13 use a fully relational database to design and implement fully functional systems applicable to local businesses.
173. Teaching of the information technology course is very good. The teachers have in depth knowledge and understanding of the subject and are very well led. Lesson aims are clear, and students know what is expected of them. Students show a very mature attitude and work independently and cooperatively as needed. Teachers have high expectations of students' work, and as a result, students are well motivated and keen to learn. The consistently very good teaching features energy and enthusiasm, giving pupils the clear message that ICT is well worth the effort. Homework is very well used to reinforce and extend pupils' learning. Assessment during lessons is very effective and formal assessments are accurate, thorough and formative.
174. Very good leadership and management of the department have ensured that students receive teaching of very good quality and their progress is constantly monitored against their individual targets.
175. Students have access to an adequate number of personal computers and appropriate software, both in lessons and at other times. However, despite the best efforts of the very good technical team, the computer systems are struggling to cope with the demands placed upon them. Since the previous inspection, improvement has been very good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

176. The quality of provision in ICT across the curriculum is good. Students are highly competent in its use and make good use of their skills to support and extend their work across the curriculum. In many sixth-form subjects, students are making good progress in researching on the Internet and presenting coursework. They have access to and use a wide range of software applications. They use computers confidently and accurately. They have well-developed research and presentational skills, which are used well in subjects such as business studies. The only problem is that lack of regular access to reliable and up-to-date facilities is inhibiting further development.

HUMANITIES

177. Geography and history were inspected in depth. Government and politics together with ethics and philosophy were sampled.
178. In **government and politics**, outstanding teaching is involving students in discussing contemporary political issues and achieving very high standards. A level results for 2004 show that almost half of the students attained grades A or B. In **ethics and philosophy** very good, well prepared and focussed teaching is leading to very good achievement. More students are studying the subject this year than last year, when nearly half of the students achieved grades A or B at A level.

Geography

Provision in geography is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good; based on excellent subject knowledge.
- There is high quality field work provision and the student response is very good.
- Students respond well to high expectations and A level results are above average
- Schemes of work need rewriting to reflect the currently good curriculum planning.

Commentary

179. Student numbers in geography are increasing gradually and over half the AS geography students choose to continue to A level. The results in 2002 and 2003 were above average and in 2003, almost half of the students gained grades A or B and there was a 100 percent pass rate. There is little variation in the results of boys and girls.
180. All work seen during the inspection was of a consistently good standard with very good standards in fieldwork and coursework; this represents good achievement for pupils. The individual coursework projects show good use of ICT, a good variety of geographical and statistical skills and very thorough data collection and analysis. The students' final conclusions show good to excellent understanding of their research. In lessons students are able to handle several resources as they consider evidence and reach conclusions about a variety of topics. In a year 13 lesson, small groups used texts, earlier fieldwork, graphs and wall displays to research sections of a soils topic prior to sharing their knowledge with the class.
181. Teaching and learning are both very good. Resource use is very well planned and often up to date. In a year 12 lesson on floods, students used newspaper reports, video clips and regional information to make comparisons between the August 2004 floods in Boscastle and Bangladesh. There is probing questioning and supportive comment from teachers which improves students' understanding and builds their confidence. Focussed discussion is a feature of all lessons leading students to develop greater understanding of factual information whilst improving oral expression. The enthusiasm of the teachers for their subject is reflected

in the very positive attitudes of students in both year groups. Students are encouraged to produce high quality work and they respond well.

182. Leadership and management of the department are both very good. Assessment is good, students are well monitored and there is very thorough preparation and assessment of individual coursework. A well planned curriculum ensures linkages between modules are clear. Students have access to a variety of texts and magazine information and are also able to attend geographical association lectures in York.
183. Improvement in the department is good, reflected in the above average results at A level. Assessment and the use of ICT have also improved. Teaching is now very good with very good planning and resource use. The schemes of work need to be rewritten to reflect the improvements in curriculum planning.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good; teachers have very good subject knowledge and plan their lessons well.
- Students have high expectations and take responsibility for their own learning.
- Resources are used effectively to improve the quality of learning.

