

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **BROADGREEN HIGH SCHOOL**

Broadgreen, Liverpool

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 104696

Headteacher: Mr I. Andain

Reporting inspector: Mr C. Sander  
4151

Dates of inspection: 29 October – 2 November 2001

Inspection number: 181156

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

© Crown copyright 2001

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 to 18 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Queens Drive Liverpool Merseyside
Postcode:	L13 5UQ
Telephone number:	0151 228 6800
Fax number:	0151 220 9256
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P. J. Farrelly
Date of previous inspection:	May 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
4151	Cedric Sander	<i>Registered inspector</i>		What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? The school's results and achievements; How well are pupils or students taught? How well is the school led and managed?
13762	Norman Shelley	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils or students? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
21061	Michael Whitehead	<i>Team inspector</i>	Special educational needs.	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils and students?
30941	Keith Brammer	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; English as an additional language.	
2919	Phillip Armitage	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics.	
20243	David Benstock	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science.	
31688	Brian McGonogal	<i>Team inspector</i>	Art.	
7084	Jack Haslam	<i>Team inspector</i>	Design and technology.	
30215	Helen Feasey	<i>Team inspector</i>	Geography.	
24127	Jim Kidd	<i>Team inspector</i>	History.	
12885	John Hunt	<i>Team inspector</i>	Information and communication technology.	
11838	Derek Cronin	<i>Team inspector</i>	Modern foreign languages.	
1340	David Wigley	<i>Team inspector</i>	Music.	
22906	Barry Hodgson	<i>Team inspector</i>	Physical education.	
30563	Jackie Pentlow	<i>Team inspector</i>	Religious education; Equal opportunities.	
15576	David Nebesnuick	<i>Team inspector</i>	Business education.	
19468	Sybil Roughley	<i>Team inspector</i>	Vocational subjects, health and social care.	

The inspection contractor was:

*Westminster Education Consultants  
Old Garden House  
The Lanterns  
Bridge Lane  
London  
SW11 3AD*

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>1</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>ANNEX: THE SIXTH FORM</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>9</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>THE DEAF RESOURCE BASE</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>PART E: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM</b>	<b>69</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Broadgreen High School is an 11 to 18 community comprehensive school for boys and girls. It is larger than average. There are 1292 on roll, of whom 113 are in the Sixth Form. It has remained similar in size since it was last inspected. The school is oversubscribed. It is situated in Broadgreen, a suburb east of the city centre of Liverpool. The pupils and students come from a wider area, including some districts of high social deprivation. Standards on entry are well below average. Approximately five per cent speak English as an additional language, a higher proportion than in most schools, but most do so fluently. Fifty nine per cent are known to be eligible for free school meals, well above the national average. Thirty four per cent have identified special educational needs and nearly six per cent have statements, well above the national average. This includes the very important feature of the resourced provision of units for pupils and students with physical disability and for the Deaf, nearly all of whom have statements. The number joining and leaving the school at times other than the start of the school year is greater than the national norm. The proportion continuing in full time education beyond the age of 16 has doubled in the last three years to 62 per cent. The school is part of a small Education Action Zone (SEAZ) and of Excellence in Cities (EiC).

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The quality of education is good. Very good leadership helps the school to fulfil its aims successfully in circumstances that are frequently challenging. Many pupils make good progress and those who attend regularly invariably achieve well because teachers have high expectations. Standards improve, particularly by age 14 but remain below those expected nationally at age 16. The very good provision for the large number of pupils with special educational needs and the excellent management of the Deaf Resource Base (DRB) and Access Resource Centre (ARC) enable pupils with special educational needs to participate fully in the life of the school. Equality of opportunity is excellent. Personal development is good because there are good arrangements for pastoral care. The level of funding is above average, reflecting the circumstances and special educational needs of many of the pupils. The school provides good value for money.

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

- The headteacher, governors and senior staff provide very good leadership in circumstances that are often very challenging.
- High expectations are a strong feature of the good teaching.
- Pupils make good progress between the ages of 11 and 14.
- Financial planning is very good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

### **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

- The progress pupils make in geography.
- The development of numeracy skills.
- Attendance and punctuality.
- Provision for vocational education after the age of 14.
- The evaluation of objectives in the school development plan.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1997. Improvement has been satisfactory. There has been a very good degree of improvement in GCSE results since the last inspection. In 1999 the school was the most improved school in Merseyside. Results at age 16 have remained broadly similar since then, representing satisfactory improvement over time in response to the findings of the last inspection. The school is now meeting its own targets and those of schools in challenging circumstances. Literacy skills are now well taught in most subjects. Improvement has been unsatisfactory in standards of numeracy. There has been good improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. Attendance remains unsatisfactory, and is an enduring obstacle to progress for a significant minority, despite the school's best endeavours to improve parental and personal responsibility. The successful reduction in the level of truancy has been recognised by the government. There has been satisfactory improvement in individual education plans for those with special educational needs but targets for improvement remain imprecise.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1988	1999	2000	2000
GCSE examinations	E	E	E*	D
A-Levels/AS-Levels	E*	E	N/A+	

**Key**

*well above average*    A

*above average*        B

*average*                 C

*below average*        D

*well below average*    E

+ The school offers the International Baccalaureate and vocational courses in the Sixth Form

In 2000, results in the national tests at age 14 were well below the average for all schools but above average for similar schools. Achievement was good but both boys and girls were still more than a year behind their age group nationally. Results were well above average for similar schools in English but below in mathematics. Over time they have been below the national trend. Results at age 16 were in the lowest 5 per cent nationally and below average for similar schools. However, they were in line with the targets for schools in similarly challenging circumstances nationally. In science they were well above the average for similar schools, and above in English. Over time, results have been above the national trend. In the Sixth Form, results in the International Baccalaureate (IB) in 2000 were below the worldwide average. Great caution is required in such a comparison because numbers are small and the circumstances of nearly all of the other schools very much more favourable. From modest GCSE results, achievement in the IB was good. Results in Advanced GNVQ were above average and very high in health and social care. At Intermediate Level they were well below average.

Standards in work seen at age 14 are below national expectations. They are higher, and broadly in line with national expectations, in music, art and design and technology. They are higher in mathematics and English than in science. Standards remain below national



expectations at age 16. They are higher than this in art. Weaknesses in literacy and numeracy remain. Overall, achievement is satisfactory at age 16. Standards are below national expectations in the Sixth Form. Achievement is satisfactory overall. It is very good in history and good in science and English.

### PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are extremely considerate towards those who have disabilities. Those who attend regularly, generally work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Many respond well in lessons. There is occasional misbehaviour in the lower attaining sets. Permanent exclusions are above average but much lower than at the time of the last inspection.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Many show good self-discipline. Good relationships are evident in pupils' readiness to work with each other in class, in sports and other activities. Some continue to lack the confidence to exercise initiative.
Attendance	Well below average. Considerable efforts by the school have led to some improvement. There has been very good improvement over time in reducing the amount of truancy. The punctuality of some is also poor.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. It is good in English and satisfactory in mathematics and science. Literacy skills are well taught in many subjects. The teaching of ICT skills is satisfactory. The teaching of numeracy skills is unsatisfactory because there are insufficient opportunities to consolidate and apply them in subjects other than mathematics. Good subject knowledge, high expectations that motivate pupils well and the good pace of well-planned lessons are regular features of the good and very good teaching. In the best teaching, for example in modern foreign languages and art, objectives are clearly stated, explanations and demonstrations good and relationships very good. Consequently, pupils' learning is very good. They understand clearly what they need to do and what standard is expected. The management of behaviour and attitudes in lessons is very good. Some who attend irregularly become less ready to co-operate as they get older. It is a strength of the good teaching that the majority continue to learn well. The school meets the needs of all its pupils very well, particularly those who are deaf, have a physical disability or other identified special educational needs.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Good features include the provision for careers education, links with the community and additional opportunities for the gifted and talented. The range of vocational courses is not wide enough after the age of 14. Statutory requirements for religious education are not met fully in the Sixth Form.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils are included very well in lessons. The Access Resource Centre and the Deaf Resource base are very good. Targets in individual education plans are not specific enough.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language.	Satisfactory. Nearly all who use English as an additional language do so fluently and with confidence. Support is well organised for the very small number who do not.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. For their spiritual and cultural development it is satisfactory. Several subjects make a good contribution.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The standard of pastoral care is high. Procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour are very good. There are good arrangements to monitor academic performance and personal care. The day provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. Strategic planning is very good because priorities are very well defined. The commitment to equality of opportunity and inclusion is excellent. There is a high degree of delegated responsibility and perseverance in managing improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. They work very well with the headteacher, combining a very good understanding of the school's challenging circumstances with a readiness to act as the school's 'critical friend' in the identifying areas for improvement. The statutory requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship is not fully met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. There are good arrangements to review improvements and identify areas for further action. Targets in the school development plan are not specific enough. The school applies the principles of best value very well.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Financial planning is very good and very well linked to the priorities of the school development plan. Learning resources are good and staffing is sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum. Planning within the Private Funding Initiative (PFI) is in place to improve the unsatisfactory accommodation in science, drama, physical education and design and technology.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children like school.</li><li>• Their children are expected to work hard and do their best.</li><li>• Their children make good progress.</li><li>• Their children are well taught.</li><li>• The school is approachable.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The behaviour of some pupils.</li><li>• School reports.</li><li>• The amount of homework.</li></ul>

Parents' views are not truly representative because only 4 per cent of parents completed and returned questionnaires and only 1 per cent attended the pre-inspection meeting. The inspection team found that most pupils behave well. The annual reports are good. They describe very clearly pupils' progress and attainment. The school strives to work closely with parents but does not always receive a good response. The inspection team confirms that homework is not consistently set in all subjects but arrangements overall are satisfactory.

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE SIXTH FORM**

The Sixth Form has 113 students and is smaller than others nationally. Three fifths of students are male and there is a small number of ethnic minority students with English as an additional language. Most students were previously in Year 11 at this school. Approximately one fifth of students have identified special educational needs, including three who are deaf. Just under half of the students embark on a two-year International Baccalaureate Diploma programme (IB). Others take Intermediate or advanced vocational courses. Entry requirements are reasonable GCSE grades, and depend on the course selected.

**HOW GOOD THE SIXTH FORM IS**

The Sixth Form is successful. Its students achieve well in the IB, having entered with mainly modest GCSE qualifications. They are successful at entering higher education. The IB programme is broad and offers very good opportunities for students to develop initiative, study skills and personal qualities. The enrichment programme is extensive. Students on vocational courses achieve adequately, with variable standards being reached at Intermediate and Advanced Level. Key skills are included, but standards are below average. Teaching is good overall and students show considerable commitment to their work.

**STRENGTHS**

- Provision of academic courses meet the needs of students well, enabling a good proportion to progress well from modest GCSE results to higher education.
- The breadth of subjects studied and the good range of experiences provided.
- Good arrangements for support and guidance meet individual needs well.
- Good opportunities to gain additional experience.

**WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

- Standards in vocational courses and in the key skills elements.
- Evaluation of the provision for all courses.
- Provision for Foundation Level courses.
- Use of tutorial and registration time.

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

## THE QUALITY OF PROVISION IN INDIVIDUAL CURRICULUM AREAS

Curriculum area	Overall judgement about provision, with comment
Mathematics	Satisfactory. Results are below average but as expected given students' previous attainment. Teaching is satisfactory but lacks extension material for capable students. Good relationships help progress.
Physics	Good. Students achieve well from moderate GCSE to successful IB grades. Teaching develops a mature approach to learning but does not use ICT enough.
Business Studies	Good. Standards are improving as a result of teachers' secure knowledge. Teachers have good awareness of students' needs. Leadership is enthusiastic and shows strong expertise.
Information and Communication Technology	Satisfactory. Results have been below average in both the IB and GNVQ courses, but progress from previous attainment has been satisfactory. Teaching is mainly good, and management of the subject satisfactory.
Health & Social Care	Satisfactory. Results in the advanced Level vocational course are above average but standards at Intermediate Level are moderate. Portfolios are well presented. Teaching is good and based on secure knowledge. Leadership is satisfactory and resources are kept up to date.
Art	Satisfactory. In the year 2001 results in the examination were below average. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The leadership of the department is good. The needs of students interested in a vocational, work-related curriculum need to be addressed.
History	Very good. Performance in the examinations has risen steadily and results are in line with the world wide average. Teaching is very good and students benefit from intellectual debate. The subject is well managed.
English	Good. Students make good progress from low entry levels. Teachers have high expectations, but do not give enough opportunity for research and independent learning.
French	Satisfactory. Results are below average but indicate satisfactory progress from previous attainment. Standards in oral work are below expectation. Teachers match the work well to the needs and abilities of students.

In other subjects work was sampled. Subjects included chemistry, biology, geography, drama, Spanish and Italian. A new course on leisure and tourism was also sampled. Provision was mainly satisfactory, but standards varied according to individual capabilities. Group sizes are generally small. Provision for religious education is unsatisfactory.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Aspect	Comment
How well students are guided and supported	Students are well supported and the provision of information and guidance on higher education is thorough. The tutorial structure is adequate, but arrangements for registration are insecure and unsatisfactory. Procedures for monitoring and assessing progress are effective on the IB programme and satisfactory on vocational courses.
Effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Sixth Form	Overall, leadership and management are good. An effective overview of students' needs and guidance is being carefully developed. Good resources are maintained. Clear objectives are set for development in line with school priorities. Staff develop their expertise through effective in service training.

## STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

What students like about the Sixth Form	What they feel could be improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The accessibility of teachers for help.</li> <li>• Being treated as a responsible young adult.</li> <li>• Being well taught and challenged.</li> <li>• Being helped to study independently.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support with personal problems.</li> <li>• The quality of printed information.</li> </ul>

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

*The word 'results' refers to how well the pupils and students are doing in national tests, GCSE, GNVQ and International Baccalaureate examinations.*

*The word 'standards' is used to define how well the pupils and students are doing when their work is compared with what pupils and students nationally are expected to know, understand and do at ages 11, 14, 16 and 18.*

*The word 'level' refers to a particular standard of work described in the National Curriculum.*

*The word 'grade' refers to the public examination grading systems for GCSE and GCE.*

*The word 'achievement' refers to how well the pupils are doing at age 14 compared with what they were able to do at age 11, similarly at age 16 compared with what they could do at age 14 and finally what they can do at age 18 compared with what they were able to do at age 16. It indicates how much progress the pupils and students are making.*

1. At the time of the inspection the national average scores in national tests and public examinations had not been validated for 2001. Comparisons with national averages are, therefore, applied only to the results in 2000. Where appropriate, reference is also made to the results in 2001.

#### **Results and standards on entry to the school at the age of 11**

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Standards on entry to the school are well below average.</li><li>• They are improving slightly.</li></ul> |
|---|

2. Standards on entry to the school are well below average. They are improving slightly. Results in national tests taken at age 11 in the final term of primary school are well below the national average for all schools. Pupils in the current Years 10 and 11 entered the school with national test results in the bottom 5 per cent nationally. Pupils currently in Years 7, 8 and 9 entered the school with test results well below the national average. Results at age 11 have been best in science and broadly similar in English and mathematics. Less than half reach the nationally expected standard, Level 4, at age 11 in all three subjects.

3. Standardised tests, taken shortly after entry to the school, confirm this picture. More than half the pupils obtained less than the mean score for the test and approximately 2 per cent obtained an above average score. The scores of boys and girls are broadly similar. Nationally, the girls are ahead of the boys.

## Results, standards and achievement at age 14

### Strengths:

- Parents are generally well satisfied with the progress made.
- Test results overall in 2000 were above average for similar schools.
- Test results in English were well above average for similar schools in 2000
- The boys' results in 2000 are closer to their age group nationally than those of the girls.
- Reported assessments in ICT were above average in 2000.
- Progress in music is very good.

### Areas for improvement:

- Test results in mathematics were below average for similar schools in 2000.
- The girls did less well in 2000 in science than in English and mathematics.

4. Overall, national test results in 2000 were well below average in comparison with all schools nationally. The average points score was below average in English and in the bottom five per cent nationally in mathematics and science. Both the boys and the girls were working more than a year behind their age group nationally. The proportion reaching the nationally expected standard, Level 5, was below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. Almost two-thirds nationally reach Level 5 at age 14. At this school in 2000, approximately half reached this standard in English and approximately a third did so in mathematics and science.

5. Given the particular circumstances of the school, including the well below average standards on entry and the well above average proportion with special educational needs, the comparison with similar schools is much more significant in showing how well the school is doing.

6. This comparison shows that results were above average. They were better than might reasonably be expected and represent good achievement. Results were well above average in English. The more capable pupils made very good progress between the ages of 11 and 14. Results were above average in science, indicating good achievement. They were weakest in mathematics, representing unsatisfactory achievement at age 14.

7. Results in the reported assessments at age 14 were well below average. Boys were generally less far behind their age group nationally than were the girls. They were broadly in line with the national average in music. Assessments were very low in design and technology. The above average reported assessments in ICT should be treated with caution.

8. The trend in national test results over the last five years has been below the national trend. This is mainly because results dropped significantly in 1999, particularly in mathematics and English.

9. Other factors also contribute to this trend. Results in mathematics have been declining. Overall, the boys' results have been slightly further behind their age group nationally than those of the girls over the last three years, except in English. The girls do less well in mathematics than in English and science. As at the time of the last inspection, and despite a significant reduction in the Level of unauthorised absence, poor attendance continues to reduce the rate of many pupils' progress.



10. Standards of work are below those expected nationally at age 14. Progress is good because pupils improve from standards that were well below those expected nationally at the age of 11 to reach standards closer to the national expectation at age 14 in English and mathematics. Progress is satisfactory in science where standards remain well below average at age 14.

11. The improving standards and good progress in English owes much to the good teaching of basic skills. Many pupils become much more confident in a range of written tasks but cannot yet apply their technical knowledge when reading and responding to texts. This is an important reason why they do not reach the standard expected nationally at age 14.

12. Progress is also good in mathematics. Standards are well below the nationally expected standard at age 11, rising to below the standard expected at age 14. This is because the poor memory skills of many means that they do not quickly recall factual knowledge they have previously learnt. Nor do they think mathematically or calculate confidently and accurately in their heads. As a result, the teaching of basic number work has to be frequently repeated. Consequently, opportunities to extend or develop mathematical understanding are reduced.

13. Standards in science remain well below the standard expected nationally at age 14, representing a satisfactory degree of progress. The reason this progress is not greater is that nearly all pupils find it difficult to apply the gains they make in scientific knowledge. The level of challenge is unsatisfactory in some of the teaching of the most capable.

14. Standards are broadly in line with those expected at age 14 in several subjects where the demonstration of practical skills is more important than written expression. In music many show a good knowledge of instrumentation and the required level of technical understanding about composing. As a result their performances are imaginative. In art many are well motivated, concentrating well and taking care in their use of line, colour, tone, form and shape to create drawings of a standard in line with that expected nationally. In physical education many develop a satisfactory level of skills in a range of games but standards in swimming are below those expected nationally because technical skills, including stroke action and breathing, are unsatisfactory.

15. In all other subjects standards are below those expected nationally at age 14. They are higher than the most recently reported assessments in design and technology because the provision of specialist teaching is much improved, resulting in much better schemes of work. This enables pupils to gain a good range of skills in designing and making.

16. They are below the nationally expected standards, and lower than the most recently reported assessments, in ICT because many pupils do not develop the required skills in measurement and control. They are also below expected standards in modern foreign languages but higher than the most recently reported assessments. This is because, despite good gains in other aspects, all lack confidence and precision in pronunciation.

17. Most are below the expected standard in geography because they make insufficient gains in knowledge as well as in understanding. They do not have the necessary skills in literacy and numeracy required to record, interpret and analyse information. They are below expectations in history because, despite good gains in knowledge and understanding, many continue to have difficulty in expressing themselves in detail or at length.

18. Standards in religious education are below those expected in the Liverpool Agreed Syllabus. Many have a good basic understanding but weaknesses in literacy skills restrict the range of their written work and erratic attendance hinders continuity.

19. Achievement at age 14 is good. Many make good progress and standards rise in many subjects from well below expectations at age 11 to below expectations at age 14. Progress is very good in music and good in all other subjects except geography where it is unsatisfactory and in mathematics, science and physical education where it is reasonable.

20. Good teaching that develops a positive, and sometimes enthusiastic, response and places an emphasis on developing the necessary skills, lies at the heart of the good achievement and progress in many subjects. For example, basic skills are well taught in English. This builds well upon the gradually improving literacy skills on entry. As a result, many write satisfactorily in a range of forms. Technical skills are similarly well taught in art and in design and technology. Consequently many pupils have the confidence to apply them. The most capable are ready to take risks, to experiment and to express themselves with originality. This enables them to achieve very well.

21. Achievement at age 14 is unsatisfactory in geography because unsatisfactory subject knowledge and insufficient challenge in some of the teaching results in a lack of interest, and even misbehaviour by some. Consequently, there are inadequate gains in knowledge, skills and understanding.

## **Results, standards and achievement at age 16**

### **Strengths:**

- The proportion obtaining 5+ A\*-C is in line with the target for schools in challenging circumstances.
- GCSE results in science in 2000 were well above average for similar schools.
- The trend in results has been above the national trend for the last five years.
- Standards in art are above national expectations.

### **Areas for Improvement:**

- The proportion obtaining 5+ and 1+ A\*-G grades in GCSE or equivalent examinations.
- The proportion completing courses and taking the final examinations.
- The gap between the girls' results and those of their age group nationally.
- Provision for health and social care in vocational courses.

22. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection in the proportion obtaining 5+ A\*-C grades at GCSE. Just over one fifth obtained 5+ A\*-C grades in 2000, compared with almost a half of all pupils nationally. These results are well below the average for all schools nationally. They are in line with the school's own well defined targets and also with those set for schools in similarly challenging circumstances nationally. The trend in results has been above the national trend for the last five years.

23. Improvement has been slower in the proportion obtaining 5+ and 1+ A\*-G grades. This has remained stubbornly well below average, despite the school's earnest efforts to include all in its curricular provision. Whereas nine-tenths obtain such results nationally, the proportion at this school remains just above seven-tenths. This is partly because there is alternative provision made for a significant number of poor attenders and for some who are disaffected. Approximately two-thirds of those who did not obtain at least one grade A\*-G did not attend school regularly. Some do not complete the necessary coursework and are therefore not entered for some final examinations. Approximately 15 per cent of those who

start the courses do not complete them. Many take either the Certificate of Achievement or attend alternative provision that does not always include GCSE or vocational examinations. These factors contribute to an average points score in 2000 that was in the lowest five per cent nationally.

