

INSPECTION REPORT

SOUTHFIELDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Southfields, London

LEA area: London Borough of Wandsworth

Unique reference number: 101063

Headteacher: Ms Jacqueline Valin

Reporting inspector: Ms Jenny Smith
2069

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 7th December 2001

Inspection number: 189386

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Type of college:	Comprehensive
College category:	Foundation
Age range of students:	11-19
Gender of students:	Mixed
College address:	333 Merton Rd London
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Thompson
Date of previous inspection:	16 th September 1996

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Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2069	Jenny Smith	Registered inspector	GNVQ Leisure and Tourism (sixth form)	What sort of college is it? How high are standards? a)The college's results and achievements How well is the college led and managed? What should the college do to improve further?
9465	Elizabeth Cooke	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b)Students' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the college work in partnership with parents?
10566	Clive Tunnicliffe	Team inspector	English Drama Literacy across the curriculum English (sixth form)	How well are students taught?
31441	Margaret King	Team inspector	Mathematics Numeracy across the curriculum Mathematics (sixth form)	
1249	Joe Edge	Team inspector	Science Science (sixth form)	
27058	Kathleen Cannon	Team inspector	Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	
8185	Peter Kendall	Team inspector	Art	
19983	Haydn Webb	Team inspector	Design and Technology	
1723	Michael Milton	Team inspector	Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to students?
15576	David Nebesnuick	Team member	History Business Education (sixth form)	
31540	Alison Edwards	Team member	Modern Foreign Languages	How well does the college care for its students?
8360	Frederick Peacock	Team member	Music	
23588	Charanjit Ajitsingh	Team member	Religious Education	
7926	James Bowden	Team member	Physical Education	
2971	Kathleen Hooper	Team member		Co-ordinator Sixth form report
3731	Bill Robson	Team member	Special educational needs and Hearing Impaired Unit (HIU) Equal opportunities	

12179	Laurence Moscrop	Team member	English as an additional language (EAL)	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Southfields Community College is a mixed comprehensive school for students aged 11-19. It gained Sports College Status in 2000. There are 1309 students on roll (701 boys and 608 girls). This is more than the average secondary school. The college admits students from beyond the immediate vicinity and from a wide socio-economic background. The number of students eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average. Fifty six per cent of students are from ethnic minority backgrounds and a high percentage of students (thirty three per cent) have English as an additional language. Fourteen per cent of students are refugees. The college is designated as a school in challenging circumstances. There are 94 students in the sixth form, lower than the average school sixth form. The college has recently reorganised its sixth form provision to offer courses which are predominantly vocational. Over half the students are on the register of special educational needs (SEN), of which, two per cent have statements of special educational needs. The number of students on the register is high. There is a wide range of special educational needs, including dyslexia, hearing impairment and emotional and behavioural issues. Students' attainment on entry to the college is lower than the national average and sixty five per cent of students in the college have a lower reading age than expected for their age. The college is a Training School for adults training to become teachers and a City Learning Centre on the college site provides a valuable additional resource to which the college has access. The college is also in receipt of additional funding for the Excellence in Cities initiative.

HOW GOOD THE COLLEGE IS

Southfields Community College is a good and improving college, with a positive ethos and strong leadership. Students' achievement is supported by effective teaching, which is nearly always satisfactory and often good or very good. By age 16, students generally reach levels at GCSE at least in line with expected attainment and sometimes higher, including students from ethnic minority groups. The headteacher and her senior management team provide clear cohesive leadership and direction for the college, which is recognised by the parents, staff and the governing body. The college provides good value for money. The college has effective strategies to ensure educational inclusion for all of its pupils.

What the college does well

- The headteacher provides strong leadership and key staff in the college are good managers.
- The teaching and learning are good, overall.
- Behaviour is good.
- The college's commitment to educational inclusion is very good, ensuring full access to all learning opportunities for students who have special educational needs, hearing impairment, dyslexia and for those who are disaffected.
- Students' moral and social development is good.
- There is good provision for students' personal development in Years 7 –11.
- The range and participation rates of extra-curricular sports provision is excellent.
- Support from advanced skills teachers and support for trainee teachers is very good.

What could be improved

- Raise attendance levels and improve procedures for accurately recording attendance and closure of registers for late arrivals.
- Meet statutory requirements for information and communication technology (ICT) in Years 8 and 9 and improve the application of students' ICT skills in all subjects.
- Increase the range of teaching styles in order to improve further the quality of teaching and learning.
- Promote the development of literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- Improve accommodation for indoor sports and art.

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

HOW THE COLLEGE HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The college was last inspected in September 1996. Since this time, the college has undergone many changes, including the restructuring of the senior management team and the appointment of a new headteacher. The college has more recently been recognised by HMI as having challenging circumstances with regard to high numbers of students with low attainment on entry and at age 16. Overall, it has made good progress on the key issues identified in 1996 and this has led to greater educational inclusion of all its students.

The college has made significant strides in the improvement of teaching across subjects since the last inspection. This has been a focus of the college's raising achievement plan and is reflected in the very small percentage of less than satisfactory lessons during this inspection. Although the college has made improvements to the Year 10 and 11 provision for ICT, the new National Curriculum has placed further requirements on all subjects to deliver ICT in Years 7, 8 and 9. This is unsatisfactory in the college at present. There is a better match of work to student's abilities now than at the time of the last inspection, particularly for the least able. Significant and innovative recent developments are now in place to improve attendance and punctuality. These have yet to fully alter attendance and punctuality patterns but have the potential to do so. The college has put in place a range of approaches to teaching and learning and behaviour management which are having a marked, positive impact on students' learning. Students' cultural and spiritual development is now secure and the college provides an effective act of collective worship closely linked to the pastoral programme.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Students' attainment on entry to the college is well below the national average for comprehensive schools. In 2001, almost a third entered the college with standards in English at Key Stage 2 at Level 3 or below. More than a third of students in mathematics are at Level 3 or below and almost a fifth at Level 3 or below in science. Thirty eight per cent of students have a reading age below 9.06 years and 20 per cent are below 8.06 years in the current Year 7.