Commentary

184. There has been a steady growth in the numbers who study history. Most students gained a grade at AS and many of them continued their studies to A level. In 2003 Advanced Level the proportion gaining A/B grades was below the national average but has slightly increased in 2004. There are only slight differences in results when considering gender
185. Evidence from lessons and from scrutiny of students' work is that students are working at standards above that expected nationally, with some students well above. Students demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the British and European history topics they are studying. They appreciate from their reading the complexity of the themes they are studying and are able to use a range of source material constructively. Most students have the contextual knowledge that engenders confidence to communicate their ideas in both discussions and in their writing and show evidence of working independently and of being able to organize their work well.
186. Achievement is good. Students have built well on their knowledge and skills since arriving at All Saints. They have developed good analytical skills, benefited from evaluating a range of historical evidence and made good progress in developing an understanding the themes they have studied. Most students are positive about the subject and are clear about the future direction of their studies.
187. The quality of teaching and learning is good. A wide range of teaching strategies is used well. The relationships between the teachers and their students are very good. They inspire the students to read around the subject and are able to manage discussions well. On the whole, the balance between teacher and student involvement is just about right. Students respond positively to good questioning and they use the resources they are given effectively to increase their understanding.
188. Leadership and management are good. The new leadership has a clear perception of the direction the subject needs to go. The curriculum is well suited to students' needs now and in

the future. Student attitudes are very positive towards the subject. Assessment is good and is used well to inform progress. The provision of the accommodation is satisfactory and the quality of resources is good. ICT is increasingly used for research and learning. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and there is an effort to encourage students of a wider ability range including some from European countries to study the subject.

Psychology

Provision in psychology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching is grounded in high level personal skills, strong professional knowledge and learning materials that are stimulating and inventive;
- High standards of coursework from the present cohort match historically strong results in external examinations;
- At the margins, there is some culture of passivity, and a need for students to be more assertively engaged in their learning;
- There is extremely good use of assessment, and the use of data in tracking the performance of students and helping them understand how they can improve;
- The subject makes a strong contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Commentary

189. For three of the last four years there has been a 100% pass rate, and numbers studying the subject have grown steadily since its introduction four years ago. Although rather more girls than boys are enrolled on the course, results have been equally good. Both boys and girls have achieved very high grades, and have gone on to follow the subject at university. Last year, as well as a hundred per cent pass rate at A Level, over half the students achieved grades A or B, and over seventy five per cent grade C or better. Module results at AS Level were equally strong, and the quality of work seen from current students suggests this will continue. All coursework seen was thoroughly marked and up-to-date.
190. Students are consistently engaged by their work. In one lesson, for example, they considered the effects of friendship and group size, and talked knowledgeably about the implications of the famous Milgram experiment in conformity and obedience. There is a contribution to spiritual and moral education in the insistence on high standards of respect and understanding of psychological difference, and constant reference to the outcomes of research in the context of the school's central Catholic values. Students are encouraged to write well, and numeracy is also served well in the subject's strong quantitative base.
191. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teaching is challenging and well structured, and students respond to the obvious affection and respect with which they are treated - although some are too passive to gain all the benefit they need from A Level studies, where a degree of assertion and self motivation is vital.
192. The quality of learning and resource materials is very good, prepared in such a way that the learning needs of the students are factored into the learning and assessment criteria of the exam board specification. The subject has its own base room, which is well resourced with books, specialist journals, files of resource materials and informative wall displays (including one in Spanish to reflect the schools Language College specialism). However, the room is very small for the numbers using it, and the larger classes are seriously constrained in what they can do there.

193. Leadership and management of psychology are extremely good. The quality of strategic thinking, analysis and organisation is exemplary. The detailed level of planning which has been brought to course design, schemes of work and scrupulous assessment is commendable, and has given the department a strong foundation on which to maintain its record of achievement. Improvement since the last inspection is very good.

ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY AND MANUFACTURING

194. The design and technology department offers AS and A-level courses and a General National Vocational course. The focus was on textiles but product design and health and social care were sampled.