24. The girls' results in 2000 were very low and further behind their age group nationally than those of the boys. This feature, which begins to show itself in results at age 14, becomes more firmly established at the age of 16. The girls' results have been further behind their age group nationally than those of the boys in all years since the last inspection. This is not a feature found in the majority of schools but is not uncommon in similar schools. It is an important factor contributing to the well-below-average results.

25. These results indicate satisfactory achievement and progress at age 16 in comparison with schools in similar contexts. When compared with those obtained by the same pupils in national tests at age 14, they are below average. This comparison is less statistically reliable because the school makes considerable alternative provision for a significant number after the age of 14, including provision for Certificate of Achievement qualifications rather than GCSE. It should be treated with great caution.

26. Results in English were well below average. Approximately one third obtained grades A\*-C compared with just over one half nationally. Results were broadly similar in science. They were well below average in mathematics, where approximately one fifth obtained grades A\*-C compared with nearly one half nationally. The girls did better than the boys in English, less well in mathematics and similarly in science. The boys did slightly less well in mathematics than in their other subjects.

27. These results represent good achievement and progress. Pupils did slightly better in these than in their other subjects. The results in science were well above average in comparison with similar schools. They represent very good progress and achievement when compared with national test results at age 14. By the same comparisons, results in English in 2000 were above average, representing good achievement and progress. Those in mathematics were average, representing satisfactory achievement and progress.

28. The best GCSE results in 2000 were in art, where just over half obtained grades A\*-C compared with just less than two-thirds nationally. Results were very low in geography, food technology and resistant materials. They were lower than in most other subjects in modern foreign languages.

29. In comparison with results in other subjects, achievement was very high in art. It was unsatisfactory in health and social care, in the resistant materials and food technology courses in design and technology and in modern languages. The boys achieved significantly less well in history and geography than in their other subjects. The girls did less well in French and food technology.

30. The proportion completing the course varies significantly between subjects. Approximately four-fifths were entered for the final examination. The proportion was highest in art, graphic products, food technology, graphic products, drama, history, mathematics and music, where at least ninety per cent completed the examination. It was lowest in geography, modern foreign languages, child development, English literature and textiles, where at least 20 per cent did not complete the course.

31. Results in vocational courses were below average. Fifty per cent obtained a pass grade at Intermediate Level, compared with 55 per cent nationally. Results were lower at Foundation Level where 25 per cent obtained a pass compared with 44 per cent nationally. In business studies, the GNVQ part 1 results were better, nearly two-thirds gaining an Intermediate award and just over one half the Foundation award.
32. Standards are below those expected nationally at age 16. The best work seen was in art where standards were above national expectations and in design and technology and physical education where standards were in line with those expected nationally at age 16. Work was well below the expected standard in science and music. Regular attendance becomes a more critical factor influencing the standards reached at age 16.
33. Standards in English are below those expected nationally. Some reach this standard and a few exceed it. Most do not. Those who reach or exceed national expectations write fluently, accurately and cogently. The writing of those who do not is more restricted and largely narrative. The main reason why standards remain below national expectations at age 16 is that nearly all still cannot respond critically to text or move beyond plot and character to explore themes and comment on style.
34. Standards in mathematics also remain below national expectations at age 16. Many improve their number skills but continue to lack confidence in manipulating number and simple algebraic expressions. Few can recall mathematical knowledge promptly to solve problems because their memories are poor.
35. Standards in science are well below national expectations at age 16. Very few possess the necessary understanding of scientific principles, the good range of investigational skills and the required precision in numeracy and analysis to reach the expected standard.
36. Standards in art are above national expectations because pupils are all encouraged to have the confidence of their artistic convictions when following their own lines of enquiry or solving technical problems, managing the development of their ideas with good self-discipline.
37. Standards are in line with national expectations in design and technology. Many are well motivated and demonstrate good graphic skills, thoroughness in planning, care in presentation and a good degree of innovation in their design work. They do not exceed national expectations partly because the use of ICT is unsatisfactory. They are also in line with expectations in physical education where many show a sound understanding of rules and tactics in games.
38. Standards in vocational courses are below national expectations. Poor attendance and low levels of literacy and prior attainment limit progress. Consequently, achievement is unsatisfactory in health and social care. Achievement in business courses is good.
39. In all other subjects standards are below national expectations. In history, many continue to find the analysis of sources difficult because they have not yet developed the necessary skills of enquiry. In modern foreign languages a lack of confidence in speaking remains, few conduct a simple conversation and even the most capable do not always write accurately. In music, time is lost through irregular attendance. Composing and performing skills are below expectations because few have had individual instrumental tuition before starting the course. In business studies irregular attendance results in unsatisfactory written assignments.

40. Standards of literacy are well below average on entry to the school. Many make good progress by age 14 because the basic skills are well taught in several subjects. Standards remain below average at age 16. Some make good gains in oral skills and most take care in their written work, trying to make it as technically accurate as they can, using sentences and paragraphs, and a range of vocabulary required in particular subjects. Most can select facts from what they read. Few can draw conclusions or analyse meaning. Below average standards in literacy are an important factor contributing to the overall below average standards at age 16.

41. Standards in numeracy are well below average on entry to the school. Progress by age 14 is satisfactory but many do not readily recall mathematical information or have the confidence to apply it. Achievement is lower in numeracy than in literacy because the teaching of these skills is not identified in most schemes of work. Consequently, most have few opportunities to consolidate or apply their mathematical knowledge in other subjects.

42. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because individuals are well supported and their needs well met. Consequently, they are included very well in lessons. For example, they are helped to organise their written work in science and resources are well matched to their needs in history. They make good progress in design and technology because good use is made of individual education plans and they are well supported in practical work.

43. The gifted and talented make satisfactory progress. There is good provision of enrichment activities. Progress is good in religious education and ICT.

44. Nearly all the above average number of pupils who speak English as an additional language do so fluently. They were observed in lessons achieving standards broadly in line with other pupils. They make satisfactory progress overall and participate fully in lessons. The small number at an early stage of language acquisition are well supported and make good progress.

## **Sixth form**

45. Results in the International Baccalaureate (IB) were below the world wide average in 2000. Results were closer to the world wide average at standard level than at higher level. The overall average grade on a seven-point scale was 3.4 compared with a world wide average of 4.85. The school's average IB grade was broadly equivalent to grades D/E at GCE A Level. The average score in higher level courses was 3.3 compared with a world wide average of 4.9. The average score in standard level courses was 3.5 compared with a world wide average of 4.0. Results in 2001 were broadly similar overall. The best results in 2000 were in history and Spanish at higher level and in environmental systems at standard level. Overall, students do less well in the sciences than in the arts subjects.

46. The small number of students on each course, the very small number of schools in this country offering these courses as well as the much more advantageous circumstances of most of those schools at home and others abroad, all make valid comparisons tentative at best.

47. Many students start the IB with very modest GCSE grades. They make good progress to achieve these results and progression rates to higher education are good.

48. A small number entered for Advanced GNVQs in 2000. The average points score was above average. Results were very high in health and social care and above average in business. In 2000 all students gained a distinction in health and social care and all gained

merit in business. A larger number entered for vocational qualifications at Intermediate Level. Just less than half gained the qualification compared with nearly three quarters nationally. Results overall were well below average. They were below average in business and in information technology. Completion rates for both Intermediate and advanced GNVQ are low.

49. Standards in the Sixth Form are below national expectations. They are above expectations in art and in line with expectations in English, history and modern foreign languages in the IB. In vocational courses they are in line with expectations in health and social care and business studies. In all other subjects inspected in detail they are below expectations.

50. Achievement is satisfactory. It is very good in history and good in English and science. The most capable make good progress in mathematics. Good gains are made in investigative and research skills in science and history. Achievement is satisfactory in all other subjects inspected in detail.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

#### **Strengths:**

- The good attitudes of many of the pupils help them to achieve well.
- Many work well with each other in lessons.
- They are caring and sensitive to those with physical disabilities.

#### **Areas for improvement:**

- Attendance and punctuality.
- The confidence to show initiative.

51. Attitudes, values and personal development are good. Attendance is poor. Standards are generally similar to the previous inspection except that some improvement has been achieved in attendance.

52. Discussions with pupils indicate that they are happy in school and enjoy the various experiences that are available to them. They describe the school accurately as a friendly place where teachers are helpful and offer good support and guidance to them about their work and personal development. The attitudes of many pupils contribute well to their standards of achievement but a substantial number place too little value on their education and this is reflected in the poor attendance of some, and in their effort in lessons for a small number of cases. Participation in extra curricular activities is satisfactory overall.

53. Behaviour is good in most lessons and at times it is very good. In some lessons, more often in lower attaining sets, behaviour is less than satisfactory, sometimes because some pupils are uninterested and occasionally because the work lacks challenge.

54. Behaviour observed at all other times was invariably good. Pupils conducted themselves in an orderly manner and had regard for others, for example when queuing patiently at lunchtime.

55. Relationships between pupils are generally good and are often very good, for example when working on projects together, in pairs or groups, in a co-operative and supportive manner. Most get on well socially and the number of permanent exclusions that result from unacceptable behaviour has reduced considerably since the previous inspection although it is still a little higher than average. The number of temporary exclusions is higher than the average for secondary schools but the school's approach appears to be effective because the number of pupils who are temporarily excluded more than once is comparatively low.

56. Bullying occurs but the school confirms that the number of serious recorded incidents last year was low. Those pupils who were questioned by inspectors say that bullying is not a significant concern to them. They are able to report it either anonymously through a bully box, or in confidence to any of a large number of adults in various roles in the school. They say that incidents are dealt with effectively.

57. Pupils make good progress in their personal development. They learn to accept responsibility for others through such things as the school council and involvement in charitable support. They learn how to work well as a group through sport and community experiences, outdoor pursuits and residential trips including abroad. They become more mature in outlook as they study and consider the various aspects of the personal, social and health education programme. They develop an appreciation of the values and beliefs of others, mainly through religious education. Pupils' respect for the feelings of others is very well demonstrated by the kindness and consideration with which all pupils in the school treat those with disabilities. The readiness to exercise initiative is not well developed and many rely too heavily on their teachers' guidance.

58. Attendance is well below the average for secondary schools, although it has improved since the previous inspection. A substantial number of pupils, across all year groups, have a very poor record of attendance. In Year 11 more girls than boys have poor records. The school and the educational welfare officer state that the reason for most absence is that many parents do not sufficiently support their children's attendance. Some truancy during the school day also occurs. Approximately 5 per cent of all pupils arrive late for school each day. Lateness to lessons relates more to distance between classrooms than pupils' delaying unnecessarily.

### **Sixth form**

59. Students' attitudes, values and personal development are good. They are positive about almost all of their experiences in the Sixth Form. Attendance is unsatisfactory.

60. Students say that they enjoy the Sixth Form and are glad that they chose to stay on. They are right to say that their tutors are very helpful and easily accessible and that tutors give them good advice and guidance. They are pleased that there is a separate common room for each of the year groups but would like easier access to computers. They appreciate the wide range of enrichment activities that are available and take part in those that appeal to them although, at times, are not able to because of the pressure of course work. Some students admit that they chose to stay on because they would rather be in school than out of work or having to find work and because of the prospect of modest financial support. They say that they work conscientiously and in the meantime have formed clear aspirations for their future and many intend going on to higher education. Overall, students' attitudes are positive towards the school and their education.

61. Students' behaviour in lessons and around the school is always good or better. Their conduct is orderly and they have appropriate regard for adults and the pupils in the lower school. Relationships between students are good and they are mutually supportive. There have been no exclusions.

62. Students take responsibility for their own community through their council. A mandatory part of their studies includes 150 hours of community service. This can be carried out within school, for example by assisting teachers in the main school, or out of school, for example in primary schools or, indeed, elsewhere. All students are pleased to do this and value the experience. It contributes very well to their personal development.

63. As a result of the induction process for Sixth Formers, students are taught how to organise private study opportunities and manage their time in a planned manner. They are introduced to such things as problem solving and team working and, although they appear to be confident about these key skills, they are not able to demonstrate more than satisfactory competence in understanding and application of them.

64. The school was unable to provide inspectors with accumulated attendance data for the Sixth Form for the previous year. Scrutiny of the manually completed attendance registers indicated an unsatisfactory amount of absence that was authorised, unauthorised or unaccounted for. During the week of inspection, a considerable number of students arrived late for the start of the day.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

### Strengths:

- The overall quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Teaching and learning in the Deaf Resource Base (DRB) is very good.
- When teaching is very good, high expectations and good pace are strong features.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very well managed.
- The teaching of literacy skills.

### Areas for improvement:

- The teaching of numeracy skills.

65. The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is consistently so in Years 7 to 11 and also in the Sixth Form. It was good or better in almost two thirds of lessons seen and very good or better in one fifth. It was less than satisfactory in four per cent of lessons, two of which were poor. Excellent teaching was seen on four occasions, in Year 7 and Year 9 and twice in Year 10. It was very good in the Deaf Resource Base (DRB). There were fewer instances of very good teaching and learning in the Sixth Form.

66. The overall quality of teaching and learning was good in most subjects. It was satisfactory in mathematics, science and physical education. In geography it was unsatisfactory.

67. Improvement has been good since the last inspection, particularly in the use of a wider range of teaching methods. This has been well led and managed by members of the leadership group, working closely with heads of department. As a result, there is now very little unsatisfactory teaching, the majority is good and there is and an increased proportion of very good teaching and learning.

68. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with physical disabilities or those who are deaf, learn well because they are carefully and effectively included in lessons. This was a very good feature of lessons, especially in physical education where activities were planned so that those with physical disabilities could participate fully. In all subjects teachers know their pupils well and plan their lessons well to meet individual needs. The targets in individual education plans are too imprecise to support the rigorous evaluation of progress.

69. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well taught. Nearly all speak English fluently. The school has recently revised and improved its arrangements to provide additional support for those who do not.



70. These findings accord with the views expressed by the small number of parents who completed the questionnaire or attended the parents' meeting prior to the inspection. Some parents expressed concerns about the regular setting of homework. Arrangements are satisfactory. They are good in several subjects, including English, mathematics, music and design and technology. In mathematics, for example, homework helps many pupils to make progress because it provides opportunities for individual investigation.

71. High expectations that motivate pupils well and the good pace of well-planned lessons are features of much of the good and very good teaching seen. This was a good feature in much of the teaching in English and modern foreign languages that encouraged many pupils to sustain their interest and concentrate well. Very occasionally, in physical education and science, there is insufficient challenge in the work provided for the most capable.

72. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. It is a strength in many subjects, including physical education, where the teachers' skilful demonstrations result in a good degree of physical effort and skill development by many pupils. Occasionally, it is unsatisfactory in geography.

73. The management of pupils' behaviour and attitudes is very good. In the best teaching seen, for example in modern foreign languages and ICT, learning was very good or better because objectives were stated precisely, explanations and demonstrations were clear relationships were very good and good support was provided when pupils were required to work on their own. Occasionally, this is not the case when, for example in geography, some pupils become restless and make poor progress because they are not sure what they are being asked to do and the poor management of their learning results in a lack of order and concentration.

74. Very good attitudes in class were a regular feature of lessons in Year 7 but some pupils attend less regularly, becoming less co-operative and ready to work hard as they get older. Consequently, the progress overall in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory despite to good quality of teaching. A few present challenging behaviour and some are reluctant to learn. It is a strength of the good teaching that the majority continue to work hard.

75. A strong feature of much of the good and very good teaching is the teachers' skilful choices of methods and careful planning that retain interest and develop confidence, often involving the good use of group work. This moulding of pupils' attitudes and good relationships is an important aspect of nearly all the good teaching, particularly in English and drama. In history and music, work is very well matched to individuals' needs and interests. Consequently, their interest is held, they enjoy the challenge of the work and learn well. When the planning of the lesson does not provide good opportunities to participate, as was occasionally the case in science, most make no more than satisfactory progress because they have no opportunity to investigate for themselves and develop scientific curiosity.

76. Invariably, when poor behaviour is not well managed, and reluctant attitudes are allowed to dictate the pace of the lesson, progress is unsatisfactory. This occurred on several occasions in geography and occasionally in modern foreign languages.

77. Basic skills are well taught in Years 7 to 11 but the pace of work is sometimes slow because the large majority of less capable pupils do not write confidently. The literacy strategy is well co-ordinated and key words are displayed in most rooms to support knowledge, understanding and the use of technical vocabulary. The teaching of numeracy

skills in each subject is unsatisfactory. Practice is inconsistent. Consequently, many have too few opportunities to consolidate and apply their knowledge, understanding and skills in number. This limits their achievements. In mathematics, design and technology and science there are too few opportunities to develop and apply ICT skills.

78. The use of resources is satisfactory. In the very good teaching seen in music and in history very good use of pictures and visual images engages interest very well, overcoming the difficulties many experience with the printed word. In drama, the printed word is well used to develop imaginative and thoughtful responses. In design and technology very good visual displays result in a very good level of interest and expectation. Consequently, many pupils are well motivated to work hard and make good progress.

79. The quality of marking of work is satisfactory. In history it is a very strong feature and it is good also in design and technology. Regular reference to the standards described in the National Curriculum helps many to make good progress in modern foreign languages. It is unsatisfactory in geography.

### **Sixth form**

80. The quality of teaching and learning is good. It was good in just over two-thirds of the lessons seen and never less than satisfactory. Less than one tenth of lessons were very good or better, a smaller proportion than in other areas of the school. The best teaching was in history where a skilful balance of challenge and support resulted in very good achievement and excellent attitudes.

81. There is insufficient reference in the previous inspection report to evaluate the degree of improvement made since then.

82. Students learn well because teachers' subject knowledge and understanding of the assessment requirements of the IB are very good. Consequently, learning is well planned.

83. There is a good balance of practical and theoretical activities in vocational courses. As a result a high level of interest is maintained and there are regular opportunities to apply understanding.

84. The teaching of key skills is satisfactory. It is good in science and English. It is very well developed in art where planning provides frequent opportunities to make decisions, pursue personal interests and undertake research.

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

### Strengths:

- Equality of opportunity is excellent.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- There is very good provision for personal, social and health education.
- The additional provision for gifted and talented pupils is very good.
- There is good provision for moral and social development.

### Areas for improvement:

- The provision for vocational courses after the age of 14.

85. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory. The statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met and the provision is in line with the school's published aims. There has been satisfactory improvement since the time of the last inspection.

86. Provision is very good for the well above average number of pupils with special educational needs. It is very well managed, providing very good individual support in lessons. Within the Deaf Resource Base the very good provision enables pupils to qualify in British Sign Language. Nearly all those who speak English as an additional language are able to participate fully in all subjects of the curriculum. There is good additional support for those who are at an early stage of language acquisition.

87. There are some opportunities to study vocational courses after the age of 14. These include GNVQ health and social care and business studies. The overall range of provision for vocational education is unsatisfactory.

88. The school curriculum is monitored effectively by the deputy headteacher and the governing body, in consultation with heads of each subject department. There are also leadership groups comprising three or four subject heads, each being led by a senior member of staff. This is proving to be an effective structure and ensures that the deputy headteacher can obtain a clear picture of the school's overall provision.

89. The school is very effective in ensuring that all pupils, whatever their needs and circumstances, receive appropriate support. This ensures that they have every opportunity to take part in all lessons. This is highlighted by the work of the staff from the Deaf Resource Base who are extremely effective as communicators, bridging the gap between the hearing community and deaf pupils.

90. The school is effective in identifying pupils who are gifted and talented. This provision is also well supported through Excellence in Cities, which provides additional funding for the education of these pupils. Ten per cent in each year group are identified as gifted and talented: seven per cent as a result of their overall academic ability and three per cent as a result of a particular talent. Because the pupils' academic scores are low when compared with the national average, it is then necessary to seek nominations from teachers in order to identify some of the talented pupils. Pupils who are identified as being gifted or talented are making satisfactory progress throughout the school. The school works hard and is successful in helping pupils to understand that being identified as gifted or talented is not a reward, but rather an opportunity to join meetings and activities which will help them to meet their full potential. Pupils are also involved in evaluating their own performance in these activities.

91. Gifted and talented pupils also have the opportunity to meet with pupils from other schools as they take part in activities and meetings. Broadgreen pupils meet with pupils from some of Liverpool's most respected schools and, as one pupil said, "I thought I was stupid, but now I know I'm not." Pupils take part in 'Maths Challenges', they enter competitions and two pupils attended a residential weekend at Cambridge University. There are several trips to theatres as well as a Technology Summer School.

92. There is a satisfactory range of extra curricular activities, including opportunities to engage in further academic studies or in other area of interest. There is additional support for GCSE courses in art, science, English, French and history. 'Café Ask' provides a forum for extended study in any chosen subject. The good range of additional recreational and sports activities includes chess, computer, swimming, badminton, girls' football, Red Cross, basketball, dance, kickboxing and disk jockeying. Whilst attendance at some of these is quite low and may involve only three or four pupils, they are proving to be successful and are valued highly by the participants.

93. The arrangements for careers education and guidance within the school are good. Much of this is provided through the careers officers and their staff. The school provides good opportunities for all Year 10 pupils to engage in work experience for a two-week session. Some of the pupils find suitable placements for their own work experience, whilst others rely on the school to make the arrangements. For ninety-five per cent of the pupils, the work experience is in line with their personal preferences. By the time pupils reach the age of 16 years they all have careers interview to help support them as they move from secondary education into the world of work, or into further or higher education.

94. There are good links with the community that further enrich the curriculum by providing both resources and additional experiences. A large national computer company has given a great deal of support to the school through the provision of CD-ROMs and software, including a CD library. Two other large companies have supported the school by helping pupils into employment through training in presentation skills. A local football club provides coaching after school and a national bank has helped the school to establish a branch within the school, which is open after school hours on Mondays. Other companies have helped to enhance the ICT provision in the school and support pupils in their studies for accredited courses in key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT.

95. There are also good links with local schools and colleges. Close links with partner primary schools enable pupils to transfer to Broadgreen with minimum anxiety. This includes times set aside for parents to visit the school during the working day and for their children to take part in 'taster' lessons. This gives them a feel for the school before they start as new pupils.