Results in the National Curriculum tests in 2001 were below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. However, when comparing the college with similar socio-economic conditions, the results for English were above similar schools, although still well below for mathematics and science. The trend in the National Curriculum test results for the college over the last three years reflects the national trend, although at a lower level. There has been an improving pattern of results in the college for the last three years and results in 2001 were the highest the college has achieved.

The percentage of students achieving 5 or more GCSE A* - C grades in 2001 was very low in comparison with the national average and well below for pupils with 5 or more A* - G grades. However, in marked comparison with all schools nationally, all students achieved at least 1 A* - G grade. This included all the students on the vocational access programme and reflects the college's commitment to educational inclusion for all of its pupils. When comparing the 2001 GCSE results with the students' prior attainment at age 14, the 5 A* - G grades are above average for similar schools and for 1 A* - G was well above average for similar schools. The school is doing well for its less able students and there is clear evidence of more than expected gains in attainment of these students (value added) from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4. The trend in results over the last five years at GCSE has fluctuated, but when

considering students' attainment in the core subjects the results are broadly in line with the national trend. Good GCSE results were achieved in music, art and religious education.

Students make good progress, overall, in Years 7 to 9 and generally good progress in Years 10 and 11 but many students are hampered by a low level of literacy and numeracy skills. Support for students with special educational needs and students with English as an additional language is good and this helps these students make good progress. Students from ethnic minority groups also make good progress.

STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the college	Good. Students generally are keen to learn and are well motivated.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good, overall, in lessons and generally good and well mannered around college. A small minority of students disrupt a few lessons. Good systems are in place to manage poor behaviour, rather than by excluding students.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Opportunities exist for developing social skills and for students to accept responsibility.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory in aspects of the registration system and low attendance in some lessons. However, statistics reflect attendance broadly in line with the national average and unauthorised absence is below the national average.

The college provides a variety of opportunities for students to develop social skills and their own code of moral behaviour, including the provision of a student council. Where students' behaviour is poor, community service is effectively used in preference to exclusion. Parents are satisfied generally with behaviour and feel that it is managed constructively. Exclusions have greatly decreased over the last year, including those of black Caribbean students, although it is still higher for this group of students than other groups. Parents generally are pleased with the college and the effort it makes to keep them informed.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good, overall, and makes a major contribution to effective learning and to standards achieved by all students, including those with English as additional language. It has improved significantly since the last inspection when one in five lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. In English, mathematics and science, in both Key Stages 3 and 4, effective planning helps to maintain students' progress within and between lessons. Lessons proceed with good pace and end by rounding up the main learning points. Lessons are well structured. The least able are particularly well supported by teachers in all subject areas and from the staff in the Learning Enhancement Centre. A sound start has been made to the teaching of literacy skills through other subjects. As yet, there is no planned programme for teaching and reinforcing numeracy skills through other subjects. Further work needs to be undertaken with regard to enhancing literacy and numeracy skills for all students. Across many subjects, there is a lack of information and communication technology, particularly in Years 8 and 9. The extra teaching for students with English as an additional language enables them to make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Overall provision is broad and relevant. The college is implementing the Key Stage 3 strategy with effective support from senior management. Alternative curriculum provision for disaffected students is good. The ICT curriculum, particularly in Years 8 and 9 does not meet statutory requirements in a number of subjects.
Provision for students with special educational needs	Good. Support for students is good and teachers use students' individual education plans well. Good provision for students with dyslexia. Assessment of students with special educational needs is effective.
Provision for students with English as an additional language(EAL)	Good. Accommodation, learning resources, specialist teachers' commitment to this group of students and the monitoring of their work contribute significantly to their overall progress.
Provision for students' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for students' personal development through the personal and social education programme is good. Students value these lessons. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contribute positively to the ethos of the college.
How well the college cares for its students	Good. The college takes good care of its students' welfare and safety. Relationships between teachers and students are good. Pastoral support is good and systems are now in place to effectively monitor and support academic progress.

The college provides a good range of learning opportunities to cater for all students. This includes a wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as competitive sports, music, outdoor activities and college visits. Homework clubs and revision sessions are appreciated by students. A recent development has been the introduction of activities for gifted and talented students. Students reported that they enjoyed the first session and wanted to attend further sessions. There is insufficient access to computers for students across a range of subject areas and, therefore, they are not meeting curriculum requirements. The college works well in partnership with its parents.

HOW WELL THE COLLEGE IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides strong leadership and is well supported by the senior management team, staff and governors. Most middle managers provide effective leadership to their departments and areas. Financial management is very good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors provide effective support and challenge to the Headteacher. They carry out the responsibilities assigned to them effectively and are able to reflect on the positive improvements since the last inspection.
The college's evaluation of its performance	Good. The college has sound systems of line management and performance management is in place. Standards are monitored systematically in departments.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Non teaching staff provide good support. Although limited in number, good use is made of existing computers.

The senior management team has recently been enlarged and refocused to enable more effective line management, support and advice to be given. The college's raising achievement plan, developed in part in response to the designation of the college in challenging circumstances, is thorough and is used as a working document. This was effectively reviewed recently. Over the last two years the college has made greater use of data analysis at whole college and departmental level and this is beginning to have an impact on departmental planning. Robust systems exist for financial management and control. Financial monitoring is effective and the college understands and fully applies principles of best value.