195. In two Year 12 **product design** lessons seen, students were achieving above average standards. Progress was aided by very good attitudes and behaviour, and good learning took place in response to good teaching. In a Year 13 Vocational Certificate of Education **child development** lesson, students reached well above average standards in response to an imaginatively planned lesson. Students, who were studying disabilities, gained valuable first experience by observing a Down's syndrome child.

Textiles

Provision in textiles is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students gain well above average results in A-level examinations. The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- Students' attitudes are exemplary.
- Limitations in accommodation and storage restrict development.

Commentary

196. In the most recent year, students gained very high grades in A-level examinations, achieving 100 per cent grades A and B. This constitutes sustained very good achievement from AS level in which equally very good results were attained. These results were gained exclusively by girls. In work seen, students display high level skills in designing and making, together with practical skills in hand and machine work and good drawing. Design shows creativity and very good methodology in developing ideas. Course folders reveal step-by-step orderly progress with intelligent use of colour to reinforce the design intention. The standard of presentation of work is very high and indicates a high degree of interest and commitment. ICT is used effectively in design, where appropriate, and is also used in research.

197. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. There is a high level of teacher subject expertise and an enthusiasm for the subject which is reflected in the attitude of students. Students acquire a capacity for independent learning and research which gives their work individuality and character. The level of challenge set in the teaching is high and students respond appropriately. A major factor underlying the progress of students is their mature and responsible approach to their work.
198. Leadership and management are very good. Students' work is assessed continually and thoroughly and progress monitored carefully. Work in textiles is organised well by all staff involved and resources are managed well. Very good relationships exist between the teachers in the areas of textiles and those in design and technology generally.
199. The accommodation for textiles, however, is unsuitable for the development of large-scale working and this tends to channel and restrict opportunity. Storage is also limited which adds to this problem. These inconveniences, however, are resolutely met and do not prevent textiles making a very important contribution to the work of the department and the school.
200. Students have enjoyed wide success in furthering their careers following work in design and technology in the sixth form. These have included textile designing via art school, architecture and aeronautical engineering via university and teaching. Success has been achieved also in design and technology competitions sponsored by industry, locally and nationally. Improvement since the last inspection is very good.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

201. Art and design and music were inspected in depth. Media studies and Theatre Studies were sampled.
202. **Media studies** is now in its second year. In the Year 12 lesson seen, students at this early stage of the course are achieving well as a result of good, well informed and well directed teaching. Students in a Year 12 **theatre studies** lesson achieve above average standards because good teaching promotes students' independence to organise and make choices in the way they would produce a scene.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- Standards and examination results are well above the national average.
- The subject is making a significant contribution to the personal development of students.
- Not many boys are opting to study the subject.

Commentary

203. Results at both AS and A2 level are well above the national average. A particularly high percentage of students attain the top grades, although these are mainly achieved by girls.
204. Standards of work seen support these results and confirm that students are achieving very highly. Work is confidently produced with very high levels of individuality and variety of artistic style. Students are able to discuss their work with enthusiasm although their use of an art vocabulary is adequate without being extensive. Students have developed a genuine love of the subject and are very comfortable with the process of making art. They are particularly

keen to experiment with a range of media. Standards of drawing are in line with the national average.

205. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teacher relationships and rapport with students is exemplary. There is a genuine interest taken in the well-being and academic progress of all students. This results in a relaxed, friendly and therefore creative environment. Consequently students quickly mature as artists and their achievement and productivity is very good. Teachers demonstrate very good subject expertise. Effective teaching and the development of artistic skill takes place on an individual basis. Assessment and challenge is achieved by good quality and regular individual tutorial support. Consequently students are aware of how to improve their work and meet examination requirements.
206. Leadership and management are good. There is a strong philosophy and clear vision of how the subject should be taught. An open door policy allows students to continue working in their own time. The subject is becoming increasingly popular which is putting a strain on the limited accommodation and storage space. Resources are well prepared. The department is not yet analysing data on the performance of students. There is a disappointingly small amount of work on display around the school.
207. Improvement since last inspection has been good. Examination results and standards have improved. The subject is much more popular although too few boys are opting to study the subject.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvements in opportunities and subject provision are attracting more students, increasingly of high capability, including a growing number from outside the school.
- Standards are above average and have the potential to be well above average because of very good teaching and learning.
- Recent examination results are above the national average.