96. The provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Several important strategies having been put into place since the last inspection. The management of pastoral care and curriculum provision are well co-ordinated. The personal, social and health programme is thorough and comprehensive. Most value the personal guidance they have received as they have passed through the school. The management structure for pastoral care has been reviewed, and pupils now receive additional support from assistant heads of year. Form tutors mostly stay with the same group through the school, know the pupils very well, and successfully monitor their academic and personal development. Learning mentors, funded through Excellence in Cities, deal effectively with problems pupils might encounter, such as those with study skills, attendance and personal situations. Pupils value the contribution to school life the mentors provide.

97. There is a detailed school policy for careers education. Options choices are carefully considered, with parents and guardians being fully consulted in Years 9 and 11. Comprehensive impartial careers advice is given by outside agencies, and links with local industry enable further advice to be given. Guidance on citizenship ensures that pupils strive to achieve the school's mission statement of helping them to develop into thoughtful, informed, responsible citizens. Links with the community are strong, as exemplified in that some pupils participate in the Liverpool Schools Parliament, and many are involved in the Changemakers Club. Through this club, they work in the community by raising funds for charity, going on sponsored walks and working in local schools. As part of their International Baccalaureate course, Post 16 students undertake 150 hours of Creativity Action Service (CAS) over two years, which challenges and extends them, and helps them to become more independent.

98. Significant improvements affecting pupils' personal development have been introduced since the last inspection. These include attendance at a drugs awareness day in the Maritime Museum, participation in the Heartstone Project, focusing on ethnic issues, links with Healthy Schools Partner Agencies, and attention to sex and relationship matters.

99. There is no whole-school policy concerning strategies for developing pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural awareness. Emphasis upon these dimensions is made largely through departments. The quality of overall provision is satisfactory.

100. Provision for developing spiritual awareness is satisfactory. The RE department makes good provision for enriching the spiritual content of assemblies, for example by celebrating Eid and Chinese New Year but there is no daily act of collective worship for all. Through English, pupils receive many opportunities to appreciate aesthetic awareness through literature and drama of, for example, the works of Shakespeare. In music, the beauty of great church music is emphasised, and the effect music can have on moods is discussed. The music department misses opportunities to contribute to assemblies or to provide concerts at religious festivals. Pupils consider the power of the natural world in geography, reflecting, for example, the effects of flooding. They are encouraged to be introspective and reflective in art lessons.

101. Provision for moral development is good, both through the personal, social and health education programme and within subject areas. Teachers are effective role models, insisting upon good behaviour, being fair in their judgements, and demonstrating a clear sense of right and wrong. Through the English department, moral matters are debated, such as those arising in *Macbeth*. In music, pupils are expected to respect each other's performances, and to take care of the expensive instruments they use. Through religious education, issues concerning the environment, adoption, relationships, racism and the Holocaust are debated. There is an emphasis upon fair play and the acceptance of decisions in games. Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon the moral issues arising from desertification and rainforest problems in geography lessons.

102. Provision for social development is good. It is reflected in pupils' good behaviour, and in the good relationships between pupils, and between pupils and members of staff. In the departments where there is much evidence of working in pairs and groups, such as music, art, drama, history, modern foreign languages and religious education, pupils work co-operatively and effectively. A notable example is that of Post 16 art students who worked with great effect on a shadow puppet project. Teamwork is good in PE and oral work is good in English and modern foreign languages. Through the English department, pupils present school plays, make theatre visits to London, and take part in workshops by Theatre in Education and by visiting writers. There is a History Club, and external visits are

made through the department. Social development is extended on field trips undertaken through the geography department. There are missed opportunities to make residential trips through the modern foreign languages department and to present concerts, and attend events outside the school with the music department.

103. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. There are missed opportunities in some subjects. World religions and the lives of personalities such as Martin Luther King and Mother Theresa are discussed in religious education. There are multicultural links in the GCSE courses in English. The great American dream is considered through the study of works such as *Of Mice and Men*, and *Death of a Salesman*. Some pupils took part in a successful African drumming workshop in music and Blues and Latin American music are studied. Multicultural dimensions are strong in geography: the life of African farmers and the indigenous tribes of Amazonia, for example, are studied. Pupils study art culture of other countries, and of their own, through such work as that by Turner and Constable.

### Sixth form

#### Strengths:

- Broadly based academic course lead to the International Baccalaureate.
- Appropriate vocational courses lead to Intermediate and advanced qualification.
- Very good opportunities for enrichment.

#### Areas for improvement:

- Religious education.
- Use of tutorial time for support and guidance.
- Vocational courses to suit lower capability students.

104. Provision is good with the overall direction of the school. The Sixth Form curriculum offers preparation for the International Baccalaureate diploma (IB) and advanced or intermediate vocational certificates.

105. The full IB is broadly based and includes subjects from six areas of study: English, mathematics, natural sciences, humanities, modern foreign languages and arts. It fulfils well the needs and aspirations of half of the students. Nearly all subsequently enter higher education. The satisfactory range of vocational courses in health and social care, business studies, leisure and tourism and ICT provide well for the other students. There is currently no provision for Foundation Level vocational courses because arrangements are subject to a current local review.

106. The IB programme includes features that provide extensive enhancement of the academic curriculum. Most students follow a course on the Theory of Knowledge, which is designed to help students think critically, formulate rational arguments and make decisions based on sound reasoning. They also gain the opportunity to take part in a range of enrichment activities such as expeditions, creative projects and some form of social service.

107. Provision for key skills is satisfactory. Communication, application of number and ICT are included as part of the IB programme where opportunities arise and an extended essay is a compulsory feature. Some students have ICT as part of their programme, but a minority rely on an uncertain integration of this aspect in other subjects. Key skills are taught as separate elements in the vocational courses, but advanced and intermediate students are taught together to the same lower Level 2 in ICT. Religious education is not provided within the Sixth Form.

108. Extra-curricular provision is good. There is an extensive range of opportunities ranging from visits to exhibitions, museums, at galleries, residential trips, Young Enterprise and sports activities. There are well- established links with local universities and colleges, who value the style of study in preparation for higher education. Some students receive guidance from an external learning mentor.

109. Students are satisfactorily supported, and are allocated to a personal tutor. Procedures for registration are not rigorous enough and time allocated is not well used. They have a purpose built block for common room and study facilities. Personal, social and health education is timetabled regularly and covers topics such as career action planning, study skills and application for higher education. Students have access to tutors individually and a system of concern sheets used by staff may result in interview with the head of Sixth Form as necessary. Careers guidance is available and resources quite plentiful.

110. There are many opportunities to extend their personal development through a range of projects. Some of these include “Your Citizen’s Passport,” through which they are introduced to moral issues and human rights, “Fag Ends,” which deals with smoking problems, and a personal, social and health programme which includes aspects of time management, study, driving, sex and drug education and examination preparation. The school is used as an adult centre out of hours: a number of students join adults in courses such as CLAIT, sign language and driving theory.

## HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

### Strengths:

- The arrangements for pastoral care are very good.
- There are very good procedures to monitor behaviour.
- The provision for first aid is very good.

### Areas for improvement:

- Opportunities for pupils to develop confidence in group work and problem solving.

111. The standard of pastoral care is high. The arrangements for pupils’ welfare are good. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils’ academic and personal development are good overall. These findings are similar to the findings of the previous report although there have been improvements in academic assessment. Parents are generally satisfied with the quality of care.

112. The staffing structure and arrangements for pastoral care support pupils very well and tutors know pupils very well. Relationships between almost all adults in the school and pupils are constructive, respectful and trusting and firmly underpin an environment that is conducive to learning and in which pupils feel secure and valued.

113. Child protection procedures are in place. Guidance and policy documents are circulated to all staff but these are not summarised for easy reference in the staff handbook. Relevant and frequent training is provided.

114. Health and safety matters are becoming increasingly well managed. Risk assessments are in place in departments but insufficient attention has been given to some safety aspects in the swimming pool area. The condition of some parts of the premises requires considerable vigilance to maintain safety but will be dealt with when the refurbishment programme takes place. The school complies with advice from the fire authorities about how to evacuate the premises and account for occupants. Provision for first aid is very good.

115. Attendance is closely monitored and procedures are in place to follow up absence through contact with parents by the school and the educational welfare service. Promotion of improved attendance and punctuality is via teacher intervention, a full time social inclusion officer, learning mentors, on report monitoring and a range of incentives and recognition. A computerised registration system supports this but could be used more effectively to analyse trends. Targets for improvement are in place. Despite all these efforts the school and the educational welfare service have not yet succeeded in securing the support of many parents and changing the attitudes of a substantial hard core of pupils. Some opportunities for improving attendance, such as appropriate alternatives in the curriculum for older pupils have not yet been adequately exploited.

116. The school's procedures for monitoring and supporting behaviour are very good. The good quality of most teaching contributes well to good behaviour in lessons. The various strategies that are used to monitor behaviour are effective. Internal isolation and external exclusion are used effectively. The Excellence in Cities initiative has funded learning mentors, one each of whom is allocated to each year group. Their involvement has made a considerable contribution to the improvement of pupils' attitudes and application to their work, their behaviour and attendance.

117. Pupils' personal development is monitored satisfactorily and supported well. Tutors sign off relevant tasks in pupils' planners and personal effort and other criteria are graded in annual school reports to parents. Pupils' aptitudes in group work and such things as problem solving and use of initiative are not assessed to inform planning for improvement in such skills and to help pupils to reach identified standards. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility for example through the school council. Experiences in the community and abroad, extra curricular activities and competitive sport contribute well to their personal development. The programme for personal, social and health education and Religious Education also contribute well to building pupils' awareness of themselves, others and the world around them.

## **Sixth form**

### **Advice, support and guidance**

118. The quality of advice, support and guidance for students is good. The procedures for health and safety are generally good but the way in which attendance registers are completed creates doubt about the whereabouts of some students and this has some implications for health and safety. The management and tutor structure of the Sixth Form effectively meets the pastoral requirements of the students. A part time learning mentor, who is funded by the Excellence in Cities initiative, provides very good additional support and guidance.

119. Before they enter the Sixth Form, students receive good quality information about the subject options that are available in Years 10 and 11, careers advice, Post 16 choices and opportunities for further and higher education. Self-evaluation and interrogation of computer applications and work experience provide adequate opportunities for students to make informed decisions about proceeding to the Sixth Form. The advice and guidance offered by the school help students to make informed choices about which courses to follow. Parents are also well informed and invited to relevant meetings.

120. A four-day induction course prepares students for life in the Sixth Form and includes teaching and training in the basic key skills required for effective self-management, study, project work and responsible independence.



121. Students receive very good advice, guidance and first hand information about higher education from their tutors, their mentor, who is a part time lecturer at a university, visits to campuses and external speakers who explain the process for applications and answer students' questions. Students who aspire to other post Sixth Form destinations are able to request relevant support for example from an external careers officer.

122. Students receive very good help, guidance and support relating to academic and personal matters from their Sixth Form tutors. Accessibility to tutors is very good.

### **Assessment**

123. Heads of year have a good understanding of their dual role to ensure pupils' welfare and development and monitor their academic progress. They are well supported by their tutor teams. Throughout the school, departmental heads are working to consolidate systems for assessing a pupil's prior attainment, setting targets and monitoring progress towards them. This process is well established, for example in English, science and business education. It has yet to be firmly established in the work of other departments, particularly mathematics and geography.

124. Overall the use of assessment to guide curriculum planning is good. In business education, teachers' lesson plans highlight particular pupils for careful attention and in music, pupils know the outcome of good diagnostic testing, know how to improve and this informs and guides teaching. Overall, procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are good.

### **Sixth Form**

#### **Advice, support and guidance**

125. In the Sixth Form, tutors and teachers know students very well. The IB programmes, with their highly structured style provide frequent opportunities for effective assessment. As a matter of course assessment, criteria are shared with students in all subjects so that they are clearly aware of targets to be achieved and what needs to be done on their part to achieve them.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

#### **Strengths:**

- The quality of annual reports and information about the curriculum is very good.
- Good arrangements before pupils start at the school in Year 7.

#### **Areas for improvement:**

- The response to the school's well managed arrangements to involve parents.

126. Parents are generally satisfied with the work of the school. The school tries very hard to inform well and involve parents but receives less support than its efforts deserve. Communications have improved since the previous inspection but parental involvement in school and regarding attendance is still unsatisfactory.

127. The number of parents who responded to the registered inspector's questionnaire and who attended his meeting was low and the views expressed by them are therefore not necessarily representative of all parents. On balance, parents who responded appear to be

satisfied with the school but would like the school to work more closely with them. Some parents are not happy about homework, the behaviour of some pupils and information about progress. They acknowledge that pupils are expected to work hard and most parents believe that their children make good progress. They judge teaching to be good and most say that their children like school.

128. Parents have the opportunity to be very well informed. The school's arrangements for the transfer of pupils from primary schools include an induction process that should leave parents in no doubt about what they and their children can expect and provide ample opportunities to see the school and ask questions. Newsletters and various information and consultation meetings provide good awareness about the life of the school but parental turnout for many meetings is low. The number of parents who attend the annual progress review meeting is low compared to what is the case in most secondary schools. Annual school reports have been improved since the previous inspection. They are very good and now very clearly describe how pupils' attainment compares with expectations for age, national standards and the class or set. Comments about what pupils know, understand and can do and targets for improvement are not consistently good across all subjects. Tutors and pupils say that pupils' planners are regularly checked but, as they are replaced each half term, inspectors are unable to judge how well all parties use them over time. A particularly good feature is the curricular information booklet that is issued to parents each term so that they are aware of what is to be taught.

129. A parents' and teachers' association arranges functions and provides some financial support to the school. An encouraging number of parents have been involved in a training session about how to support pupils, for example with revision. Parents are not involved in any aspect of the curriculum.

130. Parents are invited to special meetings for the purpose of considering and discussing pupils' subject choices, careers advice, Post 16 and higher education and these meetings are relatively well attended. Procedures are in place to appropriately involve parents, whose children have special education needs, in the periodic review of the pupils' progress.

131. Pastoral staff members liaise closely with parents. The social inclusion officer, attendance administrator, learning mentors and educational welfare officers are amongst the many who establish dialogues with parents in the interests of the welfare and education of the pupils. However, despite the efforts made, many parents do not support the school's efforts to improve attendance and punctuality.

132. Students are pleased with the standard of overall provision in the Sixth Form and inspectors confirm their judgement. Students say that they enjoy all their Post 16 experiences in the school. They receive good advice, support and guidance and tutors are very accessible when they need help with academic and personal difficulties. They value their involvement in the school and wider communities and the facilities that are made available to them.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

### Strengths:

- The headteacher, governors and senior staff provide very good leadership.
- The commitment to equality of opportunity is excellent.
- Financial management is very good.

### Areas for improvement:

- The definition of targets and outcomes in the school development plan.
- Specialist accommodation in science, art and physical education.

133. Leadership and management are good. They are more rigorous than at the time of the last inspection. The emphasis on regular monitoring is good. There is increasing emphasis on the evaluation of actions and decisions. This needs to be linked to a sharper definition of targets and outcomes in the school development plan.

134. The headteacher and senior staff provide very good leadership. The commitment to equality of opportunity is excellent. There is a high degree of delegated responsibility. As a result, the school's aims to work and learn together are very well fulfilled. It is particularly strong in the care taken to include pupils and students with special educational needs. Most subject departments are well led and the management of arrangements to care and guide pupils' personal development and progress is also good.

135. The nine members of the leadership group all have well defined and negotiated responsibilities. These include strategic, managerial and day-to-day responsibilities. The organisational strength and high level of commitment have enabled the group to continue to function very effectively despite a continuing vacancy for a second deputy headteacher. Teamwork is very good.

136. The strengths of the headteacher's very good leadership include the very good identification of priorities and a very clear vision for the school's strategic development within the local private funding initiative; an excellent commitment to the principles of social inclusion, well illustrated in the very positive ethos of the school; a high level of perseverance in managing improvement in the face of often very challenging circumstances; and the very good leadership of senior staff in the management of school improvement. In 1999 the school was the most improved in Merseyside over a three year period.

137. The governors make a very good contribution to the improvement of the school. Their partnership with the headteacher and senior managers is very good. The leadership of the governing body is very good, combining a very good understanding of the school's challenging circumstances with a readiness to act as the school's 'critical friend' in the identification of areas for improvement. As a result, there is a very good shared understanding of what the school is doing well and where it needs to improve.

138. The recently revised committee structure has established very good arrangements to monitor the performance of subject departments. Consequently, the governors have made a very good contribution to raising expectations. The 'Futures' group enables them to make a very good contribution to strategic development. Despite these many very strong features, statutory requirements are not fully met for the provision of a daily act of collective worship and for religious education in the Sixth Form.

139. The school development plan is a satisfactory management tool. The links between departmental development plans and the school's plan are better than at the time of the last inspection. Priorities are well defined. They emphasise school improvement. The plan identifies responsibilities and time scales well, together with broad costings. It does not include precise targets for improvement in academic standards. Consequently, the evaluation of its success is too general.

140. The links between the objectives of the school's plan and the work of the leadership group are very good. The management of their regular meetings is excellent and much more rigorous than at the time of the last inspection. Most recently, there has been a new requirement for subject departments to include items identified by the leadership group on their regular meetings. As a result the work of the school is kept under regular review, accountability is emphasised and points for action well defined.

141. The monitoring of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Arrangements for performance management are satisfactory. Senior managers provide very good leadership in improving the quality of teaching and learning. This is reflected in its good improvement since the last inspection. There is an increasing understanding of this management role amongst heads of subject. It is good in design and technology, history, ICT, modern foreign languages and music but currently unsatisfactory in geography.

142. Financial management, including the strategic use of resources in development planning, is very good. The appointment of a business manager has brought greater rigour and clarity to financial planning. Consequently, the sources of funding and their allocation to each key objective of the development plan are very well defined. Specific funding from national initiatives, including Excellence in Cities, the Small Education Action Zone the special educational needs and ethnic minorities funding is very well managed. The monitoring of the total budget is excellent. The lack of precise targets in many areas of the SDP does not support rigorous evaluation.

143. The funding of subject departments is by an equitable formula. These arrangements are satisfactory. They reflect different needs well but there remains insufficient opportunity to link funding directly to planning objectives and targets.

144. Financial controls are very good. The most recent auditor's report, March 2000, noted that financial systems 'are generally operated very well'. The small number of minor areas for improvement has been addressed promptly and successfully.

145. The school applies principles of best value very well. It also evaluates its procedures most thoroughly, using procedures provided by the Audit Commission. This is one of several good uses of ICT in monitoring and evaluating information. Others include the monitoring of attendance and progress. The use of ICT to track the performance and progress of different groups of pupils, and to analyse the link between attendance and progress, is unsatisfactory.

146. The match of staffing levels, qualifications and experience to meet the needs of the curriculum is good. Provision is unsatisfactory in geography because qualifications do not always match the requirements of the subject curriculum. Staff development for both teaching and support staff is very well managed. The planning group evaluates well the impact on the quality of provision. Those who are newly qualified or newly appointed are well supported.

147. The quality and provision of learning resources is good. There have been good recent improvements in geography and modern foreign languages. Artefacts are very well used in history. The ratio of computers to pupils and students is good but still remains

insufficient to meet the increasingly high level of demand. Very good resources are especially well used to support the learning of pupils who are deaf or physically disabled, as well as others with special educational needs. There has been good improvement in library provision. The much improved and very well managed provision of books and computers within the open resources area is helping to raise standards of literacy as well as extending facilities for research in the Sixth Form.

148. Accommodation is unsatisfactory. The reasons lie beyond the control of the school and its governors. There are major planned improvements using funds from the local private funding initiative. The provision of specialist facilities in science is poor. It is unsatisfactory in drama and physical education. Good features include the very good facilities in the deaf resource base, the good use of display in design and technology that helps to raise expectations and the much improved facilities in resource centre that makes good provision to support literacy and research skills.

### **Sixth form**

149. Leadership and management of the Sixth Form are good. Provision for the IB and vocational courses is well planned to raise expectations and enable an increasing number of students to enter higher education. The governing body fulfils its obligations well by regular reviews of student performance and curriculum issues. Good opportunities are provided for staff to develop their professional expertise in subjects and develop resources to match the IB and vocational syllabi some lessons are monitored and observed, but not as part of performance management.

150. Support for students is managed well in terms of guidance, facilities for social interaction and private study. The school does not make it clear enough how best to use registration time and the role of the tutor in the Sixth Form is not well defined. Conferences and consortium workshops are common. As a result, good progress is being made providing vocational subjects to meet the requirements of students, but there is not yet provision of a suitable Foundation level course. The key skills element is being monitored and under review. Opportunities for students to use ICT are not consistent and a minority of students, depending on their chosen subjects, is given little exposure to this area of the curriculum. The Sixth Form has a good development plan that is part of the whole school plan. Priorities and costs are well defined. The budget plans are overseen by governors. There is not, however, much detailed evaluation of success in set targets. The Sixth Form is cost effective.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

151. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, governors and staff of the school should:

- Raise achievement in geography by:  
(Paragraphs: 22, 26, 33, 71, 77, 84, 221, 222, 223, 226, 228, 229)
  - \* Assessing pupils' geographical knowledge, understanding and skills when they first come to school.
  - \* Placing more emphasis on teaching technical vocabulary.
  - \* Providing more opportunities for discussion in class to confirm a good level of understanding.
  - \* Monitoring regularly the quality of teaching and learning by direct observation.
  - \* Setting targets for improvement for both individuals and for groups of pupils.
- Improve the teaching of numeracy skills by:  
(Paragraphs: 46, 82)
  - \* Defining key objectives in the schemes of work for each subject.
  - \* Identifying regular opportunities to consolidate these skills in each subject.
  - \* Setting increasingly challenging numeracy targets in each subject.
- Improve attendance and punctuality by:  
(Paragraphs: 14, 37, 44, 56, 57, 63, 69)
  - \* Setting targets for individuals and groups of pupils.
  - \* Extending the very good range of current strategies to encourage groups of pupils to compete with others in order to raise levels of attendance.
- Increase the range of provision for vocational education after the age of 14 by:  
(Paragraphs: 92)
  - \* Consulting with external agencies concerning available external provision.
  - \* Consulting with pupils and their parents to match courses to individual needs and aspirations.
- Improve the evaluation of objectives in the school development plan by:  
(Paragraphs: 144, 147, 155)
  - \* Defining targets in terms of standards and the quality of teaching and learning.
  - \* Monitoring improvements against these targets.
  - \* Linking the evaluation of improvement to the level of resources used.