The number of staff is adequate and apart from mathematics there is a good match of qualifications to subjects taught. A number of staff undertake outreach work in other schools as part of their remit. These partnerships are well received by local schools and provide excellent professional development for the teachers involved. The college buildings are in reasonable condition and are painted regularly. The college is free from graffiti. Resources such as books are adequate but, in many subjects, students do not have text books to take home. There is inadequate space for indoor sports, which directly affects students' learning opportunities and accommodation is inadequate for art. There are too few computers for the size of the college.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE COLLEGE

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students enjoy coming to college. • Staff are supportive. • Good contact with home, not only for misdemeanors but also for good work. • Improved behaviour, particularly over the last year. • Community service very good. • Very high percentage of parents feel the college has high expectations. • Peer mentoring scheme. • Students with special educational needs are well catered for. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer time needed to meet teaching staff in one to one meetings. • Concerns over some supply teachers during 2000-2001.

The inspection findings support the parents' positive views about the college. Staff are supportive of students and students also reported that they felt safe and secure in college and that teachers were easy to approach. The format of parents' meetings at the college is one commonly adopted by schools. Inspection evidence does not support the parental concern about one to one meetings, as staff are willing to make extra time available on other occasions. The inspection team are unable to comment about the quality of teaching by supply teachers outside the inspection period.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SIXTH FORM

The roll in the sixth form has fallen over the last three years to 94, which is about half the size of other schools nationally. Less than half of the college's 16 year olds stay on in the sixth form. Of those who do return, approximately two thirds are from ethnic minority families and almost a quarter have English as their second language. Approximately 20 per cent receive Education Maintenance Allowances. On entry, students' level of achievement is well below average in relation to the courses they are studying. The sixth form was reorganised in September 2001 and now offers a range of seven intermediate and advanced vocational courses. The sixth form reorganisation is in a stage of transition and the college recognises that there is still a considerable way to go, in order to make the sixth form provision fully cost effective. The college plans to extend vocational provision further next year, when there will be two full years of vocational courses. At present, there is a very small Year 13 group of nine students who are completing the second year of Advanced Level GCE courses. Others who were on Advanced Level courses last year have been transferred to other sixth form providers as part of the rationalisation. Year 13 students were on study leave during the week of the inspection. Judgements, therefore, are largely based on the revised Year 12 provision.

HOW GOOD THE SIXTH FORM IS

Provision, overall, is satisfactory, although there are some significant weaknesses. There have been improvements this year as a result of changes to the curriculum. The sixth form is now cost effective in Year 12. However, the very small number of students in Year 13 means that the sixth form, overall, does not yet provide satisfactory value for money. Although limited in student numbers, the college is making an inclusive provision for students who would otherwise be unlikely to remain in full time education and is providing a significant opportunity for further maturation. Standards are low, due to the students' low levels of basic skills when they enter the sixth form. However, achievement, overall, is satisfactory and students make good progress when measured against their prior learning. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and sometimes good. Leadership and aspects of day to day management of the sixth form have some weaknesses, as has the overall support for students.

Strengths

- Students' achievements in science, information technology and leisure and recreation are good.
- Teaching and learning in science, information technology and leisure and recreation are good.
- There are good relationships between students and teachers and students appreciate the help given to them by their teachers.
- Students' achievement on the Sports Leadership Award is very good.
- The percentage of students who stay on in full time education is now rising.
- There is increasing collaboration with other local post-16 providers.
- The radical refocusing of curriculum provision to improve the cost effectiveness of the sixth form.

What could be improved

- Leadership and management: the systems and structures for monitoring progress, evaluating learning and improving learning targets for students.
- Standards in business education and mathematics.
- The level of student support, particularly in key skills, to ensure that they can make the best use of the curriculum provision.
- Links with the community and industry to develop students' awareness of future options.
- Attendance and punctuality and its monitoring.
- Students' involvement in the life of the main part of the college.

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

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION IN INDIVIDUAL CURRICULUM AREAS

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

Curriculum area	Overall judgement about provision, with comment
English	Satisfactory. Standards are below average. Students' achievement is satisfactory, but the GCSE resit examination is not appropriate for all students in the group.
Mathematics	Unsatisfactory. Standards are below average. Students' achievement is unsatisfactory. The GCSE resit examination does not meet all students' needs.
Science	Good. Standards are above average in the initial work. Achievement is very good because of the very good teaching. Students have a good understanding of the vocational links with science.
Business Education	Unsatisfactory. Standards are below average and students' achievement is unsatisfactory. The monitoring and assessment of students' work is weak. Co-ordination of the course and support for teachers are inadequate. Teaching in lessons is satisfactory.
Leisure and Tourism	Satisfactory. Standards are below average. Students' achievement is satisfactory. Teaching in lessons is satisfactory and sometimes good.

Other GNVQ courses in Information Technology and Leisure and Recreation were sampled. Students achieve well in both of these courses because teaching is good. There is insufficient use made of information and communication technology throughout the sixth form courses and limited provision for students to access computers in their private study time. This curtails independent work that students can undertake outside lesson time. Students have positive attitudes to their work and enjoy good relationships with their teachers and each other. They have few opportunities for full involvement in the life of the college. This limits students' personal development.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Aspect	Comment
How well students are guided and supported	Students are well supported by subject specialists within science, leisure and recreation and information technology courses. However, the impact of academic and personal support is limited due to high levels of absence and the arrangements for student counselling and guidance are unsatisfactory. The curriculum is limited by the lack of attention to the development of students' key skills.
Effectiveness of the leadership and management of the sixth form	The quality of leadership and management in the sixth form is unsatisfactory. Systems for monitoring students' progress, evaluating their learning and target setting for students are not fully in place. Monitoring of attendance and punctuality is unsatisfactory.

The college has appropriately altered its curriculum to provide a range of vocational courses more suited to students' needs. The college has costed this provision and, therefore, reduced the amount of subsidy to the sixth form.

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"> • The sixth form is overwhelmingly positive about the courses offered. • Students are appreciative of the greater attention afforded them in smaller groups in the sixth form and for the support and guidance of most of their teachers. • Advice given to them about other options within the Borough is seen as helpful. • Interviews with tutors about progress have been well received. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students wanted more ICT resources and better access to them for their studies.

Inspectors observed that support and guidance from tutors is limited by some students' poor attendance and punctuality. Inspection evidence also concurs with the students' views that they require greater access to ICT facilities in lessons and in their private study periods.