Commentary

208. The school is gaining a reputation for successful sixth form music courses, which is attracting larger numbers of students from within the school and outside. This is due to the overall very good provision for music which has developed well since the previous inspection, very good teaching and learning, careful individual learning support, subject specific ICT resources, and good opportunities for enrichment, as well as above average examination results. Current students expressed a high level of satisfaction with their courses
209. Because of the open access policy to the sixth form the standard of entry of current students varies widely. Some, such as those in Year 13, have conventional prior learning, through GCSE in the school. Others have no formal qualifications in music, or are international students with a high level of capability and considerable experience as performers. Although the international students in Year 12 have good command of the English language, they are often unfamiliar with technical terminology and aspects of subject practice. Recent AS and A level results are above the national average and work seen during the inspection confirms this level. Students' achievement is good, but students in Year 12 have the potential for very good achievement.
210. Teachers' outstanding subject knowledge, performing ability, experience and flexible lesson planning is complemented by the value they place on students' own ideas, opinions and contributions to lessons. As a result students' attitudes are mature, considered and

responsive. Although teachers are demanding, they provide sensitive individual support for students' needs according to their previous musical experience and to increase their understanding. Students gain valuable learning and study skills which promote independence and mean they can take increasing responsibility for their own development. Assessment and targets help students to improve and feedback is critical but constructive. All students benefit from subject specific ICT programmes for composing and research. A good range of enrichment activities offer good opportunities for students to take responsibility and develop leadership skills.

211. Leadership and management of sixth form music and its improvement are all very good. The previous inspection report judged standards to be average. They are now consistently above average even though numbers have increased significantly and entry standards vary so widely. The capacity for continued improvement is apparent through rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and of students' needs.

HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and, in a significant minority of lessons, very good, enabling students to achieve well.
- The community sports leadership award is very well supported and strengthens further the school's strong links with the community.
- There is a lack of ICT resources to support teaching and learning.
- The subject lacks the enhancement of a sports hall and on-site playing fields.

Commentary

212. The GCE A-level examination in sports studies was introduced in 2003. Provisional results in the 2004 AS-level examination were below the national average. No valid comparison can be made between the performance of boys and girls, because of the low number of girls on the course.
213. Standards in work seen by Year 12 students and those in Year 13, who have continued with the A2 course, are above average and show good improvement from their attainment on entry to the sixth form; most students are achieving well. Students produce work that is well written and well researched. They have a good grasp of the main concepts and theories and handle numerical data well. ICT skills are less developed due to the lack of resources in the department. Talented students achieve well in a range of sports at district, county and sometimes, national levels.
214. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 12 and 13. Students achieve well across both years, due to good specialist teaching. Teachers show wide subject knowledge and are aware of how students learn. A few students find the change to sixth form study difficult and initially, do not take sufficient responsibility for independent learning. Teachers give good support and guidance by easing students into research and further reading. Most students are able to write at length on a variety of topics, such as the psychological factors affecting performance. The extended writing skills of some students are less well developed. Students are encouraged to develop their numerical skills through a variety of tasks, such as summarising fitness test data in graphic form.

215. Teachers' expectations of students are high and they respond very positively. Students' written assignments are marked regularly and teachers' good diagnostic comments ensure that students know how to improve.
216. The quality of leadership and management is good; there is a clear drive for improvement. Monitoring of achievement is very well established for individual students for whom there is good support. This reinforces the strong focus on raising standards. Students in Year 12 are timetabled for recreational sport and many take advantage of this. Teachers work hard to minimise the effects of the lack of a sports hall and no on-site playing fields. There is good support for school teams and the community sports leadership award is very well supported. At the time of the last inspection there were no accredited courses in the subject.