## Sixth form

- Raise standards in vocational courses and key skills by:  
(Paragraphs: 284, 316)
  - \* increasing the number of merit passes by setting challenging targets
  - \* increasing opportunities for students to use ICT.
  
- Evaluate provision for all courses by:  
(Paragraph: 69)
  - \* Monitoring attendance.
  - \* Monitoring retention on all courses.
  - \* Analysing costs against results.
  
- Increase the provision of Foundation courses in a wider range of vocational subjects by:  
(Paragraph: 110)
  - \* Reviewing the range of current options available and costing alternative provision.
  - \* Examining possible links with other provides to make provision cost-effective.
  
- Make more effective use of tutorial and registration time by:  
(Paragraph: 123)
  - \* Defining an agreed programme of activities.
  - \* Defining the role of the Sixth Form tutor.
  - \* Monitoring the effectiveness of provision.

## THE DEAF RESOURCE BASE

### Strengths:

- Very good leadership and management.
- Very good support enables pupils to participate as fully as possible in lessons.
- Very good teaching enables pupils to participate and progress well.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good.
- Very good specialist accommodation.

### Areas for improvement:

- The emphasis on learning objectives in individual educational plans (IEPs).

152. There are currently 23 pupils within the Deaf Resource Base (DRB). The level of inclusion within the school's overall provision is assessed according to their individual needs and circumstances. Within the DRB pupils receive specialist teaching to increase their communication skills using British Sign Language. The DRB also prepares special lessons for deaf pupils in order to prepare them for the new vocabulary and concepts that they will meet in lessons that they receive in the mainstream school.

153. The school is totally inclusive in that it ensures that all deaf pupils have all possible access to the whole school curriculum. The DRB provides a very good range of resources that help pupils to understand specialist subject vocabulary. This was particularly important

in one lesson where it was essential that a deaf pupil gained a clear understanding of the difference between the mathematical concepts of 'frequency' and 'chance'. In another lesson, a deaf pupil worked extremely hard with the teacher to understand the concepts of theoretical, experimental and expected probability.

154. The level of staffing is satisfactory. The DRB is extremely well managed by a highly qualified and experienced teacher of the Deaf who has been in post for approximately two years. During this time she has been very effective in uniting what were two separate units, one for the profoundly deaf and one for those with partial hearing. The DRB now meets the needs of all deaf pupils within the school. There is an adequate number of teaching staff and an appropriate number of support staff. All teachers and support staff also work in the mainstream school for the benefit of the Deaf pupils. There is very good provision for the professional development of all staff. Some of the qualified teachers are studying for the further qualifications as teachers of the Deaf. All staff work extremely well together, each supporting the others.

155. Although the DRB is accommodated in a separate area of the school, staff and pupils alike are fully integrated into the mainstream school. The pupils are all members of mainstream registration groups and staff work as class teachers and support assistants. Each deaf pupil who needs a personal 'communicator' is assigned such a person. He or she will support the pupil throughout their time in school and will move with the pupil from year group to year group until the pupil leaves school.

156. The DRB is housed in purpose built accommodation, which is of a very high standard. Rooms offer sufficient space for the relatively small groups of pupils, though there is no separate room in which meetings or reviews may be held. When this situation arises, it becomes necessary to 'double up' the groups to create a meeting room. There is no staff/preparation room. The rooms are very well furnished with good quality equipment and the environment in which the staff and pupils work is very conducive to learning.

157. There is a wide selection of appropriate teaching material to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The school has recently installed a 'smart' screen in one classroom, which is proving to be very beneficial to both staff and pupils alike. The ICT facilities within the DRB are very good. There is Internet access and is an adequate supply of appropriate software for the pupils.

158. The curriculum within the DRB is designed to underpin the mainstream curriculum in the school. One of the major focuses is to help deaf pupils develop their communication skills which include speaking and signing, reading and writing, and to develop their lip reading skills. This calls for very specialist teaching and for highly skilled staff. When deaf pupils join the school, they are assessed very carefully through a series of tests that highlight any learning difficulties that pupils may be experiencing. There is also a high level of support and care from an audiologist, who helps pupils and teachers to maintain the pupils' hearing aids. As a result of these tests and from the pupils' Statements of Special Educational Needs, individual education plans are prepared. The qualities of individual education plans in the DRB are good and they are clearly linked to the statements and reviews. Targets are generally well set, though some of them are focused more on the teaching objectives than on the learning objectives. This is an area where there is still some room for further development.

159. The quality of teaching in the DRB is very good overall. Some teaching is excellent and some is good. In the very best lessons the teachers show that they have a very clear understanding of each individual pupil. They know their capabilities and make sure that the questions they ask are interesting and challenging for them all. Lessons are always very well prepared and a great deal of care is taken in considering each individual. There is



more difficult work set for the most capable pupils to ensure that they are well challenged, whilst care is taken to ensure that the least confident are able to take a full part in the lesson. Support staff work extremely well to help individual pupils when they need it and communicators work very closely with teachers to ensure that all pupils are able to read the signing and reply to the questions that are asked. There are no significant weaknesses in the teaching within the DRB. The work of the deaf adult within the DRB provides pupils with an excellent adult role model and this is a strength of the staffing provisio

160. Pupils behave very well and are keen to come to their lessons. They are polite to each other and to the staff. Pupils work very well on individual tasks and also work very well as a group when the situation arises. With the help and guidance of the teachers, they learn to be patient and take turns when being taught as a group. Pupils also enjoy the success of each other and are quick to acknowledge the good work of other pupils.

161. Teachers and support staff work well in helping with the pupils' personal and social development. They take an interest in them as individuals and, through the close liaison that there is between school and home, are successful in a counselling role when crises arise.

162. The DRB is a strength of the school. It is very successful in meeting the variety of special needs of the Deaf pupils. The DRB now provides very high quality specialist education for Deaf pupils. There has been good progress since the time of the last inspection.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	<b>Years 7–11</b>	158
	<b>Sixth form</b>	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils		48

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very Poor</b>
<b>Years 7–11</b>							
<b>Number</b>	4	25	72	49	5	3	0
<b>Percentage</b>	3	15	46	31	3	2	0
<b>Sixth form</b>							
<b>Number</b>	0	3	26	13	0	0	0
<b>Percentage</b>	0	7	62	31	0	0	0

Care should be taken when interpreting the percentages for the Sixth Form as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	<b>Y7– Y11</b>	<b>Sixth form</b>
Number of pupils on the school's roll	1179	113
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	736	

<b>Special educational needs</b>	<b>Y7 – Y11</b>	<b>Sixth form</b>
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	66	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	416	22

<b>English as an additional language</b>	<b>No of pupils</b>
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	64

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	<b>No of pupils</b>
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	48
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	67

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	<b>%</b>
School data	12.6
National comparative data	7.7

#### Unauthorised absence

	<b>%</b>
School data	2.4
National comparative data	1.1

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year:	<b>Year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
	2000	128	101	229

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 5 and above	Boys	51	41	33
	Girls	67	35	33
	Total	118	76	66
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 5 or above	School	52 (11)	34 (32)	30 (27)
	National	63 (63)	65 (62)	59 (55)
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 6 or above	School	20 (2)	17 (11)	9 (7)
	National	28 (28)	42 (38)	30 (23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 5 and above	Boys	40	40	38
	Girls	41	37	32
	Total	81	77	70
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 5 or above	School	36 (19)	35 (38)	32 (32)
	National	64 (64)	66 (64)	62 (60)
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 6 or above	School	13 (3)	19 (13)	9 (13)
	National	31 (31)	39 (37)	29 (28)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year:	<b>Year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
	2000	112	84	196

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	20	78	92
	Girls	19	67	74
	Total	39	145	166
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	20.0 (21.0)	74.0 (72.0)	85.0 (86.0)
	National	47.4 (46.6)	90.6 (90.9)	95.6 (95.8)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	<b>School</b>	22.0 (22.5)
	<b>National</b>	38.4 (38.0)

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

Vocational qualifications	Number	% success rate
Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	<b>School</b>	40
	<b>National</b>	N/A

**Attainment at the end of the Sixth Form (Year 13)**

<b>Vocational qualifications</b>		<b>Number</b>	<b>% success rate</b>
Number in their final year of studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied.	<b>School</b>	9	66.7
	<b>National</b>	0	N/a

<b>International Baccalaureate</b>		<b>Number</b>	<b>% success rate</b>
Number entered for the International Baccalaureate Diploma and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all they studied	<b>School</b>	13	7.7
	<b>National</b>	0	N/a

**Ethnic background of pupils**

	<b>No of pupils</b>
Black – Caribbean heritage	10
Black – African heritage	8
Black – other	29
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	19
White	1224
Any other minority ethnic group	0

**Exclusions in the last school year**

	<b>Fixed period</b>	<b>Permanent</b>
Black – Caribbean heritage	10	2
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	75	4
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes:****Y7 – Y13**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	87.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14.8

**Education support staff:****Y7 – Y13**

Total number of education support staff	43
Total aggregate hours worked per week	1209

**Deployment of teachers:****Y7 – Y13**

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	74.4
---	------

**Average teaching group size:****Y7 – Y11**

Key Stage 3	21.3
Key Stage 4	20.2

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Financial information**

Financial year	<b>2000/2001</b>
----------------	------------------

	<b>£</b>
Total income	4461270.00
Total expenditure	4726116.00
Expenditure per pupil	3622.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	301913.00
Balance carried forward to next year	37067.00

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	11.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	13.5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	1292
Number of questionnaires returned	48

### Percentage of responses in each category

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Tend to agree</b>	<b>Tend to disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
My child likes school.	38	54	4	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	23	63	10	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	40	12	17	4.
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	44	17	11	2
The teaching is good.	28	61	9	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	41	15	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	50	40	2	8	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	38	4	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	33	42	17	4	4
The school is well led and managed.	47	30	15	4	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	46	6	6	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	38	17	0	11

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

### **ENGLISH**

The provision for English is good.

#### **Strengths:**

- The department is a well led and managed team of experienced teachers.
- Pupils make good progress because high expectations are set and individual needs well met.
- The teaching of basic skills is good.
- There is a good range of resources and very good use of the library.
- The range of extra-curricular opportunities is good.

#### **Areas for development:**

- Opportunities for pupils' to take more responsibility for developing their own ideas.
- More reference in the marking of work in Years 7 to 9 to the standards described in the National Curriculum.
- Additional work in lessons for gifted and talented pupils.

163. Standards on entry are well below national expectations. Almost one half of the pupils have a reading age two years or more lower than their actual age. In 2000, results in the national tests at the age of 14 were below average, an improvement on the previous year and well above average for similar schools. They were significantly better than the results in mathematics and science. Both boys and girls results showed improvement, with girls being only slightly below the national average.

164. GCSE results for 2000 were below national average but above those achieved in similar schools. Approximately one third of those entered for the final examination gained grades A\*-C in English. Two-fifths did so in English literature. The girls did better than the boys, as they do nationally. However, because a significant number of pupils are educated off site and some attend infrequently in Year 11, the entry levels are lower than they are in many schools nationally. One out of every four boys, for example, was not entered for either subject.

165. Although attainment in Year 9 is low compared with national standards, many pupils make good progress in relation to their levels of entry to the school. As a result of the department's emphasis on basic skills in its literacy policy, pupils of all abilities take care in both the presentation and accuracy of their written work. Less capable pupils can write simple but interesting stories, descriptions, closed interview questions and diary entries, whilst the most capable show a growing confidence in using complex sentences and are able to attempt successfully a much wider range of writing, including good quality creative pieces, play scripts, letters, advertisements and newspaper articles. Although they readily recognise and understand the technical terms used when writing and talking about language, such as metaphor and alliteration, a large proportion of pupils have difficulty analysing and commenting effectively on their use. In many cases, it is the lack of well-developed critical skills that prevents more pupils achieving the higher grades in the national tests at age 14.

166. The pupils in Years 10 and 11 who attend regularly also make good progress and there is a general improvement in the accuracy of their extended writing in particular. Coursework folders and books show a wide variety of writing, discursive and argumentative, creative and original, as well as responses to Shakespeare and other literature and media texts. The quality of writing varies considerably between the fluent, lively and mature writing

of those with a good vocabulary and the ability to develop argument and ideas, and the simple, less technically accurate, largely narrative style of the less capable. Pupils in the higher sets sometimes make useful notes to help their learning in lessons and can respond imaginatively and sensitively to literature. However, pupils of all abilities have difficulty responding critically to it and often place an undue emphasis on plot and character, instead of investigating a writer's themes, purpose and style.

167. Reading comprehension ranges from very poor to very good. By the end of Year 9, most pupils can follow instructions unaided, such as those in external examination papers or notices around school, and read to extract information. They can also make some inferences and predictions based on their reading of a good range of fiction, media and non-fiction texts. All pupils are given opportunities to read for pleasure and there are regular library lessons in the lower school that are designed to encourage and develop their skills. A team of teachers and learning assistants provides special reading recovery support for pupils in Year 7 with very low reading ages. This is proving successful in raising achievement. Pupils' personal reading is recorded in a journal which is monitored by teachers to ensure that they are making progress and are reading a range of books. Both boys and girls readily volunteer to read aloud in class and they are listened to and encouraged, if necessary, by other pupils. The most capable in Year 11 read fluently, widely and with good understanding.

168. Standards of speaking and listening for both boys and girls are higher than those in reading and writing. Most pupils of all ages and ability speak confidently amongst themselves and to adults and are able to use talk to problem solve, negotiate, share and extend ideas and consolidate their learning, when given the opportunity. One strength of their group work is that relationships are usually good and pupils listen to each other and make positive and constructive criticism which enables all to develop and improve their skills.

169. In all years, most pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the clear guidance and support which they receive from their teachers who collaborate very effectively with learning assistants who might be present in lessons. Most of these pupils are able to produce work of a sufficient standard to be entered for the GCSE courses which all pupils follow: however, there are few planned activities to extend those identified as gifted and talented.

170. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to use ICT in lessons, though there is no provision in English rooms. Many pupils use word processing to plan and draft their coursework for GCSE and the department is now developing schemes of work which will help them to develop their reading and research skills to become independent learners, including the use of the world wide web as well as commercial software.

171. Most pupils are effective learners because they have positive attitudes to school and are co-operative and well behaved in lessons. Their learning gains are very well monitored by teachers who use test and other diagnostic data effectively to negotiate and monitor progress and to set targets. Marking is very supportive and usually shows pupils how they might improve, though in Years 7 to 9 there are few references to the National Curriculum Levels to help pupils to understand the differences between their present performance and what they need to do to achieve a higher level. An extensive programme of extra curricular activities, including links with the Liverpool Playhouse and Everyman Theatre, national poetry and letter writing competitions and writers in school, greatly enhances the curriculum provision for all pupils.



172. Teaching is good or very good in three out of four lessons in Years 7 to 9 and two out of three in Years 10 and 11. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen during the inspection, in Year 10, and all the teaching in Year 11 was good or very good. Good lessons are characterised by teachers' high expectations of pupils' behaviour and progress and a variety of teaching styles and activities makes it possible for all pupils to become fully engaged in a purposeful, supportive and enjoyable work atmosphere in which learning is rewarding. In these lessons, teachers make good use of pupils' own experiences to help them to engage with the subject matter. For example, in one particularly successful lesson in Year 11, the teacher made very good use of reggae music to help pupils make effective links between what they already knew and the Caribbean poetry which they were studying. Teachers also carefully plan a range of activities to ensure that lessons have a brisk pace and that pupils' productivity is good. They clearly identify the skills which they want their pupils to develop and make good use of marking and assessment information to set them improvement targets. Additionally, the requirements of those pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are fully met. In the lessons with some shortcomings, pupils' learning objectives are not properly identified or appropriate activities planned, the pace is dictated by the slowest, the quality of pupils' progress is not monitored and the management of unsatisfactory behaviour is sometimes inadequate. There is also a lack of challenge for the most able when whole classes are given identical tasks.

173. Leadership and management in the subject are good. Responsibilities are appropriately delegated, all policies are in place and understood, communication is good, there is frequent monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress against agreed targets. The hard-working and conscientious team of experienced teachers is fully aware of current educational initiatives. Planning for improvement is also very good and the department is providing much of the direction, impetus and support for the school's literacy across the curriculum initiative.

174. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Three quarters of the teaching observed during the inspection was good or better. The provision to teach literacy skills in the different subjects of the curriculum is much improved. The newly introduced National Literacy Strategy in Year 7 is proving successful in raising standards, both in English and across the school, and an annual summer school provides extra help for those who require it. Additionally, the department is working well with the very capable and enthusiastic librarian to ensure that reading resources are appropriate and of high quality for all ages and abilities: She is also involved with the effective reading recovery programme in Year 7. The head of department now monitors more closely teachers' marking but there is still some inconsistency in how National Curriculum information is used to show pupils what they have to do to raise their levels in Years 7 to 9 There has been additional provision of texts to help boys improve their performance. There is also much better access to computers and the department is now exploring more ways of using them in lessons to develop pupils' reading and research skills.

## Drama

The provision for drama is satisfactory.

### Strengths:

- All pupils in Years 8 and 9 take drama and it is a popular option in Years 10 and 11.
- There is good co-operation with the English department to prepare pupils for the Shakespeare paper in the national tests for pupils aged 14.
- There are good links between the school and local theatres.

### Areas for development:

- Facilities and resources in order to improve the opportunities for pupils and students, particularly those taking external examinations.

175. GCSE results in 2000 were well below the national average, with one in three gaining grades A\*-C, and lower than in the previous year. However, all pupils were awarded A\*-G and their results were better than those gained in most other subjects. Only four Sixth Form students took the theatre arts examinations for their International Baccalaureate in 2000: three gained grade 4 and one grade 3. Because such low numbers are involved, and because the course content and assessment criteria are different from A-Level, comparisons with previous years and other schools are unreliable.

176. Standards of performance differ widely. At age 14, the least capable make good gains in self-confidence and develop their group and teamwork skills as well as learning about body language and audience awareness. The poor listening of some boys, both to instructions and to each other, sometimes impedes their progress. Additionally, they sometimes have difficulty sustaining a role and using the acting space and their voices effectively. The most capable are creative and original in their interpretations of roles and themes and use a range of techniques to create dramatic tension and atmosphere.

177. Pupils following the GCSE option course in Years 10 and 11 work co-operatively and well: they support each other, share ideas and are able to use discussions to evaluate constructively both their own and others' performances. Their knowledge and ability, both with scripted performances and in improvisations, are good, but the quality of their written work lets down pupils whose literacy is below average because they cannot transfer their critical ideas and evaluations to paper.

178. Pupils of all ages and abilities acquire good social skills through their study of drama. They usually work well together and often show mutual appreciation by spontaneously applauding each other's performances. Drama also provides pupils with the opportunity to consider a wide range of cultural, moral and social issues, and they were observed exploring the origins of Halloween and the impact of the arrival of a new baby on a family's life. In the Sixth Form, students work very well together and produce both practical and written work of a good standard.

179. The teaching of drama is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, prepare their lessons well, ensure that the pace is brisk and make learning both rewarding and enjoyable. They have good relationships with their pupils and provide very effective guidance and stimulation to support and challenge them. In one low ability set in Year 9 the teacher made very good use of the poem "Kill the Children" which greatly appealed to the class and enabled them to extend their own ideas and to produce short group presentations on tragedy. Teachers are also very good role models and were observed demonstrating both voice production and body posture which pupils were then able to copy in their own work. In the lower of the two Year 11 sets, the teacher made very good use of a range of activities to suit the wide range of ability within the class and also worked well with the

learning support assistants to ensure that the pupils with special educational needs made good progress. Sixth form teaching is particularly characterised by a close working partnership between the teacher and students which ensures good group dynamics, well understood lesson objectives and clear learning outcomes.

180. The leadership and management of the subject are good. There is useful co-operation with the English department over the teaching of Shakespeare for the standard tests for pupils aged 14 and in the school's links with local theatres and visiting theatre groups. There are long-term plans for the building of a drama studio but, in the meantime, lessons are taught either in classrooms or in the school hall. The absence of a specialist area, light-weight stage blocks, black-out facilities and portable lighting seriously limits the range of dramatic experiences of pupils and students studying the subject for both GCSE and the IB. This prevents the provision from being good.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Overall, the quality of provision in mathematics is satisfactory.

### **Strengths:**

- The department now has new impetus and a new focus resulting from recent changes of staff.
- The quality of teaching and learning seen was at least satisfactory.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and the sharing of good practice.
- The use of ICT.
- Making the raising of standards the focus of departmental planning.
- Basic numeracy and computational skills.
- Numeracy across the curriculum.

181. National test results at age 14 in 2000 were in the lowest five per cent for all school nationally and below average for similar schools. There was no significant variation in performance between boys and girls. In the tests at this age, results for mathematics in the school are below those for science, but well below those for English.

182. GCSE results for 2000 were well below average. Approximately one fifth of the pupils entered obtained grades A\*-C compared with nearly one half nationally. Results were broadly in line with the average for similar schools, representing satisfactory achievement. Results in the IB at age 18 were low in comparison to the world-wide average grade. The results in this examination have shown a decline over the last three years because many students start the course with very modest GCSE results. Progress in Sixth Form courses is satisfactory mainly because of the very adult approach the students bring to their work.

183. At age 14, the few more capable pupils achieve standards broadly in line with national expectations. They show a good knowledge of angles related to mathematical shapes and use technical language precisely. The standards achieved by the majority are well below those expected nationally because most have poor recall of facts and algebraic techniques. Many also have a low level of computational skill so that progress in acquiring new skills and understanding is hampered. Many of the basic concepts and rules have to be repeatedly taught. For example, even some more capable pupils at age 14 had difficulty remembering how to solve the simplest first order equation, despite this work having been covered thoroughly last year.

184. Standards at age 16 remain below national expectations, despite some improvement in number skills. Many continue to lack confidence and accuracy in their calculations, for example expressing 0.4 as a percentage. The majority lack confidence in manipulating number and simple algebraic expressions. They lack the skills and understanding to apply their knowledge to solving problems. In none of the work seen was there any significant difference of attitude or outcome between boys and girls.