COMPARING PROVISION IN COLLEGES AND COLLEGES

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

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The college's results and students' achievements

Attainment refers to the standards achieved compared to national averages. Standards are also compared with results obtained in similar schools, that is those with a similar uptake of free school meals. **Achievement** refers to the progress students make in terms of where they started when they entered the school, or when they started their GCSE or sixth form courses. Thus, good achievement does not necessarily mean that standards are above average, but that students do well and make better than expected progress.

1. Overall attainment of students on entry to the college is well below the national average for comprehensive schools. In 2001, almost a third entered the college with standards in English at Key Stage 2 at Level 3 or below, more than a third of students in mathematics are at Level 3 or below and almost a fifth at Level 3 or below in science. Thirty eight per cent of students also have a reading age below 9.06 years and 20 per cent below 8.06 years. The prior attainment of students and their progress through the college should also be seen in the light of 14 per cent of students who are refugees and a third having English as a second language. Fifty three per cent of students are currently on the register of special educational needs for particular learning and emotional and behavioural difficulties, dyslexia and hearing impairment. A small but significant number of students' progress was hampered by lateness to lessons or absence, particularly in period one.
2. In 2001, by the end of Year 9, the attainment of students in the National Curriculum tests was below the national average in English and well below the national average in mathematics and science. A similar pattern emerged for those reaching the higher Level 6. However, when comparing the college with similar schools and taking the average point score into consideration the English results at Key Stage 3 are above average for similar schools, although still well below for mathematics and science. The trend over the last five years reflects the national trend, although lower than the national trend. There has been an improving pattern of results in the college for the last three years and the results in 2001 were the highest results it has achieved at Key Stage 3.
3. At Key Stage 4 in 2001 the percentage of students achieving 5 or more A* - C grades was very low in comparison with the national averages and well below for students with 5 or more A* - G grades. However, in comparison with all schools nationally, all students achieved at least 1 A* - G grade. This included all the students on the vocational access programme (for disaffected students) and reflects the college's commitment to inclusion for all of its students. When comparing the 2001 GCSE results with the prior attainment of this same group of students at Key Stage 3, the 5 A* - G grades are above average for similar schools and for 1 A* - G was well above average for similar schools. The school is doing well for its lower prior attaining students and there is clear value added from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4. The trend over the last five years at GCSE has fluctuated and the results are, however, lower than the national trend. The college had predicted its headline target grades for GCSE and only just missed its target figure. However, as the college is part of the Excellence in Cities initiative, the targets set for them were considerably higher than Key Stage 3 test results would have indicated that these students could achieve. The results in 2001 at GCSE for boys was considerably better than that of girls and black Caribbean boys did well. There were no discernable differences in the rate of progress made by boys or of any particular ethnic groups in the lessons observed.
4. In English, GCSE results have varied over the last three years. They are well below the national average for A* - C grades. However, in English literature the results are closer to, although still below the national average. In mathematics, results have been below the national average at grades A* - C for the last three years, but above national averages for lower grades. There has

been an increase in the higher grades in science in 2001, but the longer term trend for the higher GCSE grades is still below the national average.

5. In art, music and French the GCSE results for 2000 were above the national average. In chemistry, biology, history, geography, drama and physical education the results were below the national averages, but were significantly above the college's overall subject average (subject relative performance) for higher GCSE grades.
6. Inspection evidence indicates that students in Years 7 to 9 make at least satisfactory and often good progress in relation to their starting point. They achieve well in some aspects of English, drama, design and technology, art, geography, history, ICT, music, physical education and religious education. Achievement for students in writing is less secure and there are inconsistencies in the progress made by students in mathematics and science. Students in Years 10 and 11 make satisfactory progress in most subjects, including English, mathematics, science, geography, history, French, ICT, but a number are hampered by poorly developed literacy and numeracy skills. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 in art, design and technology, music, physical education and religious education is good.
7. Students with special educational needs make good progress, overall. Many make very good progress, especially in overcoming social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, because of the sensitive support provided by teachers, teaching assistants and learning mentors. However, those with literacy difficulties make slower progress. They do not receive sufficient, regular, specific tuition in basic literacy to improve their skills significantly. By the end of Year 11 in 2001, all students with special needs had some success at GCSE. A number of students with special needs continue to study successfully in the sixth form and achieve qualifications.
8. Students with English as an additional language make steady progress in Years 7 –11, which is further supported by the homework club and again in 2001 these pupils all achieved graded results at GCSE.

The sixth form

9. The number of students in the sixth form is small and this makes comparisons with national statistics insecure. Year 13 students were on study leave during the week of the inspection and this reduced the number of lessons available to observe. Nevertheless, although the numbers were very small in last year's A Level groups, most students achieved a graded pass in their examinations and some students gained results in art and design, biology, chemistry, textiles and Urdu at grades A and B.
10. Standards in relation to national norms for the General National Vocational Awards in science, leisure and tourism, leisure and recreation and information technology were judged by inspectors to be comparable with those nationally. It is not possible to judge standards over time because of the revised provision this year. In 2000, 95 per cent of students achieved a vocational qualification which showed an improvement on 1999 when 77 per cent achieved a qualification. In 2001, 72 per cent achieved a qualification.
11. Students join the sixth form with very low levels of attainment in the General Certificate in Secondary Education from Year 11. In science, their achievement and progress in learning was judged to be very good. They achieve well in leisure and recreation and in information technology. Students' achievement in English and in leisure and tourism is satisfactory. Their achievement in business education and mathematics is unsatisfactory. Students' achievement is often limited by their poor levels of basic skills, their lack of study skills and by poor attendance. Many students have substantial family commitments and the majority have part-time employment. The achievement of those students with special educational needs and English as an additional language is satisfactory because teachers are aware of their needs and the classes are sufficiently small.