BUSINESS EDUCATION

Provision in business education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCE A2 and AS level results are very high
- The high quality of teaching and learning enables students to achieve well
- The leadership provides clear vision and direction
- Students on the vocational course are very well supported in their attainment and progress
- Extensive and varied links with local and national businesses support the curriculum very well

Commentary

217. In the A2 GCE business studies course in 2003 seven out of eight students obtained grades A and B, which is well above national averages. All four candidates in 2004 also achieved those grades. This continues the consistent improvement since the previous inspection. At AS level the 2004 results were very high, with a larger entry. In 2004 the first Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education candidates achieved a one hundred per cent pass rate.
218. In the current early stage of Year 13 A2 business studies, the standard of work is above average. Higher-attaining students are regularly satisfying the highest level criteria with their analysis and evaluation skills, sometimes at the expense of more basic requirements. The good progress of other students in acquiring high-level skills contributes to the overall standards. In the AVCE course students are on target to achieve pass grades, and standards are average. The current topic of business law and involvement in Young Enterprise are challenging their ability to think independently and creatively. Achievement is good overall, as students are making good progress over time in their knowledge, understanding and application of theory to practice. The standard of work of the current Year 12 AVCE students meets expectations. The quality of their language is good, and they are quickly acquiring organisation and research skills. In their first major assignment they are satisfying the initial basic criteria. There is a high standard of literacy in the written work of all post-16 business students, which is also reflected in the quality of note taking.
219. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers have an expert knowledge of their subject, and the structure and planning of the lessons are a particular strength. Students are actively involved in lessons through questioning, discussion and group work, which promote good learning. Those on the AVCE course have every opportunity to learn independently through research into their case studies, and are questioned closely and individually on their planning and progress. Students are often "put on the spot", especially when planning for deadlines. Assessment is very thorough in the vocational course, especially in major assignments, where the fulfilment of criteria is acknowledged in the marking. Students receive detailed feedback of how to improve their submissions in preparation for re-drafting. In both courses students

are very much aware of their current attainment and what is required to achieve higher grades.

220. Leadership and management of the department are very good. Good planning and clear teaching and learning strategies have enabled the departmental team to achieve high standards at AS and A2 level, and in vocational courses. The department is constantly evaluating its provision and reviewing its strategies, taking account of students' views with end-of-course surveys. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching, and sharing of good practice, are regular and effective. Access to computers is well organised, and supports students' learning particularly well as a research tool. Very good links with industry enhance the curriculum, with visits, visiting speakers and support for case studies. Many students are involved in Young Enterprise, and work experience is organised as part of the courses.
221. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good. The firm leadership of the head of department, and the stability that has brought, have enabled the department to achieve the present high standards. The greater involvement of local and national businesses has enhanced the delivery of the business courses.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND GENERAL PROGRAMMES

222. The provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education in the sixth form is through the religious education programme and general studies. All students follow a general studies course in Year 12 but it is optional in Year 13. Results in Year 12 are satisfactory overall and an improvement on those of the previous year. A strength of the sixth form provision for PSHCE development is the way in which some subject areas make significant contributions to the students' personal development. This is most notable in French, where lessons conducted in French often become studies in history, politics, ethics or art appreciation. Psychology, art and philosophy and ethics also make explicit contributions. In all other subjects students' personal development is fostered by the unique ethos of the school, which encourages learning in the context of warm and harmonious relationships.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Sixth form grade</i>	<i>School grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the sixth form and the school	2	2
How inclusive the school is		2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2	2
Cost effectiveness of the sixth form / value for money provided by the school	2	2
Overall standards achieved		2
Pupils' achievement	2	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)		2
Attendance	3	3
Attitudes	2	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		2
The quality of education provided by the school		2
The quality of teaching	1	1
How well pupils learn	1	1
The quality of assessment	2	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities		2
Accommodation and resources	4	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety		2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents		2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3	3
The leadership and management of the school		2
The governance of the school	2	2

The leadership of the headteacher		2
The leadership of other key staff	2	2
The effectiveness of management	2	2

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