185. Standards are well below those expected at age 18. Students following the standard IB programme had begun work with differential calculus and could apply first principles effectively. Although progress in the Sixth Form is satisfactory, understanding of algebra is below national expectations. The higher IB class was dealing effectively with matrices and their products. Overall, progress in the Sixth Form is satisfactory.

186. Pupils are generally co-operative and willing to learn. They respond well to good classroom management and to the good relationships which exist between them and the teachers. The occasional incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour are in some classes of low attainers who, failing to recall earlier work, make only modest progress. Most lessons feature sound planning where learning objectives are clear, good explanations given, and the teacher has high expectations of what pupils might achieve. When this happens, pupils are on task well, work at a good rate and collaborate effectively when required.

187. Pupils of all abilities are well supported in the classroom. Some pupils, particularly at age 14, are asked to use self-evaluation sheets at the end of each module. These enable the pupils to record what they have learned and now understand. Key mathematical vocabulary is entered in teachers' planning notes, often displayed on the board and referred to during the course of the lesson. Homework is a regular feature in mathematics and this provides the principle means of pupils undertaking individual investigations, such as when pupils ran a survey of their peers to determine preferences for breakfast and then displayed the results as a pie chart.

188. The numeracy practice of a three-part lesson with an oral and mental starter is beginning to improve pupils' grasp of number manipulations, but their overall lack of fluency of handling computations has not been addressed effectively. Little work with ICT was seen either in displays or in the classrooms. This represents a deterioration since the last inspection. Teaching of mathematics has improved since the last inspection, with no unsatisfactory lessons seen and nearly half of them good. In the Sixth Form, this picture is repeated and students, some of whom start from a very low baseline, progress effectively under the influence of well-structured lessons.

189. The head of mathematics has only recently taken up his post and has begun the task of revising documentation and revitalising the department. Monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching are currently unsatisfactory, and this means that the good practice evident in the department is not effectively shared. For example, at least one teacher uses a spreadsheet to record pupils' grades and attendance to track their progress effectively, but this is not common practice. Current documentation is thorough in its coverage of attainment targets, but nowhere does it link departmental development to specific actions, strategies or outcomes which would yield measurable improvements in standards. Other areas for development include a wider use of forms of assessment which give pupils a clear indication of what they should do to improve, and further strategies to improve algebraic and computational skills.

190. The special provision for deaf pupils is very good at all ages. Working in small groups with a skilled signer, pupils respond enthusiastically, with enjoyment and pay very careful attention to the teacher. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good, and this helps

to maintain a lively pace to their work. Pupils age 13 made very good progress when converting raw data into graphical form. Pupils at age 16 made very good progress on probability and this meant they were able to join the mainstream lessons the next day.

## SCIENCE

Provision is satisfactory.

### Strengths:

- Results are improving slightly, and at the age of 16, are above average in similar schools.
- Pupils have positive attitudes and behave well in lessons.
- Relationships are good as a result of supportive strategies used by teachers.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Assessment data is used well to measure progress against targets set for pupils.
- Good leadership provides clear direction and goal.

### Areas for improvement:

- Knowledge and understanding of essential scientific concepts, which remain well below national average at both age 14 and 16.
- Level of experimental skill in carrying out, analysing and evaluating practical investigations.
- Rate of increase in attainment, especially from age 11 to 14.
- Provision of tasks that challenge the more capable pupils.
- Direct use of ICT to enhance learning by pupils in lessons.
- Extent of contribution of pupils to their own learning, including participation in class discussion.

191. Standards in science are well below national expectations at age 14. However, pupils make satisfactory progress from age 11, since they enter the school with knowledge and understanding of concepts, and investigational skills which are well below average. In the national tests of 2000, the average point score was very low in comparison with the national average, but close to average in schools where the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals was similar. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 5, or greater, was well below average. After a period of decline, results improved significantly in 2001 when approaching half of the pupils reached the national expectation, Level 5. The performance of boys and girls has not been significantly different.

192. GCSE results at age 16 for double award combined science in 2000 were well below the national average in all schools, but above the average for similar school. The boys' results were close to those of the girls. The percentage of pupils gaining grades A\*-C rose steadily from 1997 to 2000, but fell again in 2001. Overall achievement at age 16 has been satisfactory.

193. Standards observed during the inspection reflect those in the most recent tests and examinations, and are well below the national expectation. For example, in Year 9, the majority of pupils have a basic grasp of scientific ideas, such as chemical reactivity, but have only a limited understanding and ability to apply this knowledge. However, a few pupils, mainly those in the upper set, have a good understanding of the detail of more

complex aspects, such as appreciating the physical basis for the action of human joints. Most pupils make satisfactory progress, but for those with special educational needs, progress is good, since the support is well targeted by the teacher. The progress of the most capable pupils is not always sufficient, where teaching has not provided enough challenge or focus on the higher level work.

194. In the work seen at age 16, understanding of basic principles such as chemical bonding is only secure for a few pupils. Progress in developing knowledge and understanding from 14 to 16 is satisfactory. Progress in gaining reasonable investigation skills is slow. Pupils record data without enough precision and thought for reliability. Many pupils find it difficult to analyse information because they do not get enough practice in numeracy skills, and do not develop sufficiently their evaluation skills. Pupils in the lower sets, and those with special educational needs, often make good progress when the planning includes individual help and support.

195. The good teaching of basic literacy skills helps to describe clearly their experiments, using technical language. There are regular opportunities to read aloud, and share ideas in groups. The development of numeracy skills is unsatisfactory, resulting in inaccurate calculations and graph work. The teaching of ICT skills is unsatisfactory because there is infrequent opportunity to use computers.

196. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. During the inspection just over half of lessons were good, or very good, and the remainder were satisfactory. In all lessons pupils concentrated and persevered in their work because there was good support for their individual needs. Provision for pupils with special educational needs was good. In the good teaching, the well-planned work provided a good level of challenge because teachers' expectations for all pupils were appropriately high. Methods used were sound but sometimes did not stimulate enough interest, mainly because there was no requirement for pupils to contribute through discussions or respond to questions. There were missed opportunities for ongoing assessment. The pace of learning was often without urgency. There was only occasional use of ICT by pupils, but portable computers are used occasionally, for example to demonstrate the technique of data logging in analysing results.

197. Leadership and management of the department are good. There is a strong commitment to raising standards. Assessment data are well used to establish individual pupil targets and monitor progress. There are satisfactory arrangements to monitor the quality of teaching through a planned programme of lesson observations, informal visits to classes and analysis of pupils' written work. However, the approach is not sufficiently rigorous, or frequent, to ensure that strengths and weaknesses are identified clearly. There has been good development of resources, particularly textbooks, but there is a lack of ICT equipment. Many pupils have too few opportunities to use computers.

198. Since the last inspection attainment has improved slightly, and progress from 11 to 16 is satisfactory. The development of investigation skills is now better, but still an area of concern. There remain an unsatisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to participate in class discussion and an inclination for teachers to talk too much, rather than elicit contribution from pupils, is still apparent. Marking of pupils' work, so that teachers now give more guidance on how to improve their level, and the overall use of assessment have both improved.

## ART AND DESIGN

Overall the quality of provision for art and design is good.

### Strengths:

- Teaching is good overall.
- Progress by the age of 14.
- Improvement in standards achieved by pupils in Years 10 – 11.
- Progress made by pupils with special educational needs.

### Areas for improvement:

- The definition of assessment criteria.
- The use of ICT.
- Opportunities to follow a more vocational course after the age of 14.

199. At the age of 14, standards are broadly in line with national expectations. This demonstrates significant improvement over the standards achieved by these pupils when they first entered the school. There has been a steady improvement in standards since the last inspection. In 2000 GCSE results were below the national average, whereas in 2001 there was substantial improvement in the number of pupils achieving A\* - C grades. There has been steady improvement in results at GCSE since 1999.

200. The majority make good progress by age 14. They work at a level that is broadly in line with national expectations. Most have a very positive approach to their art and design lessons and show interest in the tasks that are set by their teachers. They can incorporate line, tone, colour, form and shape effectively into their two dimensional studies. During discussions with pupils it was evident that most regard art and design activities as an opportunity for them to develop deeper self-knowledge through exploration of their concepts, ideas, attitudes, values and beliefs. Most acquire the basic skills that enable them to communicate their ideas through the use of different media and materials. Many can work with some degree of independence. In general the quality of the two-dimensional drawn and painted studies is good.

201. Most pupils at age 14 show enthusiasm for their work. They usually settle quickly and work at a good pace. The majority produce interesting images that demonstrate good control over a variety of media and materials. A minority show initiative and explore ideas in both two and three dimensions. Most work in a structured and a disciplined manner and form good working relationships with others in the group. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

202. Most pupils at age 16 work with greater independence and are more ready to experiment with new media and materials. They are encouraged to rely on their own ideas, attitudes, values and beliefs as a sound basis for their art and design work. Most sustain work over longer periods of time and work in a disciplined manner. They achieve well and make good progress because they become more confident in applying the skills learnt previously. Most set out to resolve problems without undue reliance on their teachers. Pupils with special educational needs, particularly the deaf pupils, work at a reasonable pace and make good progress. Achievement is good overall at this level and in the most recent GCSE Examination, results showed that the pupils are working well above the national average for pupils at age 16.

203. Although there is clear emphasis on a traditional Fine Art approach to the curriculum, some pupils are beginning to explore ideas through ICT. The current curriculum is too narrow and there is a lack of provision for those pupils who are interested in developing in a more work-related, vocational context.

204. Teaching is good overall in Years 7 – 9, but two of the lessons observed during the inspection were unsatisfactory. In Years 10 – 11 teaching ranges from good to very good. The large size of some classes does have a negative impact on teaching, learning and behaviour. In Years 7 – 9 some group sizes are too large for the studio space. This results in pupils having to draw on small A4 size pieces of paper.

205. The department is very well led and management is good. All members of the department are clear about their individual responsibilities. Departmental meetings are held regularly, during which issues can be raised and discussed. These form the basis for later discussions with the senior management team. There has been some improvement in the recording and assessment procedures adopted by the department, but there remains a need for further fine adjustments. The available rooms, resources and equipment are used effectively as stimuli for pupils' learning. Teachers are supportive of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Pupils are encouraged to develop deeper understanding of their own cultural traditions and those from other cultures.

206. Although there are displays of pupils' work in the art rooms and in the corridors these can be improved by regular rotation and replacement. The ICT resources in the department are very limited which imposes great restrictions on what pupils can achieve except within a narrow, Fine Art biased curriculum. There is little opportunity for pupils to develop and communicate ideas by means of photography and computer-aided design within a design context.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision is good.

### Strengths:

- Standards of work seen are satisfactory and pupils have a good understanding of design and technology.
- Pupils achieve well and make good progress, including those with special education needs.
- Teaching is consistently good; lessons are planned well and proceed at a good pace.
- Leadership and management of the department are good.

### Areas for improvement:

- The lack of resources for newer technologies and information technology limits coverage of the programmes of study and the standards that pupils can attain.
- Some up grading of accommodation is required in the resistant materials area and food technology.
- The development plan for the department needs to be a more detailed document.

207. The statutory teacher assessments reported in 2000 at the age of 14 were well below the national average. The quality of work seen since the start of the academic year and lesson observations show that there has been an improvement. This improvement is because there have been appointments of specialist teachers and new schemes of work. Through a series of focused tasks and design assignments, pupils build up a resource of skills, knowledge and understanding. Work in folders is varied and includes opportunities for pupils to generate and develop their ideas in different product areas. The quality of graphics is good and the staff ensure that all pupils have the skill and techniques to represent their ideas effectively.



208. Pupils use their skills in ICT for word processing and computer-aided design. However, limited provision and sometimes limited access to computers holds back the pupils' development of these skills. They develop key planning skills and techniques alongside a range of practical skills. These provide a basis for more open-ended work in the GCSE course. They show interest in the design assignments and many are beginning to develop a personal style. They are confident in practical situations and they use tools and equipment sensibly and effectively. There is much good work and pupils obviously enjoy the challenge. Pupils are aware of assessment criteria and what they need to do if they are to improve their work. Teachers review the progress of pupils regularly and details of National Curriculum Levels attained, progress made and targets for improvement are communicated to pupils and parents. Pupil achievement is good.

209. GCSE results in 2000 were well below average. Approximately one fifth obtained grades A\*-C compared with a half nationally. The A\* - C pass rate was higher in graphic design and textiles. There has been an improvement in the pass rate over the previous year. The target setting for individual pupils and the regular review of pupil progress and attainment are having a positive effect. Pupils opt for a GCSE course from food technology, textiles, graphics or resistant materials. These programmes make different demands on pupils although they work to a common framework for the presentation of their work. Graphics is a skill which all pupils use effectively. There is very little evidence of the use of ICT, particularly in the folders of project course work. There is need to develop ICT further within the context of subject studies in all the options offered. Design folders are of a high standard and there is evidence of considerable depth of research and analysis as pupils plan their work. Presentation is good and there is much evidence of attractive and innovative design work. Practical work is done carefully and pupils use tools, equipment and machinery with confidence. The quality of design products overall is good and reflect a wide range of pupils' interests. Health and safety matters are given high profile and pupils use appropriate guards, eye protection and clothing.

210. Pupils' attitudes are positive and many demonstrate enthusiasm for, and enjoyment in, their studies. They are attentive and show interest in the challenges and assignments offered. Pupils respond positively to codes of conduct in specialist rooms and their behaviour is very good. Relationships between pupils and with teachers are good. Pupils are able to concentrate for appropriate periods of time and they are keen to succeed. Those with special educational needs are clearly identified by staff and copies of individual education plans are used to focus work more closely to the needs of the individual. Special educational needs pupils make good progress and achievement is good. Assessment profiles and periodic review provide all pupils and parents with important information about progress and attainment.

211. The quality of teaching overall is good and there are examples of very good teaching. The department has created a positive and attractive learning environment within which many pupils find interest and stimulation. The teaching team is experienced and hard working. Work is well managed, resources appropriately organised and lessons well prepared. Schemes of work are structured and progressive and they also enable pupils to introduce their own ideas and influences. Assessment is detailed and provides important information to pupils and teachers about progress and development. There were many very good lessons seen which had pace, expectation, structure and purpose and teachers used their enthusiasm and personalities effectively to stimulate pupil behaviour. Homework is integral to current work in class and diary/planners are used to communicate with parents. There are links with the community outside school and the curriculum is enriched through these contacts. Teachers use display very well and this contributes considerably to pupil

interest and the development of ideas. Of the lessons seen during the inspection the majority were good, or better. One lesson seen was satisfactory. The team has good technician support and the technician makes a very effective contribution to the running of the department.

212. The department is well led by an able and enthusiastic teacher who is well supported by a very effective second in department. Together they co-ordinate very well the work of team specialist teachers. Administrative procedures are good and documentation full and detailed. There are very thorough schemes of work. Some refurbishment is required in the workshops. A major area of curriculum development is the introduction of CAD/CAM facilities and control technology. The department has addressed the issues listed in the last inspection report and there have been a number of improvements. Leadership is positive and the management system effective and these are reflected in the steady progress, which has been made since the last inspection.

213. The leadership and management of the department are good, with a clear vision and direction which will lead to effective strategies for promoting curricular improvements. The department has specific aims and values, including a commitment to good relationships and equality of opportunity for all. That commitment is reflected in the work of the department. There is a shared commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed. There is good delegation to ensure the effective contribution of staff with management responsibilities. There is a formal programme of monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching including peer observation of lessons. There is monitoring of the work of the department by the senior management team. The department has identified appropriate priorities and targets and takes necessary action and review of progress towards them. There is a scheme of work to assist teachers planning and a department handbook to outline clearly the policies, aims and objectives of the department. A development plan has been produced identifying the areas for improvement. The more recent plans, linked to the school's bid for specialist college status, now provide more detailed planning objectives and targets. There has been improvement in the results at GCSE Level. The joint planning covering all aspects of design and technology ensures that the work is challenging and provides progression. There are very good systems in place to monitor the progress and attainment of pupils. The department still has to develop projects relating to systems and control and computer aided design.

214. Accommodation is satisfactory, the size and number of rooms are appropriate for the number of pupils being taught. The level of resources and equipment available in the department is adequate. The good level of resourcing in graphic design and textiles contributes to good standards in these subjects. The lack of resources for newer technologies and information technology limits coverage of the programmes of study and the standards that pupils can attain.

215. The department has carried out a Risk Assessment and made the necessary improvements to ensure the safe organisation of resources and accommodation in the practical workrooms and the practical projects.

## GEOGRAPHY

Overall, the quality of provision in geography is unsatisfactory.

### Strengths:

- There are good opportunities for pupils to take part in fieldwork that stimulates interest and enjoyment in the subject.
- The department provides good support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and consistently.

### Areas for improvement:

- The very low standards at age 16.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory for pupils between the ages of 11 and 14. These pupils do not make enough progress in their work.
- Planning and the use of assessments of pupils' work are not yet sufficiently rigorous in order to raise standards.

216. Standards of work at age 14 are below national expectations. There is very little difference between the performances of girls and boys. During the first three years in this school, some pupils, for example those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and reach expected levels. However, most do not learn enough and their progress is unsatisfactory. At age 16, standards are very low although most pupils' progress is as expected when compared with their prior attainment. In 2000, results in the GCSE examination were amongst the lowest in the school. Passes at grades A\*-C and A\*-G were well below average for girls and boys, as they had been in previous years. There was a modest improvement in results in 2001.

217. Standards in work seen at age 14 are below national expectations. Many pupils enter the school with very low levels of geographical knowledge and with particular difficulties in writing fluently and in using numbers accurately. Even amongst the most capable pupils at age 11, the use of straightforward words to describe relief features and the basic understanding of the map of the British Isles is weak. At age 14, more capable pupils understand the factors that influence climate and can produce accurate climate graphs. Thorough marking of their work, sometimes with general targets for improvement, helps them to understand the reasons for, and consequences of, forest clearance in equatorial areas. In a good lesson in Year 9, the teacher's high expectations and use of a wide range of resources captured pupils' interest. They were fascinated by the force of volcanic processes and were able to offer a wide range of appropriate vocabulary to describe the sequence of events. Despite the good learning that pupils made in this lesson, opportunities were missed for them to discuss and share ideas and thus to learn from each other. Co-operation between the teachers and classroom assistants enables some individual pupils with special educational needs to take a full part in lessons and therefore to make satisfactory progress. For many pupils, however, the impact of unsatisfactory and poor teaching limits their learning significantly. Where the subject knowledge of teachers is weak, pupils cannot learn accurately and in sufficient depth. When the management of pupils and the planning of challenging tasks for all levels of capability are poor, pupils make insufficient progress. Some then lose interest and behave badly, disrupting their own and others' learning. The progress of some classes is reduced this year because of difficulties in obtaining qualified, experienced supply teachers. In these classes, particularly those containing the more competent pupils, the amount of work covered is insufficient and pupils are not reaching expected standards.

218. The work seen shows that standards are well below average for both girls and boys at age 16. Geography attracts a low proportion of the most capable pupils. Some are very reluctant learners, showing little interest in their work and little desire to learn. In the

lessons observed in Year 11 a significant proportion were absent. These pupils cannot make sufficient progress, despite the best efforts of their teachers. However, most pupils who attend regularly make satisfactory progress. Those who opt for the subject generally have great difficulty in retaining knowledge, in writing accurately and in enough detail, and in using essential geographical skills. Pupils in a Year 11 lesson could not remember the work they had completed in the previous lesson and they found it very difficult to learn the necessary vocabulary in order to describe aspects of tropical agriculture. They were severely challenged by the task of displaying statistics accurately in cumulative graphs. However, the teacher's good relationships with the group and the constant reinforcement of skills and new learning meant that pupils achieved well in this lesson.

219. The department has a long tradition of organising successful fieldwork excursions, enabling pupils to collect first-hand evidence in rural and urban environments in order to complete their course work. Some good examples of finished folders were seen, sometimes using ICT in order to display changes to the variables in a river channel. Although most pupils find it difficult to analyse their results and to draw conclusions from them, careful guidance by teachers through all the necessary stages enables them to achieve well in this work and to enhance their final grades.

220. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory for pupils aged between 11 and 14, satisfactory for those aged between 14 and 16, and unsatisfactory overall. Although examples of good and very good teaching of pupils aged between 11 and 14 were seen, over half of these lessons were unsatisfactory or poor.

221. Learning is particularly restricted in lessons where pupils, mostly boys, are allowed to shout out answers and to challenge the teacher's authority. Time is then lost and it is impossible to determine which pupils need help with their work. In these lessons, girls are often passive and not sufficiently involved in learning. Teaching is poor in lessons where there are no clear learning objectives, insufficient explanation of the tasks and no provision of material adapted to the specific needs of all pupils.

222. In the lessons where learning is most successful, teachers manage the pupils skilfully and provide challenging tasks that extend their knowledge and understanding rapidly. In a very good lesson in Year 7, pupils reacted very well to the teacher's excellent subject knowledge and enthusiasm which brought aspects of map skills alive and increased their literacy skills. The needs of all pupils were met very well and they were all able to apply their new learning to increasingly complex tasks. All the teaching of pupils aged between 14 and 16 was at least satisfactory and one lesson was good. In this lesson, the individual needs of a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs were well known. They were all given good individual assistance which helped them to achieve well.

223. At present there is a shortage of qualified, experienced specialist teachers which creates particular difficulties in giving pupils sufficiently challenging experiences and in maintaining morale within the department. Despite this situation, the department has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The range of textbooks for pupils with different levels of competence has improved and provides material that is particularly appropriate for more competent pupils. There is now a subject area within the school where rooms are enlivened with good displays of work that stimulate pupils' interest and involvement. Some sharing of expertise with colleagues in other departments and other schools is helping to raise awareness of how to improve standards. The use of ICT in lessons is gradually increasing and providing more opportunities for pupils to extend their learning through the use of computers.