12. In GCSE in English, standards are below average. However, students' achievement is satisfactory. For example, in a unit on reports, the writing of two thirds of the class was comparable with their peers in other schools nationally. All students were writing at a higher level than the last time they took the examination.
13. In the General Certificate in Secondary Education in mathematics, standards are lower than average and achievement is unsatisfactory. For example, Year 12 students found it difficult to complete and use cumulative frequency graphs or factorise and simplify algebraic equations. This is because students are not supported sufficiently to gain a sound foundation in the application of number.
14. In the vocational course in science, students are achieving good standards. They are developing good scientific skills. They analyse data and write reports. The higher attaining students draw conclusions from their work.
15. In the vocational courses in business education, standards are below average. Students' achievement is unsatisfactory. The work of students who are on the Advanced Level course contains too many gaps and insufficient case study analyses. Through an understanding of profit and loss, intermediate students calculate the profitability of a business, but the materials they use are inappropriate.
16. In the vocational course in leisure and tourism, students' standards are comparable with those nationally. Students' achievement is sound. They find out about a satisfactory range of leisure and tourism opportunities in the local area. The higher attaining students make sound judgements when they evaluate quality of leisure opportunities.
17. In the vocational course in Advanced leisure and recreation, the standard of students' work is sound. They achieve very well in practical activities, but their achievement, overall, is limited by their low levels of basic skills. Students are developing a very good understanding of health and fitness. For example, they design and deliver exercise sessions for their peers.
18. In the Intermediate and Advanced Level vocational courses in information technology, standards are satisfactory and students make good progress. For example, when designing and making stationery, their work is well related to business contexts. They make good use of the Internet. Students on the advanced level course develop a good understanding of computer networks.
19. In Year 12, 16 students have been taken off roll since the beginning of this year and numbers on the vocational courses have stabilised.

Students' attitudes, values and personal development

20. The majority of students attending the college have good attitudes to learning. They are well motivated and enjoy their lessons. These students are able to organise themselves, behave well and take advantage of the opportunities the college offers. For example, in a Year 9 art lesson students were keen to work, showed enthusiasm and behaved well. The lesson was characterised by lively interaction between the teacher and students and inclusive, focused teaching resulted in good standards of work. There has been a significant improvement in standards achieved in this aspect of college life since the last inspection. A minority of students show unsatisfactory attitudes to college. They arrive late to lessons, chat and are unable to sustain concentration unless directly supervised. Litter is a problem in the playgrounds, which premises staff ensure is cleared at break and lunchtimes.
21. Parents and students say that youngsters enjoy college and that they feel safe and comfortable in college. In informal settings, such as break and lunchtime, there is little bad language from students.
22. Behaviour at the college is good, overall. Students are co-operative and friendly and the college is a harmonious place. Students report little bullying and all are clear on how to access the

college's effective support systems if they have problems. All adults in college manage behaviour in a positive manner and there are a number of effective strategies in place to encourage and sustain good behaviour. For example, students are given the opportunity to put things right if they misbehave and to do community service as reparation. The college takes care to give praise where it is due and contacts parents and carers promptly to discuss both good and bad behaviour. Parents are pleased with the college's practice and students regard procedures and teachers as fair. Standards have improved greatly since the last inspection. Parents say that the local community has noted the improvements achieved.

23. Exclusions at the college have been reduced considerably since the last inspection because of effective strategies put in place to combat poor behaviour. There is a higher number of Caribbean boys excluded compared to the whole college population. The college has undertaken extensive analysis of patterns of exclusions and the ethnic imbalance occurs because many of these students have already exhibited emotional and behavioural problems in their primary schools. The college uses exclusion as a last resort and tries other avenues before exclusion. Behaviour management systems in the college help students to improve as they move through the college and the imbalance lessens accordingly in later years. There is good racial harmony in the college.
24. Students' personal development is good in the main college. Students are generally keen to take responsibility where it is offered and participate enthusiastically in the extra-curricular activities offered. The student council is highly regarded by students and staff and the council's contributions are valued. The Vocational Access Programme (VAP) for disaffected students offers very good support and provides effective learning for them.
25. Attendance and punctuality at the college are still unsatisfactory, although reported attendance statistics are in line with national standards. In the week of the inspection attendance was low with a number of students unaccounted for in a high proportion of lessons.
26. The college has made a good improvement since the last inspection in the behaviour of students, although there is still more to be achieved in the area of attendance and punctuality. Where good levels of attendance are achieved there is a positive impact on learning.

Sixth form

27. Students stay on in the sixth form because they appreciate being in small groups where they receive more individual attention than in Key Stage 4. The fact that teachers know them well is a further significant reason affecting their decisions. Behaviour is good and sixth formers are helpful. They are co-operative, biddable and want to learn. Students have under-developed study skills and are not confident learners. However, they reported that they appreciated well-focused feedback from the majority of their teachers. In lessons it was observed that their confidence visibly increased when they were given positive feedback. Many of them are not ready to take responsibility for their own learning and have a limited understanding of what it means to be a full-time student.
28. The sixth form has too little involvement in the life of the main college, which hinders an important aspect of their personal development. Although some Year 12 students do community service within the college, for example helping at college functions, this is not the norm. Many students have considerable family and work commitments outside the college, which limits the amount of time they have available outside college hours. Nevertheless, students on the leisure and recreation course work productively with primary school pupils on the Sports Leader Award. Good support and teaching on this course enabled them to run exercise sessions for their peers as part of an adult learning module.
29. Attendance in the sixth form is poor. Students are expected to sign in and out, but this is insufficiently well monitored. Although attendance in lessons is much better than that indicated on the signing in forms, it is very poor in tutor sessions. Those who do attend registration value the support they gain from form tutors.

HOW WELL ARE STUDENTS TAUGHT?

30. Across the college, as a whole, the quality of teaching is good.
31. Teaching is satisfactory or better in nearly all lessons and good or better in seven out of ten lessons. Teaching was less than satisfactory in a very small minority of lessons and no poor teaching was seen. This is a marked improvement in the quality of teaching from the last inspection when teaching in one in five of lessons was unsatisfactory.
32. Teachers show a good understanding of their specialist subject areas. Features of effective teaching include:
 - the thorough coverage of all areas of the National Curriculum programmes of study in modern foreign languages;
 - a wide variety of teaching styles, promoting an interesting range of activities, for example in geography, music and in the support provided for students with SEN;
 - challenging questioning in English, drama, physical education and in geography;
 - planning to ensure progression in learning in science, mathematics and design and technology;
 - very good strategies for promoting good behaviour in English and music;
 - high expectations of all students in physical education and modern foreign languages;
 - the excellent resources used to support learning in geography;
 - the use of assessment to inform students' learning in science, mathematics, geography and, for students with SEN, through individual education plans;
 - good support teaching for students with English as an additional language after college;
 - good support for students with hearing impairment.
33. In the best lessons, teachers plan to meet the learning needs of their group and of individuals within it. This includes students with SEN and English as an additional language. Both groups make good progress in lessons throughout the college. The specialist provision made for these students is also thoroughly planned to meet their learning needs. More able students are also identified in most lessons and the opportunities provided to extend their learning are always satisfactory and often good. Teachers' management of behaviour is very good, overall, and provides a calm atmosphere for learning to take place. The college further supports effective behaviour through the post of an advanced skills teacher with a role for training teachers in effective classroom control.
34. As a consequence of effective teaching, students of all abilities and ethnic backgrounds make good progress in both Key Stage 3 and 4. Good management of their learning allows them to develop knowledge, skills and creativity at a brisk pace. Across the college as a whole, students showed good understanding of what they had to do in lessons and in homework tasks. In contrast, however, their ability to work independently was no better than at expected levels in both key stages. Students with English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress and most acquire effective learning strategies through the support offered by the teachers specifically recruited to help them.
35. In some lessons, students adopt a more passive approach to their learning. In other lessons, particularly where teaching is very good and excellent, students are encouraged to reflect on their own learning and develop individual study skills. In general, however, students need to be exposed to a wider range of teaching strategies to promote their own self learning skills rather than relying on teacher instruction. The appointment of an advanced skills teacher for thinking skills recognises this need within the college and will enable the development of teaching skills in this area.
36. The college has five advanced skills teachers, three of whom have recently been appointed. They are already playing an important role in increasing the quality of teaching by coaching and developing teachers' classroom repertoire.

37. Overall, the teaching of students with special educational needs is good. Teachers in the special educational needs department have a very good understanding of methods of teaching basic literacy skills to small groups of students. In the best lessons, they make good use of prior assessment to plan appropriate activities that keep students interested and develop their reading and writing skills. They manage students well to ensure that they make good use of the available time. However, in a few of these lessons, teachers do not focus sufficiently on students' individual needs. They ask all students to do the same work, rather than helping individuals with the different spellings and letter patterns that they find difficult and this is unsatisfactory.
38. Some students with social, emotional and behaviour difficulties are withdrawn from some mainstream lessons in Years 7,8 and 9 because they are at risk of exclusion. They are taught for part of their timetable in small groups in the Learning Enhancement Centre. Teachers in the centre plan lessons well. They help students to cope with their difficulties by, for example, discussing what makes them angry and ways that they can deal with their feelings and emotions. Teachers manage these students firmly but calmly. They avoid confrontation skilfully and their good relationships with the students encourage them to try hard and learn well. Similarly, in Years 10 and 11, teachers on the vocational access programme (VAP) boost the confidence of students with severe social and emotional difficulties. They provide skilful individual support so that students work well and make very good progress over time. As a result, several students who have been excluded from other schools achieved well in the Youth Award Scheme and some gain GCSE passes.
39. In all subjects, teachers take account of the needs of students on the special educational needs register. They plan lessons carefully and usually give clear explanations so that these students learn successfully in mainstream classes. Subject teachers work closely with support teachers and teaching assistants from the special needs department. This has a positive impact on students' progress. In most lessons, this enables support staff to provide effective help for students with special educational needs. However, occasionally, teachers spend too much of the lesson leading whole class discussion and this prevents support staff from helping individuals or small groups of students.

Sixth form

40. Overall, teaching is at least satisfactory in Year 12 and sometimes good or very good. Students work productively in lessons and are keen to learn. The quality of teaching in English, science, leisure and tourism, information technology and leisure and recreation is good. In the best lessons, for example in leisure and recreation, students are given responsibility for their own learning and the teaching is skilfully structured to ensure that students achieve successful outcomes. In science and information technology students are given very clear written feedback. Where teaching is particularly successful, teachers aim to address the development of students' subject knowledge, skills and understanding and also their study skills. In good lessons, students learn to hypothesise, analyse situations and draw conclusions. Where teachers use a good range of teaching strategies, deliver lessons with enthusiasm and make good use of humour there is a marked impact on students' pace of learning. In good lessons, the most effective teaching is well matched to students' individual needs, because the teacher has made effective use of students' baseline data to understand students' different starting points. As a result, students find the work challenging, but achievable. For example, in science lessons, teachers tailor questions appropriately for individual students. Teachers present good role models to students. Their respect and encouragement are demonstrated through interactions within the lesson and in the quality of the preparation before the lesson. Students appreciate the way most teachers treat them as adult partners in the learning process. Students learn best when the teachers reinforce key points throughout the lessons and ensure that learning has been effective before moving on to the next stage.
41. The quality of teaching is less effective where teachers give too much information in lessons. Students become particularly passive and the pace of their learning is reduced. In some lessons, students are not encouraged to involve themselves as active learners. Where teachers' expectations are lower, for example, students do not remove their out-door clothes at the

beginning of lessons, late students are not challenged and there is too little reinforcement of good study habits. Teachers did not remind students to use their diaries to organise their work and literacy and numeracy are not systematically reinforced. Some teachers do not give sufficient feedback to students to help them to understand their strengths and what they should do to improve. This limits the quality of their learning.