224. The management of the department on a day-to-day basis is good, particularly in the support provided for temporary and newly qualified staff who are made to feel valued and part of a team. However, although teachers share their resources and exchange ideas, there is no formal structure for monitoring the quality of teaching despite the existence of some unsatisfactory practice. Although books are marked regularly, there is insufficient use of the assessments of pupils' work. For example, the use of ICT to record assessments and then to relate them to national standards and levels has yet to be fully exploited. Pupils are not set precise targets to help them to improve their work and reach higher levels. Pupils' progress over time is not evaluated in order to provide precise information on the rate at which individual pupils are learning. It is therefore difficult to identify both those who are underachieving and those who would benefit from more challenging work. The outlines of new schemes of work are in place, but they do not yet contain sufficient detail to ensure that all lessons are planned to incorporate essential skills and challenging tasks to meet the needs of all pupils.

## HISTORY

The quality of provision in history is good.

### Strengths:

- The high quality of teaching, which uses methods and resources designed to meet the needs of all pupils, irrespective of their capabilities.
- Pupils in all years make good progress in acquiring historical knowledge and skills.
- The department is managed effectively and evaluates its own performance in detail; priorities for future development are well defined.
- Pupils behave well and display mature attitudes to study during lessons.

### Areas for improvement:

- Although improving, standards of work of pupils between the ages of 11 and 14 are still below average.
- GCSE results for both girls and boys are well below the national average; the scheme of work for years 10 and 11 is not detailed enough.
- The department does not use ICT extensively in its teaching.

225. Standards at age 14 are below national expectations because most pupils find it difficult to write about historical issues in any detail and literacy skills are low. However, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in the understanding of historical terms and become more aware of how historians use evidence to make judgements on the past. Pupils working at Level 5 and above are beginning to produce well-structured essays, which demonstrate that they have a deeper feeling for bias. Year 8 pupils, for example, present personal research, which discusses the vexed question of whether Richard III was responsible for the murder of the princes in the tower. In Year 9, they can write their own role-plays to examine conditions for children in the textile mills of Lancashire and Yorkshire.

226. GCSE results were well below average in 2000 and declined further in 2001. Girls outperformed boys at the higher grades. In work seen during the inspection, however, the picture is more favourable. Although standards are still below average and pupils still find detailed source analysis difficult, they are making good progress in comparing and contrasting an increasing variety of documentary evidence. Pupils in Year 10, for example, can make convincing arguments about the usefulness of propaganda posters during the Second World War and those in Year 11 give accurate information about social and religious groups in 1920s America, which were in favour of prohibition.

227. The high quality of teaching is the major strength of the department and is characterised by a wide range of methods which meet the learning needs of all, include everyone and also allow the most capable to extend their skills. During the inspection, teaching was always at least satisfactory and in 70 per cent of lessons it was good, very good or excellent. The use of artefacts, in relation to Roman history and also to the home front during the Second World War for example, is a strong feature and encourages pupils in Year 7 both to look for clues and also to discuss their thoughts with their classmates.

228. Teachers ask thought-provoking questions, which serve to motivate youngsters to greater depth of thought. In a very good Year 8 lesson for example, the teacher acted as “devil’s advocate” and challenged the pupils to look for evidence suggesting that Henry VII wished to write history from his own viewpoint. The pupils responded by giving presentations of a very high standard for their age and looked at both sides of the argument. Pictorial evidence, seen in every lesson, is effective in allowing less capable pupils in Year 9 to come to accurate conclusions about the difference between conditions in the cottage system to those in the factories.

229. Group work is well planned. As a result, all pupils are actively involved. During an excellent lesson in Year 10, less capable pupils were so motivated by the subject matter and by the teacher’s questioning, that they were able to learn much from each other. They were keen to share their findings on which emotions would be engaged when members of the public looked at a variety of posters designed to encourage enlistment in the army. Within 25 minutes, every pupil had made at least one accurate contribution.

230. Rigorous but stimulating teaching engages pupils’ interest and imagination. As a result, they are well motivated and concentrate well. They behave sensibly, get on well with each other and speak highly of their teachers. One female pupil in Year 8, for example, was at great pains to say to the inspector, “our teacher cares for us and puts lots of comments in our books so that we can improve.” The girl is right: teachers mark regularly and spend much time giving pupils advice on how well they may make further progress. The assessment of pupils’ work, the use of levels and grades is a developing strength in the department and is leading to higher standards, particularly in the first three years.

231. Leadership and management are good. Teamwork is very good. Teachers support each other well. Planning is good, and the department evaluates its performance regularly. Realistic and accurate priorities for development have been identified. Accommodation is satisfactory but more could be done to ensure that the classrooms contain both displays of pupils’ work and also historical terms. Learning resources are adequate and are augmented by artefacts and by the industry of teachers who work hard to produce stimulating materials for their pupils.

232. The department has made sound progress since the last inspection. There are historical trips for every year, the history club provides expert tuition in archaeology and there is now a much wider variety of teaching methods and opportunities for investigative work. There is also more emphasis on literacy skills. The department is now looking at strategies to improve the attainment, particularly of boys, and is looking at ways to introduce more ICT into its teaching. There is a good capacity for improvement and the department is well placed for future development.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT).**

The quality of provision for information and communication technology is good.

### **Strengths:**

- The quality of computer resources is good.
- Good progress of the majority of pupils by the age of 14.
- Mainly good teaching and learning.
- Positive attitudes and behaviour of the majority of pupils.
- Effectively managed department.
- Good quality computer resources.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- Below-average standards of attainment of pupils at the age of 14.
- Low attendance in some classes.
- Poor responses to aspects of the set work.

233. Standards on entry to the school are well below those expected nationally because their keyboard skills are weak. They make good progress by the age of 14 but standards are still below the national expectation. Although good progress is made by the majority in communicating and handling information, their skills relating to measurement and control are less well developed. Additionally, too few pupils have sufficient confidence to be able to use the computer for a range of tasks on an independent basis. Too many continue to require significant help and guidance from the teacher in order to complete tasks. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good.

234. This year, the school has just begun to offer a GCSE short course in ICT. All current Year 10 pupils are following this two-year course. There was insufficient evidence at the time of the inspection to make judgements on standards of attainment and progress of the majority of pupils on this course.

235. Teaching and learning are good. All lessons are well planned and contain a good range of activities and learning approaches. The aims of lessons are clear and frequently shared with the pupils. For example a good Year 7 class involved less capable pupils in using software to control a programmable floor robot. The teacher initially demonstrated the use of the software to the group. Clear explanations were given by the teacher and this aspect also involved the frequent questioning of the pupils. The pupils were then required to work on an individual basis at the computers developing a set of instructions to control the turtle and to enable it to undertake specified actions. The pupils were well supported on an individual basis by the teacher and by a learning support assistant. The pupils made good progress with the tasks that had been set. In another very good Year 9 class, higher attaining pupils were involved in reviewing an Internet web site that had been developed by the school. The teacher used a digital projector so that all pupils in the class could see the web pages clearly and a good discussion developed on the strengths and weaknesses in the design of the various pages. The teacher skilfully led the discussion and frequent questioning allowed checks to be made on the level of understanding. Pupils were then expected to access the pages on an individual basis and to review the web site by answering a series of questions prepared by the teacher using a handout. Pupils were also able to review the web site by using frameworks which had been developed by the teacher and which provided different levels of help for the pupils. Pupils made good progress and both teaching and learning were well supported by good quality computer resources. In most classes the pace with which the work progressed was well matched to the pupils in the group. However in a few classes progress in the lesson was adversely affected by the need for the teacher to maintain acceptable levels of discipline.

236. The majority of pupils have a positive attitude to the work in ICT. Pupils are particularly well motivated when undertaking the practical work. Some pupils show a level of enthusiasm when undertaking aspects of the work. Behaviour with a few minor exceptions is very good. However there are a relatively high number of pupils absent in some classes and this clearly adversely affects continuity and progress for these pupils. Some pupils make poor responses to the homework that is set and opportunities to prepare for future work or to consolidate previously undertaken class work are missed.

237. The department is effectively managed. The teachers involved meet on a regular basis and are working well as a team. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the department are in place including regular lesson observations. Newly qualified teachers are well supported. Examination results are also reviewed on an annual basis. All Year 7 pupils now undertake a baseline assessment and target setting for individual pupils is beginning to be based on these. Pupils have good access to high quality computer resources. However the relatively high number of computers not in working order leads to the need for sharing in the larger classes. The forming of a single network of computers for pupils' use has also resulted in some initial problems. All teachers involved in the teaching of ICT have a secure grasp of the subject.

238. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The range of provision has been increased in all three stages. Separate provision for ICT has been introduced for all pupils throughout Years 7, 8 and 9. A GCSE short course has been introduced in Year 10 and a GNVQ Intermediate programme for Post 16 students commenced operating in 2000. A baseline assessment is now undertaken for all Year 7 pupils. The majority of pupils now make good progress up to the age of 14. Computer resources have improved substantially and a technician has been appointed to provide additional support.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

Provision for modern foreign languages is good.

### **Strengths:**

- Pupils make good progress in Years 7 to 9.
- Good teaching is improving attitudes and standards.
- Work in French and Spanish is well led and managed: teachers are deployed to allow individual strengths to have maximum impact on learning.
- Teachers know pupils well and assist their progress through good relationships and helpful marking.
- The use of computers and a reading programme extends pupils' learning experiences beyond the routine.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- Results in GCSE examinations at age 16.
- Attitudes, including attendance, in many lessons in Years 10 and 11.
- Strategies to enable pupils to work more confidently from memory, especially in oral work.

239. Teachers' assessments show that standards at age 14 are well below national expectations. Girls do better than boys, but by a smaller margin than nationally. However, there is a rising trend, and this is confirmed by inspection evidence. In lessons and in other work seen, progress is good overall, especially for more capable and average attaining pupils. The least capable, including the majority of pupils with special educational needs, make small gains in each lesson, and satisfactory progress over time. Pupils acquire new knowledge of vocabulary at a steady rate, and a focus on language rules enables many to



bring structure to what they say and write. In written work, the more capable make progress from simple sentences to produce paragraphs on familiar topics, and begin to include different tenses by the end of Year 9, consolidating work begun in Year 8. Less and least capable pupils also make progress in writing, producing shorter paragraphs of less accurate French or Spanish, largely to describe themselves, family, home and local area. Listening and reading skills develop reasonably well, as pupils cover a full range of prescribed topics. They identify main points in what they hear and read. Speaking is the least developed skill, for all pupils. Despite frequent opportunities for choral and individual repetition, pronunciation remains poor, and pupils lack the confidence to develop oral responses, which remain very brief. Teachers are aware of this, but often struggle to overcome pupils' diffidence, or unwillingness to participate at an individual level.

240. At age 16, results in GCSE examinations in 2000 show that attainment in both French and Spanish is well below the national average. Results fell further in 2001, confirming a falling trend over the last three years. In French and Spanish, results at grades A\* - C are well below national averages for both boys and girls. Girls do better than boys in both languages, though the difference in Spanish is marginal, and much less than found nationally. Boys' results in French are low, and much inferior in 2001 to those achieved by girls. Grades across the full range, A\* - G, are close to the national average, indicating that less and least capable pupils, including those with special educational needs, attain in line with expectations if they complete the course. The number of pupils gaining the higher (A\* and A) grades is very low. In 2000, pupils did less well in modern languages than in most other subjects. Written work benefits from the structure provided by the coursework option. Pupils write on prescribed topics such as their bedroom, their local area, school and the house of the future. The work of more capable pupils includes some creative ideas and the application of different tenses and opinions. Content is good, though they do not achieve consistent accuracy. Other pupils write in a more basic style, in short sentences, but communicate information, despite errors. Comprehension skills develop in line with expectations, reflecting pupils' ability to recall vocabulary. Most pupils need extra support for listening, especially with recorded extracts delivered at normal speed by native speakers. Speaking remains the weakest skill, with little evidence of pupils advancing to a conversational level. Pronunciation and intonation are poor, especially when pupils base oral work on written preparation. Too many pupils remain reluctant, or at best half-hearted, in their attempts at oral work.

241. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is better in Years 7 to 9 than in Years 10 and 11, and more consistently good in French than Spanish. It was very good or better in two of the fifteen lessons seen and unsatisfactory in one. On one occasion it was excellent. The key strength in teaching, especially in Years 7 to 9, is teachers' expectations. Teachers have good command of the languages they offer and use the foreign language well to conduct lessons and provide a model for pupils to imitate. They set work which challenges pupils appropriately and expect good behaviour. In this context, pupils' learning is accelerated. In an excellent Year 7 French lesson on opinions about school subjects, some capable pupils were all involved regularly in a variety of oral activities, and completed reading and writing tasks. No English was used throughout the 60 minutes and pupils had fun in learning, as they responded to energetic and focused teaching. Expectations are not as strong in some lessons in Years 10 and 11. The use of the foreign language is not as consistent and has less impact on learning. Whereas in Years 7 to 9, and in some lessons in Year 10, teachers manage behaviour through the pace and variety they bring to activities, there are instances in Years 10 and 11 of pupils' negative attitudes being allowed to dictate the course of the lesson. This accounts for the unsatisfactory teaching, where strategies to stimulate interest and progress were absent, and the excessive use of English set the wrong example. However, good relationships between teachers and pupils are evident in most lessons and underpin progress.

242. Planning for lessons is good. Teachers set clear objectives, plan activities to include all pupils, and recap progress at the end of lessons, often referring to National Curriculum Levels. This gives pupils a clear idea of their progress. Work is well matched to pupils' abilities. In a Year 9 French lesson for the least capable, pupils were challenged to produce personal details from memory, worked with a partner in role play, and used individual whiteboards to show what they had remembered from the lesson. All made progress at their own pace in response to sensitive yet demanding teaching. Teaching methods are becoming more varied and effective due to the impact of improved course books and a greater range of resources. The school's priorities are reflected in work to improve basic skills. The department is beginning to make good use of computers and a video camera to improve and vary learning, whilst a reading programme for Years 7 to 9 is making a contribution to improving literacy skills. In a minority of lessons, largely in Years 10 and 11, some activities last too long, or are squeezed in at the end of lessons, thereby losing the intended impact on learning. Marking is a strength of the teaching. Helpful comments are added routinely and assist future learning. Targets are set for improvement and pupils know what they must do to reach the next level. This is also a good feature of reports to parents. Though there is some inconsistency in setting homework, especially to lower sets, this usually provides good extension and consolidation of work done in class. The least satisfactory aspect of the good teaching is the lack of systematic opportunities for pupils to use the foreign language independently of the teacher, and of strategies to improve pupils' ability to work from memory in order to increase numbers gaining higher grades. Unfortunately, the high incidence of absence from lessons leads to discontinuity in learning and negates the impact of good teaching for a significant number of pupils.

243. Leadership and management of work in modern foreign languages are good. The curriculum leader is changing attitudes in Years 7 to 9 and bringing about a tangible improvement in standards. A key feature is the deployment of staff so as to allow their individual strengths to have maximum impact on learning. Some staff are skilled in teaching less and least capable pupils, whilst others, including native speakers, use their individual skills and enthusiasms to ensure the progress of the more capable. Work is well monitored through observation of lessons and collective sampling and moderation of pupils' work. Assessment procedures are good and data are used to improve planning for learning, for instance in schemes of work which have been brought up to date to reflect recent changes in requirements. The subject development plan lacks a sharp focus on improving boys' results in French at GCSE, and on providing strategies to improve oral skills. Time allocated to the subject is adequate, and there are good resources for teaching and learning. Sadly, there are no trips or exchanges to enrich work in the subject. Though standards in results at GCSE are similar to those reported at the previous inspection, there has been good improvement overall, especially in the quality of teaching, standards in writing, and improving attitudes and standards in Years 7 to 9.

## MUSIC

The provision of music within the curriculum is good.

### Strengths:

- Good teaching in Years 7, 8 and 9 leads to good progress in lessons and across the key stage.
- Very good teaching in Years 10 and 11 contributes to the quality of pupils' learning when they have started from a very low base of practical musicianship.
- Carefully chosen subject material for lessons in Years 7,8 and 9 attracts pupils to the subject, and raises their interest.

### Areas for improvement:

- The provision of more extra-curriculum activities.
- The provision of opportunities to extend pupils' cultural and spiritual development.
- To continue to seek methods of raising standards in Years 10 and 11.

244. In recent GCSE examinations, pupils gained results below the national average. Results reflect the fact that pupils start the course in Year 10 from a very low base of practical ability.

245. During the inspection, pupils demonstrated standards of work in line with the national average by the time they have reached the age of 14. These standards are in line with the most recently reported teacher assessments. They have a secure knowledge of instrumentation and of the benchmarks of development in musical history. Most understand basic concepts of drones, canons and echo effects, and can correctly identify the difference, aurally, between major and minor chords. Group work, often recorded on graphic notation, is successful and imaginative. Pupils use their ears well in ensemble playing, as demonstrated through an African drumming workshop. Pupils' knowledge of basic music literacy is a weakness that limits the range and complexity of their compositions.

246. By the age of 16, standards are below national expectation, despite very good teaching. Most pupils do not have individual instruction on an instrument before starting the course, with the result that they experience difficulty in performing and composing. In addition and there is a high absence rate among course members. These factors contribute to low standards. Knowledge of music history is thin, and pupils have difficulty recognising instruments, either visually or aurally. Manuscript and composition work is very elementary. Aural awareness of harmony and instrumentation is under-developed, though it is better in year 11 than in year 10.

247. Pupils having special needs can perform well at age 14, as exemplified by a pupil who demonstrated great skill in a karaoke session. His rhythm was accurate and his sense of pitch was quite good, despite his having hearing impairment. Appropriate worksheets for practical work enable pupils with special needs to make progress. More capable pupils, who have individual instrumental tuition with visiting teachers, or privately, are expected to use their instruments in class ensemble: this extends their musical experiences.

248. Progress at age 14 is good. This is a result of the good teaching, the very good behaviour of pupils and their attitudes to the subject. Various factors contribute to the good progress being made. An imaginative choice of subject material attracts pupils to practical work. They enjoy using the music technology, and there are enough instruments for them to have one each. Tasks are suitably varied to enable pupils of all ability to succeed. The practice of insisting upon group performances at the end of practical lessons keeps pupils focused and on target. There are no available practice rooms in the music suite for group

work: this inhibits further progress that could be made. At Key Stage 4, progress is unsatisfactory not only because of absence and the allocation of time to the subject, but also because of the limited concentration span and retention of information by pupils within lessons, and from one lesson to another.

249. Teaching is good in Years 7,8 and 9. It is very good in Years 10 and 11. Lessons are well prepared, with informative and varied worksheets used as teaching aids. The emphasis upon visual, as well as language directions on these worksheets enables pupils of all ability to use them effectively. The subject material for lessons is excellent: a counting song, for example, referring to Everton, Liverpool and David Beckham, works well to ensure that both boys and girls sing with gusto. There can be too much teacher input into some lessons in Years 7,8 and 9. Teachers work very hard in their efforts to try to raise pupils' standards of achievement at age 16 by virtually giving each pupil individual and personal attention. They use exactly the right degree of pace and variety to endeavour to keep the pupils on task.

250. Members of the department work effectively together in developing and evaluating delivery of the curriculum at both key stages. Good assessment procedures have been developed since the last inspection. Subject specific policy statements have been produced, addressing every aspect of running the department. There is a well-constructed departmental action plan. Information and communication technology has been successfully developed, and is still in the process of being reviewed and up-dated. The department has made some improvements since the last inspection but the numbers who continue to study music beyond the age of 14 remains very low and the provision of extra-curricular activities is still limited.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Overall the provision for physical education is satisfactory.

### Strengths:

- Pupils participate well because the development of skills, good behaviour and attitudes are well managed.
- Pupils show interest and enjoyment because relationships with their teachers are good.

### Areas for improvement:

- To extend the range of provision beyond the age of 14 to include accredited courses.
- To make explicit reference to the levels of the National Curriculum in the assessment of standards.

251. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in physical education aged 14 in 2001 indicate that pupils are achieving below the levels expected for their age. There are no results for pupils at age 16 as there is no provision for GCSE physical education.

252. Standards of work seen during the inspection are satisfactory, although in some lessons there are some lower levels of performance in some activities. In Year 7 basketball pupils are able to dribble the ball with some control and understand the importance of shielding the ball with the body. In swimming many pupils are working below the levels expected for their age. Only four pupils in one class are able to swim ten metres using front crawl. Pupils in Year 8 hockey are able to run with the ball showing some control in dribbling but are unable to use the reverse stick. In swimming in this year over half the class are working below expected levels. In front crawl pupils have poor arm action and as a result are unable to use the correct breathing technique. In gymnastics in Year 8 girls can perform cartwheels and forward rolls, although some less capable pupils a limited range of

movements. In Year 9 soccer the majority of pupils have skills and understanding in soccer expected for their age. They can pass the ball accurately, and more capable pupils are able to use a chip pass they learned earlier in the lesson in a game situation. In Year 9 netball year pupils understand team positions, basic tactics and rules but have poor performance skills, particularly footwork and shooting. Many pupils are working below the level expected for their age In Year 10 soccer girls are able to pass and dribble the ball in practice situations but lose possession when under pressure in games. However for many girls soccer is a new game and they are just starting to become more confident with their skills. In basketball in this year boys understand man-to-man defence, have satisfactory passing and dribbling skills but are less successful in shooting. In Year 11 soccer the majority of pupils have good skills and understanding of the game. In netball in this year pupils understand rules and tactics and centre pass restarts but pupils have unsatisfactory footwork and shooting skills for their age.

253. In all lessons pupils of all capabilities make progress as they learn new skills and improve and refine existing ones. In Year 7 basketball pupils make good progress in dribbling the ball increasing their control and developing the use of both hands. In soccer in Year 9 pupils are making satisfactory progress as they improve the quality of their passing, with more capable pupils improving control and consistency with chipped passes. Girls in Year 10 soccer show good progress as they increase their range of skills as they learn to head the ball. There is satisfactory achievement by pupils of all capabilities, particularly where they learn skills of new activities such as basketball and hockey in Years 7 and 8, but less so in swimming where the majority of pupils have made insufficient progress in the activity.

254. Teaching is satisfactory, and some lessons are good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, which helps them to give clear explanations and demonstrations to pupils, helping them learn new skills and improve existing ones. Lessons are generally well planned with appropriate practices for pupils of different capabilities. However sometimes there is insufficient challenge, particularly for more capable pupils in Year 9 soccer. The few pupils who are excused practical lessons help with practices and umpiring, but evaluation sheets are sometimes too difficult and are not always appropriate. Classes are always very well managed and pupils behave well. The very good relationships between teachers and pupils, and between pupils themselves are major factors in successful lessons. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and work hard at tasks set, which contributes to their learning. There are limited opportunities for pupils to have independence and take control of their learning. Pupils could take charge of their own warm up at the start of lessons rather than be teacher led. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into lessons with the good support of caring teacher assistants. Deaf pupils receive 'signing' help in basketball in Year 10, and two pupils in wheelchairs are able to take a full and active part in Year 9 netball lessons.