42. Overall, teachers plan appropriately for the lessons, but sometimes there is an insufficient focus on outcomes, resulting in a slower pace to lessons. In these lessons, students do not have a sense of urgency about their work. The teaching of study skills and key skills such as communication, application of number, information technology, working with others and problem solving are not always systematically built into all lessons. Nevertheless, since the last inspection teaching has improved.

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

43. The curriculum is broad and balanced in Key Stages 3 and 4, but the use of ICT in most subjects across the curriculum does not meet statutory requirements. The Key Stage 3 curriculum includes all the required subjects and all students have the same opportunities. ICT is taught as a separate subject in each year and students have the opportunity to study French and Spanish. The RE course follows the locally agreed syllabus. Good curricular opportunities are made available for students with English as an additional language and for students with hearing impairment.
44. In Key Stage 4, students follow a core course of English, mathematics, science, physical education, ICT, personal and social education (PSE), careers education, religious education and a good range of options. Not all students study a modern language and design and technology, because 201 students have been disapplied from the National Curriculum requirements, following the appropriate guidelines, to help match the curriculum to their needs. Since the last inspection, the Key Stage 4 curriculum has been improved by the introduction of GCSE short courses in religious education and ICT for all students and the introduction of some vocational education courses. The Vocational Access Programme has been successfully introduced to meet the needs of disaffected students with no record of success with traditional schooling. The course includes well organised work experience for two days each week and work in college which includes English, mathematics, ICT, art, design and technology and physical education. In 2001, all of the students achieved well. Part 1GNVQ courses are provided in ICT and leisure and tourism.
45. A sound start has been made to the teaching of literacy skills through other subjects, with some particularly effective work in geography and physical education. The weakness is that there is no special provision for students who enter the college with literacy skills that are below average. Numeracy skills are effectively taught in mathematics and a start has been made to improving the teaching for those students who enter the college with numeracy skills that are below average, using the National Numeracy Strategy catch up programme. There is not yet a planned programme for teaching and reinforcing numeracy skills through other subjects.
46. The college ensures that all students have access to the curriculum. For example, there is effective support for students with English as an additional language. Work is generally well matched to the range of students' attainment and, for example gifted and talented students are identified and receive appropriate special provision both within lessons and in extra-curricular activities, such as fencing in physical education. Successful summer schools in literacy and numeracy have taken place. This has enabled students with lower prior attainment in these areas, who are about to join the college, to participate in activities designed to enhance their skills.
47. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. The range and quality of sports and games offered by physical education are excellent. About 40% of students are involved and successful in many competitions. The Specialist College Status supports this well. All subjects provide study support, for example for coursework and revision for GCSE geography. Other activities include the Duke of Edinburgh Award, a breakfast club and an Amnesty International group. Some activities are targeted for specific students.
48. Provision for students' personal and social education (PSE) is good. The course is very well planned by a group of teachers and includes a range of relevant topics, such as drugs education, healthy living and sex education. It is taught by specialist teachers and students treat it as seriously as their other subjects. Their work is regularly marked and assessed and students receive PSE reports.
49. The provision for careers and vocational education is good. Vocational courses have been introduced in Years 10 and 11 to help match the curriculum to the different needs of students. There is a well planned scheme of careers education for Years 9, 10 and 11 with a good level of

specialist teaching. Work experience is well organised and effective for students in Year 10 and students' achievements are certificated by an external agency. Careers guidance is provided by a specialist careers service, and a careers adviser works in the college for two days every week. Many students have individual careers interviews and, during the target setting day, six careers advisers are in the college and provide interviews for any Year 11 students who request them. The college has a partnership agreement with the careers service, but there is not an overview of all aspects of provision. The careers library is in the main college library, but there are insufficient computers with Internet links and paper resources are tucked away in a corner and are not attractively displayed, detracting from their use. The college prepares students well for their next stage of education and guides those Year 12 students wishing to study A levels to other schools and colleges.

50. The community makes a good contribution to students' learning. For example, learning mentors from businesses support some students in Year 11, many Year 9 students have a day of work shadowing and the local environment is used by many subjects, including geography and GNVQ courses. The physical education department has links with several local clubs so that students can continue with sport when they leave college.
51. The relationships with partner institutions are very constructive and make a good contribution to students' learning. As a Sports College, Southfields has links with many primary and secondary schools and provides training and support with teaching, extra-curricular events and competitions. A sports summer school is held at the college. These initiatives are helping to raise standards in physical education for students entering the college in Year 7. The college is also the host college for the School Sport Co-ordinator Programme which provides links with many other primary and secondary schools. At both key stages, students benefit from many competitive sports and specialist coaching because of the college's involvement in these activities. The college also hosts annual physical education and arts festivals in the summer term for local primary schools and these provide students with good opportunities for leadership and collaborative working with younger students.
52. As part of the central Government's 'Excellence in Cities' initiative the college has been developing its provision for gifted and talented students since 1999. The local context of selective secondary schools has meant that in the past the most able students have not opted for Southfields. This is illustrated by the relatively low percentage of students achieving the highest grades in national examinations. Last year, for example in the assessment tests for 14 year olds, fewer than 4 per cent of students attained level 7 or above compared to 23 per cent nationally.
53. Nevertheless, the college has used its gifted and talented programme creatively to extend the opportunities it provides for its most able young people. Under the management of the deputy headteacher, departments now identify up to 10 per cent of their students as gifted and talented and bid for funding to provide enhanced learning opportunities and resources to meet their needs. At the whole college level, productive links have been made with the Brunel University urban scholars programme, with Robinson College Cambridge and with Wandsworth Children's University, which the college hosts. Curriculum events such as a Saturday science masterclass and a study support programme for able Year 9 students (taught by the college's advanced skills teacher for thinking skills) are a regular feature of provision for targeted students. Good progress has been made in increasing the profile of this area of provision both within the college and the local community. Since April 2001, a post of responsibility for gifted and talented students has been appointed. This appointment should allow the college to monitor more effectively the impact of this work on raising the achievement of the most able.
54. There are good opportunities for students' spiritual development. Since the previous inspection, opportunities for spiritual development through subjects have improved. Many subjects provide opportunities including history, religious education, art, music and physical education. For example, in history there is much work on developing empathy, in music students' emotions are fostered by listening to music and they are encouraged to make a personal response to what they hear, and in physical education and art there are opportunities for imagination and creativity. Religious education makes an important contribution and provides students with opportunities to

consider life's fundamental questions as well as exploring beliefs and values through the study of religions. The homework club for students with English as an additional language is very supportive and caring of the students who attend. The college emphasizes the value of each individual student and provides an ethos in which all students can grow and flourish.