255. Since the last inspection there has been satisfactory progress. Standards have improved in some activities, although there is some underachievement in netball and swimming. Teaching is satisfactory and pupils continue to show interest and enthusiasm for the subject, with few non-participants. There is better challenge in many lessons. Curriculum planning has been improved, but this needs to be developed to ensure equal opportunities for pupils and to fully include the requirements of the National Curriculum. The present assessment system needs to be adapted to include National Curriculum Levels.

256. There is satisfactory management of the department and a shared vision to provide good experiences in physical education for all pupils. The accommodation for the subject is limited, particularly for field games and athletics. The pool is well used by the school, primary feeder schools and the community. The two gyms have dirty, poorly maintained

floors. Talented pupils can play at higher levels in school soccer and netball teams, which provide a route to city, district and county teams. The department has a commitment to giving pupils extra curricular opportunities through 'Panathlon', a multi event competition in which the school represented Liverpool in the national final at Crystal Palace in 2000.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Overall the provision for religious education is good.

### Strengths:

- Good progress is made by pupils especially in learning from religion, giving their own views and applying the principles to everyday life.
- Good teaching results from using a range of resources and methods.
- Good relationships provide an environment that encourages sharing and promotes interest.
- Leadership and management of the department are good in motivating pupils and in enabling them to experience success.

### Areas for development:

- The provision of religious education in the Sixth Form in order to meet statutory requirements.
- Raising the levels of attainment in GCSE by widening learning methods to aid long term recall.
- The emphasis on world religions in Years 10 and 11.
- The use of more constructive comments and specific targets in exercise books and on reports in order to help pupils raise their attainment levels.

257. Standards at age 14 are below the expectations of the Liverpool Agreed Syllabus. Standards at age 16 in the core course are also below the Agreed Syllabus expectations. In 2000 the results of pupils in the GCSE examinations were below the national average although most pupils did as well or better in religious education than in their other GCSE subjects. These results have remained very similar over the last few years. There is no provision for religious education for pupils in the Sixth Form and in this respect the school is not meeting statutory requirements.

258. Work seen during the inspection supports these findings. Pupils at age 14 use a wide range of appropriate technical terminology; they have a good understanding of spiritual concepts such as religious experience and knowing God and have the ability to apply the principles studied to themselves, for example when studying the 'fruits of the spirit' in Year 9.

259. The oral work of pupils in lessons is at the level expected by the Agreed Syllabus but the least capable have weak written skills and poor long-term recall of factual information. The time allocation to religious education is just below the recommended minimum time and that means that not all areas of the Agreed Syllabus are covered in sufficient depth.

260. The school has introduced a school validated modular certificate course for all pupils in Years 10 and 11, and this course assists the motivation of the pupils in offering short-term goals. Most pupils at age 16 are able to apply information of the topic they are studying to current situations, as seen with Year 11 pupils considering different types of love. Again the long-term recall of factual information is weaker. Few pupils are able to recall important information about world religions, other than Christian. Erratic attendance

also hinders continuity and progress. The pupils following the GCSE course study the topics at a suitable depth and by the age of 16 have an understanding of Christian teaching and how it can be applied to a range of ethical issues. A weaker aspect of their work is their skill of note taking and recording work in a suitable way for revision purposes.

261. The pupils enter the school with a wide variation in religious understanding and from the ages of 11 to 14 and 14 to 16 all groups of pupils make good progress. There is an attitude of inclusion for all, respect is shown for other's views and the good behaviour and positive attitude to religious education mean that all pupils make good progress. The number opting to take GCSE religious education is rising.

262. The teaching of religious education is consistently good. Strengths within teaching that enable learning to take place effectively are the very good relationships between teachers and pupils so that pupils feel confident in expressing personal views, a variety of methods and resources are used alongside a lively delivery of lessons to stimulate and maintain interest. Work is provided that is suitable for pupils of a range of ability, as when the same topic was taught to two groups with greater demands being made on the most capable pupils, ensuring that good learning took place. The good display work in the religious education rooms gives a stimulating environment shows examples of good work, celebrates the success of pupils and is used in lessons to explain teaching points. Weaker aspects in teaching are missed opportunities for pupils to participate in discussion and the occasional loss of pace. The marking of the pupils' books gives positive encouragement but the use of constructive comments so that pupils know what to do to raise their attainment level is inconsistent. Marking of the GCSE work is not linked to the GCSE grades.

263. The leadership and management of the department are good. A structure is in place to monitor the work of the pupils and there is emphasis on motivating pupils and enabling them to experience success. The 'Jesus in art' course for year 8 pupils provides an innovative way of encouraging conceptual understanding whilst giving good provision for both the spiritual and cultural aspects of education. Visits to a synagogue and a local art gallery also add interest to the courses provided. Although the literacy skills of many pupils and especially the least capable are low, the department has a good policy and makes good provision to improve the skills of the pupils. Time is taken in lessons to draw the attention of pupils to spellings and grammatical structure and care is taken when marking the books. A time line is displayed in each room so that numerical concepts of time are understood although numerical skills such as graphs and pie charts are rarely used in lessons. The use of ICT has improved since the last inspection and is still developing. The assessment of pupils work is undertaken both relative to the group pupils are in and across the whole year group. An example of how understanding the needs of the pupils affects the curriculum provided is seen in the introduction of the modular school-based certificate course.

264. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory and there has been significant improvement in teaching. Schemes of work have been modified, new textbooks have been purchased, along with a range of artefacts, but examination results have not yet risen significantly. The department has a very good base from which to progress further.

## VOCATIONAL COURSES AT KEY STAGE 4

Overall the quality of provision in vocational courses is unsatisfactory.

### HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

**Strengths:**

- Good specialist subject knowledge is a strong feature of the good teaching.

**Areas for improvement:**

- Provision for the separate teaching of Foundation and Intermediate courses.

265. The results for 2000 to 2001 showed an improvement on previous years but were still below the national average. At intermediate level, 50 per cent of students achieved a pass grade. The national average is 55.5 per cent. At Foundation Level, 25 per cent of students achieved a pass compared to the 43.6 per cent national average. There were no merits or distinctions.

266. Teaching is good. The team of three teachers has a good knowledge of the vocational area. Lessons are well planned and organised. Resources are interesting and appropriate to the needs of the students.

267. In Year 10, attendance and behaviour affect progress. Learning is slow. Literacy levels are poor and a high proportion of pupils have identified special educational needs. The pace of lessons is slow, in order to accommodate less capable pupils. The teaching of Intermediate and Foundation Levels in one teaching group hinders progress. There is a lack of clarity as to procedure for deciding which award is suitable for which pupil. The result is that inappropriate evidence is placed in the portfolios of intermediate students and students who are unclear as to their progress within the award. Feedback to students is informative but the use of the school's marking scheme is not appropriate for GNVQ.

268. Year 11 pupils are making better progress. Some of the work seen is satisfactory but there is insufficient structure to the portfolios. They contain evidence required for both levels of the award. There is no information as to the structure of the GNVQ or of student progress within it. This does not help students understand the structure of the award or encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning.



## BUSINESS STUDIES

Overall, the quality of provision is satisfactory.

### Strengths:

- Teachers are enthusiastic and have a secure knowledge of the subject; lessons are carefully planned, organised and are suitably paced.
- A wide and comprehensive range of written materials produced by the teachers, which encourage and support learning.
- Very positive relationships observed in the classroom between pupils and with teachers.
- Business objectives are clearly explained and are reinforced by effective full class discussions.

### Areas for improvement:

- Ensuring a higher number of GNVQ part 1 pupils, Intermediate and Foundation Levels, achieve a final grade.
- Establishing a dedicated suite of rooms for years 10 and 11, to encourage the use of a wider range of learning resources.

269. In 2001 the GNVQ part 1 results showed that 63 per cent of the pupils gained an Intermediate award and 55 per cent a Foundation award. The Foundation results overall show an improving trend. At Intermediate Level, no pupil achieved a distinction grade and at Foundation Level no pupil achieved a distinction or merit grade. In 2001 the equivalent of 34 GCSE A-C grades were achieved in business.

270. The evidence from inspection confirms that standards are below national expectations but improving. By the end of Year 11 pupils make good progress in both business courses. Pupils develop a wide range of skills, including the manipulation of financial statistical data, the development and use of spreadsheets, the identifying of local business activities in fieldwork surveys and identification of direct and indirect business stakeholders. They are able to use a range of learning materials including statistical worksheets, writing frames, case studies and ICT packages. Pupils have a sound understanding of key business terms and concepts such as fixed and variable costs, the difference between sole traders, partnerships and limited companies and the various activities associated with the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors. There is good evidence of the use of local examples for example the Ford Halewood car plant to enhance and develop both interest and understanding in the subject. Pupils take care with the presentation of their work, in particular with their long local business surveys. There is solid evidence of the use of ICT to illustrate the project work with block graphs, pie charts and cash flow diagrams.

271. From the scrutiny of work there is evidence that poor attendance has an adverse impact upon both the quantity and quality of written work, as some assignments are not completed. Regular attendance is particularly important in the GNVQ courses because much depends upon completing all the assignments in the portfolio to achieve a final grade. The wide range of teacher produced worksheets is impressive both in presentation and content and provides a good basis for pupil s' learning. The high quality of material supports the care taken in their work by the pupils. The majority of boys and girls make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress in relation to their prior attainment because their teachers and learning support assistants know them well and provide effective support and guidance in lessons.

272. The quality of teaching overall is good. There is teaching consistency across both year groups. Classes are well ordered, well managed, well planned and well structured. Lessons are marked by clear exposition, supported by direct questioning and are conducted

at an appropriate pace. Pupils make good progress when teachers include frequent opportunities to recap and explain key ideas as in a year 11 class on the different costs a business incurs. Teaching ensures good progress when it is built on what the pupils already know as in Year 11 Foundation work on weekly sales records. Teachers are very clear about the lesson objectives, which are very clearly explained in all lessons and are frequently referred to. They are reinforced by effective whole class discussions. This particular feature is strength of the teaching in the department and underpins the pupils' progress that is evident. The wide variety of method encourages and develops pupils' business understanding and overall enjoyment of the subject. Many lessons begin by reinforcing pupils' previous knowledge and understanding through an effective use of structured questioning. There is evidence of a high level of involvement from all pupils and the teacher's good management skilfully encourages pupils of all abilities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the subject.

273. Teachers are enthusiastic about the subject and have a good local knowledge of business, which is used most effectively in developing case study material to facilitate learning. Business concepts are clearly explained and developed using a range of approaches and methods. Teachers know the pupils well and are aware of their prior attainment, learning needs and individual characteristics. This enables them to manage learning and behaviour effectively. Several good examples were observed of individual pupils being encouraged to become actively involved in the lessons.

274. The standards of behaviour are very good. The strong relationships observed in the department underpin learning and the acquisition of skills. Good interpersonal relationships are one of the strengths of the business department. Very good examples of pupils listening carefully to each other were observed and co-operation amongst pupils in both years was high.

275. Leadership and management are good. The head of department has a clear view about where the department needs to go and has introduced a review of the key stage 4 curriculum possibly to introduce a vocational GCSE. The business staff makes a well-balanced, complementary and enthusiastic team who have a commitment to continuous improvement and are well qualified to meet the needs of the vocational curriculum and the pupils. The department has increased its links with other Liverpool schools and is an active member of the business teachers' network which provides opportunities for staff development and a means of sharing and exchanging good practice.

276. There are no specialist rooms for business studies in Years 10 and 11. The subject is taught in many different rooms throughout the upper and lower schools. The work portfolios and all other resources have to be taken across the campus. Although there is some access to computers they are not readily available for all lessons. As a consequence it is hard to offer the full range of learning strategies particularly regular opportunities for research work. The teaching rooms available do not easily contribute to modelling a modern business environment. This is a weakness that needs to be addressed.

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

In the inspection, nine 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 in the International Baccalaureate completed in 2000.

The school does not provide GCE AS and A Level courses.

***International Baccalaureate***

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades 7-3		% gaining grades 7-5		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	World wide average
<b>HIGHER LEVEL</b>							
Chemistry	1	0	N/A	0	N/A	2.0	4.7
Biology	6	17	N/A	0	N/A	2.2	4.2
Physics	2	50	N/A	0	N/A	2.5	4.8
Business and Organisations	9	100	N/A	11	N/A	3.8	4.9
Art and design	1	100	N/A	0	N/A	3.00	4.9
Theatre arts	4	100	N/A	0	N/A	3.8	4.9
History	6	100	N/A	33	N/A	4.33	5.09
Geography	1	100	N/A	0	N/A	3.0	5.1
English	14	100	N/A	7	N/A	3.9	4.8
Spanish	2	100	N/A	50	N/A	5.0	5.5

<b>STANDARD LEVEL</b>							
Mathematical Studies	17	65	N/A	12	N/A	2.8	4.7
Environmental Systems	6	100	N/A	17	N/A	4.00	4.9
ITGS	11	91	N/A	0	N/A	3.6	5.0
English	1	100	N/A	0	N/A	4.0	4.72
Spanish	2	100	N/A	50	N/A	4.0	5.0
Italian	9	66	N/A	0	N/A	2.7	4.6

***AVCE courses***

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Business	7	43	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
Health and Social Care	3	100	N/A	100	N/A	N/A	N/A

***Intermediate vocational qualifications***

Qualification	No in final year	% gaining qualification		% gaining merit		Average point distinction	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Business	12	50	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
Health and Social Care	7	43	N/A	29	N/A	14	N/A
Leisure and Tourism	7	43	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	N/A

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

**SUBJECTS AND COURSES GROUPED IN CURRICULUM AREAS**

**MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

**Mathematics:**

The overall quality of provision for mathematics is satisfactory.

**Strengths:**

- The new leadership of the department has established good Foundations for improvement.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good.
- Good relationships in lessons promote confidence and good motivation.
- The IB programme provides well for the full range of students.

**Areas for improvement:**

- Standards of work are below national expectations.
- Students' confident use of algebra.
- Procedures to monitor the quality of learning and teaching, including the sharing of good practice.

277. The 2000 IB examination results were well below the worldwide average, but satisfactory when seen against the students' prior attainment. In 2001, this picture was repeated but with a slight deterioration in the average grade. Group sizes have risen markedly over the past three years. This, taken with the school's very good approach to inclusion, where students with weak GCSE results are welcome to undertake the IB programme, is a significant factor in the decline of average scores.

278. The standards of work of current students are satisfactory. At age 18, students are achieving in line with expectation, with high attainers making good progress. All students apply themselves well and concentration and interest are maintained throughout lessons. In one lesson introducing the concept of mathematical differentiation, the teacher usefully revisited key words, and provided a good start to mastering the concepts involved through a carefully structured lesson. However, the teacher had no enrichment material available so that at one point a more capable student was working ahead of the teacher. Others in the group though making good progress, needed constant support. Some had difficulty expanding a simple quadratic function, again highlighting a weakness with simple algebraic operations.

279. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Within the overall satisfactory teaching, some elements are good, such as relationships, teachers' subject knowledge and the teachers' willingness to revisit concepts and explanations in order to keep everyone engaged. The use of the IB programme means that the lesson planning is highly structured and teachers have high expectations of the students in all three courses on offer. The structured assessments linked to the IB programme mean that the teachers know their students very well and are able to give appropriate individual guidance. Students do not always see opportunities to simplify algebraic expressions by cancelling down. Their lack of confidence in doing so again relates to their weak attainment at GCSE. Nonetheless, the good atmosphere in lessons allows them to ask questions easily and they work well both individually and collaboratively when required. Students with special educational needs merge into lessons very effectively, take a full and active part in proceedings and progress satisfactorily.

280. The new head of department is moving the department in a positive direction. The strong assessment framework provided by the IB ensures a good grasp of pupils' progress and achievement. At present, there is no mechanism for monitoring learning and teaching so that what good practice exists is not shared amongst staff. Since the last inspection, there has been insufficient improvement overall at Sixth Form Level, but with new leadership the department has the opportunity to move forward effectively.

281. In the Sixth Form, tutors and teachers know students very well. The IB programmes, with their highly structured style provide frequent opportunities for effective assessment. As a matter of course, assessment criteria are shared with students in all subjects, so that they are clearly aware of targets to be achieved and what needs to be done on their part to achieve them.

## Science

282. The focus was on physics, but biology, chemistry and environmental systems were also sampled. Examination results in these sampled subjects are variable, below average overall, but as expected in relation to previous GCSE attainment. Achievement for the few candidates has been satisfactory in terms of knowledge and understanding of concepts, but gains in development of investigative skills, independent research and presentation skills have been good due to the emphasis on these aspects in the IB programme. In the lessons seen, teaching was at least satisfactory and was characterised by good explanations from knowledgeable teachers but insufficient participation by students.

## PHYSICS

The provision overall is good.

### Strengths:

- Scientific skills are developed well from modest prior levels at GCSE.
- Teaching is good with lessons well prepared and support for individual students effectively provided.
- Students approach their work with maturity and high motivation to succeed.
- The subject is managed well within the science department.

### Areas for improvement:

- Depth of knowledge and understanding of essential ideas of physics that are variable, but overall below average.
- Success in establishing effective class discussion to ensure students have fully understood concepts.
- Quality of marking that is not giving enough guidance to students on what is expected, and what to do to improve their standard.

283. The results of the two candidates in the IB examination, higher level, in 2000, were below the world wide average, but were as expected from previous GCSE attainment. There were no entries in 2001. In previous years results have varied according to the capabilities of individuals. In the current Year 13, the four students are achieving satisfactorily in the development of their knowledge of essential facts and improving their understanding of the application of ideas to problems. One student demonstrates a very good understanding of the theory of gravitation although others are more insecure. Good use is made of opportunities to carry out calculations using formulae, and details are reasonably well set out. Written work is variable in standard, but improving overall. The

two students in Year 12 are producing work in line with expectation for their individual capability. They show sound knowledge of basic ideas and demonstrate satisfactory development of skill in carrying out an investigation. The depth of knowledge remains below that needed for higher grades.

284. Teaching is good overall, but students do not learn quite as well as might be expected. This is because they are not willing to question ideas sufficiently, or confirm their understanding, in class discussion. Lessons move at a moderate pace with students listening well. Opportunities for collaborative work are created and this enables more participation. Expectations are made explicit and the detail of explanation is clearly presented. Marking is not formative enough to indicate to students how to improve their standard, although verbal feedback is given enthusiastically. Students are very well supported through encouragement and very good relationships.

285. Key skills are developed well through science. In physics students are frequently expected prepare presentations, research information, solve problems and use external resources. Students have good opportunities for independent study, but the use of ICT is not well exploited. Students' progress is monitored well and targets are set from previous attainment. Regular assessments are carried out and evaluated. Resources, including good textbooks, are developed that enable students to benefit from a significant amount of practical work. Resources for use of ICT are insufficient.

## **ENGINEERING, DESIGN AND MANUFACTURING**

The school does not offer courses in this curriculum area.

## **BUSINESS**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

### **Strengths:**

- Teaching is good overall, reflecting the teachers' strength of subject knowledge. There is a good understanding of how students learn most effectively.
- An active involvement of all students in group discussions. They exhibit very positive attitudes to each other and the teachers.
- The provision of teacher-produced resources is comprehensive, well adapted to individual student need and supports student progress well. In particular there is good use of local case study material that gives added relevance to the students' learning.
- An impressive range of curriculum opportunities for studying business in the Sixth Form. The contribution to the International Baccalaureate is particularly noteworthy.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- Achieving a higher rate of full awards in both the advanced and intermediate vocational courses.
- Improving the provision of business textbooks.

286. Student performance in both the GNVQ Advanced and Intermediate courses over the past three years have been satisfactory with some improvement. Six students took the advanced vocational examination in 2001; three achieved the full award with one student gaining a distinction. Fifty per cent similarly achieved the full award in 2000. In the Intermediate course 50 per cent gained the full award in 2001 and also in 2000. These results were below the national average. The business and management module of the International Baccalaureate is the most popular option in the course and has achieved high

standards in the last three years, several students gaining the equivalent of A-C GCE grades. This course has enabled many students to enter higher education. The range of business courses offered by the department is impressive. Over the past three years there has been no significant difference in the achievement of male and female students. The retention rate overall is good, reflecting students' commitment and interest in the subject, but there is still a significant number who do not achieve the full vocational award owing to incomplete assignments. Much of this is due to poor attendance.

287. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are at present average. In Year 12 students in the GNVQ Intermediate group are able to analyse operating costs, both fixed and variable in a variety of business sectors and are able to share their ideas. The group works well together, gaining from each other's ideas. There is good group work in the AVCE class, with the group devising 2 marketing questionnaires for customers and businesses. The IB class brainstormed the product range of four different sectors. The pace in the activity is fast and furious, illustrating a strong commitment and involvement in the subject. A Year 13 IB class is very involved in group activity preparing for a new chocolate bar launch presentation. The presentations are effective in putting over a strong marketing message and in developing the understanding of the business issues involved in such a launch. They are very different and the exercise clearly shows the students that there are several different ways of developing a business strategy. In addition the activity is thoroughly enjoyed by the whole group and this enjoyment reinforces their previous learning.

288. Overall students' contributions are thoughtful and well balanced and the whole membership of students actively contributes to discussion. This is a common feature in all three business courses and is a particular strength leading to good teamwork, a sharing of ideas and a positive learning atmosphere that reinforces the business themes most effectively.

289. Students learn well in their Year 12 and 13 business courses and much of their progress results from effective and enthusiastic teaching that is rooted in secure subject knowledge. All teaching is good and some is very good. The teaching is well organised, supported by a wide range of teacher produced worksheets and materials, all of a high quality. There is good local business knowledge that develops students' learning as they can relate directly to their own experiences. Thorough local studies of ICL and Manchester Airport have been researched. Business education is therefore a living and dynamic experience for them. The students are taken through a range of case studies that are designed to use management tools.

290. Students are challenged to express their thoughts and views and this process produces enthusiastic, well-motivated and confident business students. The range of activity in the classes is impressive. Brainstorming, paired and group discussion, individual research, class analysis, group presentations and strong teacher led discussion all contribute to good progress in the subject. Much of an individual student's progress is the result of strong teacher intervention. Teachers have a sound understanding of an individual's needs; support for individual learning is high.

291. The rapport between teachers and students is very strong and this underpins the enthusiasm the students have for the course. They enjoy business and get a considerable amount from the subject. Students interviewed confirmed that their teaching is good and that they are well prepared for the examinations. They know very clearly what their learning objectives are and what work they have to do to secure the expected outcomes. The range of the portfolio work is wide and they recognise that full attendance is necessary for success, as it is difficult to maintain the necessary pace if lessons are missed. This is one area where additional teacher support could be offered if the percentage of full awards is to



be increased. Students believe the Part 1 courses in Key Stage 4 offer a good Foundation for further study in the Sixth Form. The use of ICT is good. The portfolios are well presented and organised and indicate a wide use of ICT for research purposes. Accessibility is satisfactory. There are three computers in the business departmental base in the Sixth Form suite and students regularly use the resource centre. The evaluation of student work is thorough with diagnostic comments on their written work, the comments help the student to identify areas for further work and the improvement in the content and quality of work is marked over the two years.

292. Accommodation is good. There are two dedicated vocational business rooms with a departmental base between them and there is also an IB teaching room. These rooms have good displays and they offer an effective business learning environment. Teacher-produced work sheets are of a high quality, but there are few up-to-date business textbooks in the department. Leadership of the subject is good. It is rooted in enthusiasm and expertise for the subject. Teamwork is encouraged and new members of the department are supported strongly.

### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

293. The focus was on the GNVQ Intermediate Information Technology programme and the option Information Technology in a Global Society (Standard level) which forms part of the International Baccalaureate course. Examination results for both courses have been below average though most students enter the courses with modest prior attainment. Three lessons were seen for the two courses and a further one was seen for key skills. Teaching and learning on the two courses are mainly good.

The overall quality of provision for (ICT) is satisfactory.

#### **Strengths:**

- Lessons are well planned to provide a good range of activities.
- The students show a high level of interest.
- The quality of resources is good.

#### **Areas for improvement:**

- The standards students achieve at the age of 18.
- Greater progress as a result of improved attendance.

294. Results for the Standard level course in Information Technology in a Global Society which forms part of the International Baccalaureate programme, have been variable but mainly below average. In 1999 they were good with one student achieving outstanding results. In 2000 and 2001 they were poorer with a number of students achieving low grades. The school has only operated the GNVQ Intermediate Information Technology programme since 2000. Although four of the nine candidates achieved either merits or distinctions, a further four candidates failed to achieve the full award. Since students enter both courses with relatively low prior attainments at the GCSE Level the progress of the majority of students whilst in the Sixth Form is satisfactory. Progress for some students is adversely affected by poor attendance and by non-completion of homework that is set. A few students each year fail to complete the courses.

295. Standards of work of current students are also below the expected level. In a number of classes although the teacher encouraged the students to work independently and to take more responsibility for their own learning many were only able to make progress with further help and guidance from the teacher. For example, in a GNVQ Intermediate IT class consisting of a mixture of Year 12 and 13 students were reviewing multi-media

presentations as a group led by the teacher. Students were then required to review presentations on an individual basis. Many were not able to successfully identify strengths and weaknesses of the presentations without significant further help from the teacher. Files of work also showed that although for many classes there is a wide variation in terms of attainment the majority of students are working below the expected level.

296. Teaching is mainly good. Teachers plan their lessons well and most involve the students in an appropriate range of activities. Both teaching and learning are well supported by a range of good quality resources including computers. For example a good lesson on the International Baccalaureate course for Year 13 students involved a discussion led by the teacher on the misuse of the Internet. During the discussion the teacher encouraged the students to participate by frequent use of questions. Several students were encouraged and able to make substantial contributions during the development of the topic. Students showed an interest in the work and attitudes were positive. Although a number of students had withdrawn from the course all but one of the remaining students were present. Records showed that most students were making good responses to the work that had been set and progress during the class by the majority of students was good. Work is regularly marked in the Sixth Form and teachers indicate, where appropriate, how aspects of the work might be improved.

297. There is a small team of staff involved with the Sixth Form work. The provision is well managed with those involved working closely together. As with the main school monitoring and evaluation procedures are in place with lesson observations and regular reviews of examination results. The teachers involved have a secure knowledge of the subject. Students in the Sixth Form have good access to high quality computer resources during timetabled classes and for private study. Many make good use of an open access resource area to use computers during the times free from timetabled lessons.

## **HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL**

No subject in this area of the curriculum was inspected in detail.

## **HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**

298. The focus was on Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE) and General National Vocational Qualification Intermediate (GNVQ Intermediate) Level programmes in Health and Social Care.

Overall, the quality of provision is satisfactory.

### **Strengths:**

- The quality of teaching is good.
- The relationship with students is good.
- The monitoring of progress is effective.
- 

### **Areas for improvement:**

- The use of facilities and personnel in the field of health and social care as a resource.

299. The results at AVCE Level are above the National average. Over the last three years, the completion rate was 100 per cent. All students achieved distinction grade for the award with 75 per cent, 100 per cent and 50 per cent respectively, carrying on to Higher Education. The trend, over the three years, is of small numbers with four, three and two respectively. The present Year 13 group has five students. All five are expected to complete the award.

300. Standards in GNVQ Intermediate programmes are satisfactory. The courses have attracted small numbers over the last three years with completion rates of 83 per cent, 44 per cent and 50 per cent respectively. Two students are currently following the course.
301. The standard of work seen in Advanced GNVQ lessons is broadly in line with national expectations. Portfolios of evidence are well organised and presented. Most students show a good understanding of the assessment criteria and meet them well in their written assignments.
302. The present Year 12 students are at an early stage in the programme. The standard of evidence shown in the portfolios is of a satisfactory standard but this judgement is made from a small evidence base.
303. The standard of work seen at Intermediate Level is satisfactory. Class work is focused upon two units to be externally tested in January. Written work is recorded in note form, which is appropriate for examination revision.
304. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject area. They skilfully adapt assignments to involve appropriate and challenging activities. The theory and practice of health and social care are well applied within assignments. This gives students realistic insights into the demands of the vocational area and promotes greater understanding.
305. A range of interesting, appropriate and effective teaching techniques is used in lessons. The activities provide a good balance of theory and practical and are adapted to the needs of the students. All students are encouraged to participate. Appropriate assessment procedures are in place for the new award and assessment criteria are being applied. Written feedback to students is informative and constructive. Its detail is used as a tool for identifying future learning needs and to aid progress. As a result of this, students are clear as to their progression within the award.
306. At Advanced Level, all students work at a good pace, expectations are high and students are encouraged to become independent learners.
307. At Intermediate Level, the delivery plan has been completely adapted to the needs of the students. More time is being given to test preparation. Less capable students are provided with much support and reinforcement. Small numbers facilitate this process.
308. Learning opportunities are good. A wide variety of learning activities are used. Advanced Level students are fully engaged in the process and are challenged to use higher order skills such as analysis and evaluation. The small numbers allow for discussion as to different ways of tackling assignments. Such discussion reinforces understanding and promotes progress. Students use links with care establishments to support their research. They are allowed independence within their learning programmes. They say that they appreciate the freedom to choose the optional units they would like to study. As a result of this, their interest and concentration is fully engaged and they continue assignment work at home.
309. At Intermediate Level, students need much support. The pace is slower. There is need for much repetition and reinforcement. Students need encouragement to take responsibility for learning. The use of videos and reference to television programmes is used effectively to help student understanding. Their own experiences are used as starting points for discussion. Low levels of literacy and limited use of ICT hinder progress.

310. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Health and social care has its own resource base within Sixth Form provision. Resources and textbooks have been updated. Students use their own links with care establishments for research. Teachers show good professional judgement in the teaching of the new award begun in September 2000. They have adapted teaching methods to include extra preparation time for the externally tested areas of the award. Each level of programme is delivered by one member of staff. There is, at present, no time for standardisation.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA**

311. The focus was on Art and Design, but one Performing Arts lesson was sampled. In 2001 there were two candidates for the International Baccalaureate in Theatre Arts. Attainment was lower than that achieved by candidates worldwide. The students who were observed worked well as a small, tightly-knit group. They responded positively to the teacher's introduction to the lesson, asked appropriate questions and sought clarification. They worked diligently to prepare their own presentations which they gave later in the lesson. The teacher had a very good relationship with the group. Organisation and planning were good and lesson objectives were clearly stated. Students worked with a high degree of independence.

### **Art**

Overall the quality of provision in art is satisfactory.

#### **Strengths:**

- The subject is managed and led well.
- Students work with a high degree of independence.
- Group work is good – students work well with one another.
- Students are well supported by their teachers.

#### **Areas for improvement:**

- The low numbers of students who progress from GCSE to the Sixth Form.
- Narrowness of the I.B. Curriculum with work restricted to traditional media and materials.
- Lack of work-related design programme.
- Little ICT provision within an art and design context.
- Poor integration of Key Skills within the main subject area.

312. Results in the International Baccalaureate in Art and Design over the past three years have been below those achieved by candidates worldwide.

313. Year 12 student show enthusiasm for their work. They apply themselves readily to the task of improving not only the quality of their ideas but also their technical skills in drawing and painting. Currently they are working as a group to carry out a critical analysis of a selection of paintings. From these investigations they will be responsible for developing their own ideas, views and opinions in their visual diaries. All of the students work with varying degrees of independence in carrying out research and developing ideas. Some are experimenting with plaster of paris and collage. They demonstrate real interest in what they are doing and are acquiring skills that are essential if they are to learn and think for themselves.

314. In Year 13 students have acquired much greater confidence and self-assurance. They are learning to trust their own world views and their own opinions as legitimate subject matter for exploration through art and design activities. At present they are carrying out research into the work of English artists such as Turner, Constable and Samuel Palmer. Eventually they will be expected to relate the paintings of these artists to their own work to inform their methods of carrying out research and collecting a body of information in their visual diaries. Students are encouraged to draw upon historical, contemporary and multi-cultural contexts to inform their own ideas. At present however, emphasis is placed firmly on working with traditional fine art materials at the expense of using modern technology in the form of photography and computer-generated image making.

315. Teaching is satisfactory overall at this level. Teachers see themselves primarily as facilitators, only intervening when they see that a student has encountered a difficult problem. Students carry out the bulk of their research independently at home, away from the school. They are encouraged to carry out critical evaluation of their own work and also that of other members of the group. Out of the three lessons observed, two were satisfactory and one good in terms of teaching.

316. The relationship between the teacher and the students is good, but the students are not being challenged sufficiently. On the basis of much of the work seen during the inspection, they are capable of working with and resolving more complex problems. Feedback is usually given orally to students, but there is a need for a more formal written process. It is important that detailed information be provided on a regular basis for students, to inform them about progress.

317. On the whole students respond positively to the set tasks. During conversations with them they said that they were enjoying their work and felt that they were making good progress. They apply themselves conscientiously to the task of acquiring the necessary skills that they will need to communicate effectively with others. Their visual diaries show evidence of research leading to finished pieces of work. Insufficient use is made of ICT as an effective means of carrying out this research. There is little evidence of the assessment or recording of key skills.

318. The department is well managed and students are given ample opportunity to develop deeper understanding of their own culture and the cultures of many others through the set assignments. Regular visits are made to art galleries in Liverpool and in London. Artists, designers and craftspeople are invited in to the school to work with the students. However there is too little emphasis, at present, on the work-related, or the vocational curriculum and the application and integration of key skills within the main subject area. Although this is the case, the department continues to provide a sound education for students based largely on fine art activities.

319. In the year 2001 results in the examination were below average. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Assessment procedures, recording and feedback could be improved. The needs of students interested in a vocational, work-related curriculum need to be addressed.

## **HUMANITIES**

320. The focus was on history but the work of the three students in Year 12 studying geography was also sampled. They are making satisfactory progress towards a target grade 4 for IB, having started the course with broadly average GCSE grades. There are no students studying geography in Year 13.

## History

Overall, the quality of provision is very good.

### Strengths:

- The teaching of history is very good overall and students benefit from the high levels of intellectual debate.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is very strong. They mark essays in depth and offer their students extensive advice on how to improve.
- The International Baccalaureate is ideally suited to the needs and aspirations of the students. It reinforces work already covered and is effective in fostering a lasting interest in history.
- Attainment is improving and students make very good progress from average and below-average performance at GCSE.
- The subject area is well managed.

### Areas for improvement:

- There are few students opting for the course and many of them have not attained the highest GCSE grades.
- There are few opportunities for students to benefit from the expertise of outside speakers.

321. Students' performance in the International Baccalaureate has risen steadily over the past three years and no candidate has received less than a grade 3. Average grade scores have been higher than the school average for other subjects, but lower than the IB worldwide norm. However, work seen during the inspection was better than external results indicate and standards at the age of 18 are in line with the worldwide average. Moreover, students completing the IB course have been accepted onto university courses to read history and also history combined with other subjects. Three students over the past two years have opted for further study at higher education level.

322. Observations of lessons, discussions with students and scrutiny of work demonstrate that students make very good progress from an average to low baseline, and that they achieve well. Students in Year 12, for example, are beginning to use historical terms accurately and in context in order to outline the growing domination of Prussia in mid-nineteenth century Europe. They give well-thought-out comments on Prussia's growing economic strength and explain the significance of the "Zollverein". They are becoming more adept at selecting important information from their textbooks and presenting their findings to the rest of the group, but finding essay writing difficult.

323. In Year 13, students take part in high levels of intellectual debate and are skilled at writing short presentations on historical controversies. They have good background knowledge of Europe between the two world wars and can speak with authority on the Treaty of Versailles and its impact on Germany and France. They use subject terminology quite naturally and are skilled at the analysis and interpretation of source material. Furthermore, they can defend their arguments with evidence and are not afraid of challenging the views of their classmates and of their teachers! The very good progress of students over the two years in the Sixth Form is confirmed by the high standard of essays produced by students in Year 13. Essays are planned meticulously, have introductions that set the scene and continue with a full account of the views of historians on the topic under discussion. They conclude with a judgement about the validity of the evidence they have considered.

324. The profound subject knowledge of the staff and the high quality of teaching in the Sixth Form are areas of real strength. Teaching was never less than good and was very good overall. Teachers are well aware of the prior attainment of their students and try hard to challenge and yet to support. This sensitive yet rigorous approach ensures that students are not afraid to make contributions in class and to defend their views. In a very good Year 12 lesson, for example, on the events leading to the Unification of Germany, the teacher's questioning was so challenging that students engaged in a brainstorm about why the 1848 revolutions could be said to have failed. Moreover, teachers know just the right questions to ask in order to demonstrate to students that they are making good gains in knowledge. In a Year 13 lesson on the causes of the Second World War, students delivering presentations on appeasement and on the responsibility of Hitler for the outbreak of war were encouraged to go even further in their search for the truth because of the challenging questioning of their teacher and also of their fellow-students. Teachers place great emphasis on the views of historians. Students respond well and show that they have read widely and that they know the essence of a variety of historical controversies. For example, students in Year 13 can discuss in depth whether Hitler planned for war or whether war was thrust upon him. They quote A.J.P. Taylor, Lewis Namier and even the Hossbach Memorandum when giving their views. Students are very positive about Sixth Form history and their attitudes to study are excellent. They speak highly of their teachers and enjoy the breadth of the programme. Students are happy when others succeed and they like to take part in the cut and thrust of historical debate. They enjoy challenging each other and also learning from each other. In summary, students are pleasant, polite and forthcoming and the teaching ensures that they have every opportunity to succeed.

325. Improvements in students' achievements are not just the result of very good teaching. The subject is well managed and teachers have worked hard to produce resources, which recognise that students learn in different ways and that higher-level study in history demands rigour and intellectual challenge. Teachers in the area share a vision for the teaching of history, care deeply for the welfare of their students and are, therefore, well placed for future development.

## **ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION**

326. The focus was on English and French but work in Spanish and Italian was also sampled. Results in the International Baccalaureate (IB) in Spanish have been in line with the worldwide average at higher and standard levels in the last two years. Results in Italian have been below average. One lesson was seen in each language. Those studying Spanish in Year 13 are making satisfactory progress at standard level. A large number of students in a Year 12 Italian lesson were making satisfactory early progress in their beginners' course. The provision of Italian offers an attractive alternative, especially for students who have not previously done well in French or Spanish.

## English

Overall, the quality of provision is good.

### Strengths:

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and examination experience.
- Teachers have high expectations of students.
- Pupils make good progress, often from low entry levels.
- Teachers and students share a commitment to the International Baccalaureate (IB) course.
- Very good relationships between teachers and students.
- Extra English classes are provided after school.

### Areas for development:

- Students' critical and analytical skills.
- Opportunities for students' research and independent learning.

327. Standards at age 18 are roughly in line with national expectations. More boys than girls take the subject and all make good progress considering that approximately one in three enter this Sixth Form course with grades lower than C.

328. The least capable students have a largely narrative writing style and make insufficient references to context and writer's language and purpose. Even the best make little reference to authorial voice or engage closely enough with the text, and some still tend to look at characters as real people, rather than literary constructs. However, all of them are able to discuss their reactions to character and plot very well and write about them. The most capable use talk as an effective way of exploring and refining their own ideas and particularly enjoy their oral coursework: it is in this component of the syllabus that many make their best progress. Students' progress is also greatly enhanced by their mature attitudes to study, their enthusiasm in class and the sense of achievement and confidence which successful interim coursework brings. They also readily attend extra English workshops provided after school by their teachers.

329. Teaching is at least satisfactory. Four out of six lessons were graded as good during the inspection. In the good lessons, teachers' planning for continuity and progression is good, as is their subject knowledge. They share the assessment criteria with students so that they know what they have to achieve, make frequent and appropriate use of praise to encourage all to contribute and are aware of the particular needs of individuals. They also have high expectations of all and make good use of questioning techniques to check students' understanding or to encourage them to consider other possibilities and ideas. In the other lessons, there are insufficient opportunities for students to develop their close analytical skills, to do independent research or to choose their way of learning.

330. The Sixth Form course is well managed and resourced. The head of department, an external examiner for the IB course, provides invaluable experience and all teachers are committed to it, strongly believing that it is highly appropriate for Broadgreen students. Their results in the final examination, which are higher than at the last inspection, support this view.

331. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is good. Although comparisons between the IB results and A-Level are not entirely reliable because of the difference in the courses and in the methods of assessment, students' average points scores indicate that standards have improved. Lessons and work seen at this inspection confirm that students are making good progress.



## French

Overall, the quality of provision is satisfactory.

### Strengths:

- Teachers match work well to the needs and abilities of students.
- Teachers who are native speakers make effective use of their knowledge and provide good authentic materials.

### Areas for improvement:

- Standards and confidence in oral work.
- Opportunities for enrichment, for instance through planned time abroad.

332. Very few students choose to take French in the Sixth Form. There are two male students in Year 13, taking higher level in the International Baccalaureate. The three students in Year 12 are suited to standard level entry. Results in 2001 for two students were slightly below average but represented satisfactory progress from their grades at GCSE.

333. The evidence from work seen in lessons, in students' files and from discussion with students in Year 13 indicates that they are making satisfactory progress. In the Year 13 lesson, both students showed a satisfactory level of understanding of challenging factual information about French nuclear power stations, and engaged in a reasonable level of discussion in French about associated moral and social issues. They speak with satisfactory accuracy though there is a difference in the degree of fluency, which reflects previous attainment. Pronunciation is fairly accurate, though there are basic errors such as sounding silent letters, especially in verb endings. They made good progress in this lesson. Their knowledge of French culture and institutions is comparatively undeveloped, and they have read very little in French beyond the chosen text for an oral examination, Pagnol's 'La Gloire de Mon Père.' Work in files shows that students have gained considerably from the bridging unit to improve the complexity of their written French. They add to the number of tenses they can apply and learn about the formation and use of the subjunctive mood. In subsequent written assignments, covering topics such as foot and mouth, education and family values, they gradually improve their standards by applying these examples of complex language. However, content remains better than accuracy, as basic errors persist, for instance in adjectival agreements, and recognising singular and plural in spellings.

334. Attainment in Year 12 is more difficult to assess so early in the course. Students have completed their bridging unit and there is satisfactory progress in exercises to practise verbs in the present and perfect tenses. In the lesson seen, the focus was on testing students' knowledge of French culture, institutions and geography. The overall standard of this knowledge is very disappointing. When given opportunities to express themselves in French, they are all diffident and produce very little of merit, finding it difficult to follow French delivered at normal speed. They then consolidated their knowledge of patterns in regular verbs in the present tense. They are enjoying the work being done and are learning from it, so that they are making satisfactory progress relative to the C grades achieved at GCSE.

335. Teaching is good overall. It is all in the hands of one native speaker. By using French consistently to conduct lessons, she shows good expectations, gives students a model to imitate and forces them to concentrate and seek ways to respond in French themselves. This has improved the oral standards of Year 13 students and is beginning to have a positive effect in Year 12, though progress in oral work here is much slower in the early stages of the course, with its concentration on grammatical work. Teaching takes account of this difference in ability without reducing expectations. The teacher makes

effective use of a course book designed specifically for the IB, and is able to supplement this with a significant number of articles from authentic French sources, giving students a sense of immediacy and relevance about what they are studying, and improving the content of their oral and written work. With such small groups, relationships are good, and students appreciate the teacher's efforts to help them to make progress. The school's assessment system for the Sixth Form allows students to participate in the setting of targets for the course. Subsequent marking is linked to this, and students say that they are kept well informed about their progress towards targets through marking and ongoing assessment in lessons. The flexibility of the scheme of work for IB allows for changes in content and levels, and teaching makes good use of this to match work to students' individual needs and abilities.

336. Students have positive attitudes towards their studies. They are attentive and involved in class, take notes well, and organise their files efficiently. They appreciate the advice they receive from the teacher and their head of year about their work. They make use of Internet facilities made available to them to carry out research for written assignments. What is seriously lacking is a more outward-looking approach to work. The dearth of quality time spent in France hinders their progress, in that they have not received the boost to their oral standards and knowledge of culture enjoyed by students in many other schools.