55. The quality and frequency of assemblies have improved since the last inspection and have a sense of occasion. They are based on a programme of themes and contribute positively to the corporate life of the college. The themes encourage students to explore questions of value and belief. There is a weekly assembly for each year group based on a thought for the week. It is intended that the assembly is followed by a brief class discussion on the theme on the following day. During the inspection, there were good quality assemblies on the theme of inequality on a global scale and how individuals can make a contribution to this through the purchase of fair trade products. Some links were made between beliefs and behaviour and the assemblies provided good opportunities for moral development and citizenship. The students were attentive and well behaved and clapped spontaneously. Weaknesses in provision are that the college still does not meet the statutory requirement of a daily act of collective worship. However, there is effective cohesion between the assemblies and the work planned for tutorial time.
56. Opportunities for moral development are very good and have improved since the previous inspection. Teachers take a clear moral stance and model moral behaviour through the relationships they have with each other and the students. The college provides a clear moral code and actively promotes equality in all aspects of its work. It fosters values such as honesty and fairness through assemblies and the way behaviour is managed as students are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions. Many subjects make a strong contribution. For example, in religious education there is work on greed and giving to charity, issues such as human transplants are debated in science and in history, the changing nature of protest movements is studied. In physical education, students respect fair play and the laws of the games. The personal and social education (PSE) course includes a moral philosophy unit and moral issues are explored in topics such as drugs education and bullying.
57. There are good opportunities for students' social development and all subjects make a contribution. For example, in art, students work well in pairs and other groups as they co-operate and help each other. In religious education, they are encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour and work. The very wide range of sporting activities promote team work very effectively. In design and technology, students are encouraged to co-operate and share tools, while older students discuss the social impact of their designs. The PSE course includes contributions from the community police officer and community nurse and cover a wide range of social issues such as race and media, financial education and politics. Students can also become sports leaders through the physical education department, enabling students to develop sporting and leadership skills with younger students.
58. There are various opportunities to assume roles of responsibility within the college. Older students can become peer mentors to newly arrived students. This system is much appreciated by the Year 7 students and the training received by older students enables them to deal with potentially difficult situations. Year 10 and 11 students can also take on the role of prefects and again, the training offered is extremely valuable to those who are involved. The college has an effective student council. Students are elected onto the Council by their peers. Students are involved in the democratic process and this makes a difference to aspects of college life. Although provision for personal development is good, it is not explicitly planned on a whole-college basis and there is no monitoring in simple pragmatic ways of how well the college as a whole is doing.
59. Opportunities for cultural development have improved since the previous inspection and are now good. For example, world music is part of the music curriculum, the attitudes, values and traditions of diverse religions are taught sensitively in religious education, art includes work from many different cultures, and modern languages includes French and Spanish poetry and songs. History makes a strong contribution to students' cultural development through, for example, the study of black Americans and the role of women. The college's values are reinforced through display in many areas and these celebrate students' achievements and their cultural diversity.

The college's commitment to equality of opportunity is a particular strength. A wide range of activities provide opportunities for cultural development, including special events such as the cultural awareness day in 2001 and the very good range of extra-curricular activities. There is scope to extend the contribution that English makes to students' knowledge of the richness and diversity of cultures.

60. A key issue at the last inspection was to increase the opportunities for students' spiritual and cultural development and this has been achieved.

Sixth form

61. The college's recent reorganisation of the curriculum for the sixth form is appropriately focused on vocational courses and A and A/S level courses are no longer offered as part of the provision for Year 12 from September 2001. There is increased collaboration with other local providers to ensure that students who are capable of Advanced Level studies are directed to appropriate institutions. The college's vocational curriculum offer is appropriate in this interim year and there are well-conceived plans for extending this provision next year. Although a course of key skills was delivered last year, the level of difficulty in the tests and the students' low levels of basic skills led to a decision to offer re-sits this year in GCSE English and mathematics. However, the GCSE courses have proved too difficult for a number of students and failed to meet their needs. The vocational courses are, therefore, not supported by appropriate tailor-made courses in key skills to support students to the level required. This aspect of the sixth form provision is, therefore, unsatisfactory.
62. Students have very good opportunities to consider spiritual, moral and social issues through the religious education element of the personal and social education course. All students have an opportunity to attend a sports or fitness session each week. Although there is an expectation that students will be involved in the college through community service they are given too little encouragement and support to make best use of this facility. There is too little emphasis on the development of students' understanding of the community and industry.

HOW WELL DOES THE COLLEGE CARE FOR ITS STUDENTS?

63. The college takes good care of its students' welfare and safety. This care is evident in all relationships in the college, in teachers' knowledge of students and their needs and in how the college acts to promote the best interests of all its students.
64. Students receive good pastoral support from heads of year and form tutors in Years 7 to 11. There is an effective induction programme for new students and, whenever possible, tutors stay with the same groups throughout the college, thus ensuring that each student is well known and that close links are developed with parents. This arrangement supports students well, both academically and personally.
65. There are effective health and safety procedures, such as fire evacuation practice and whole college and department risk assessments. There is a separate medical room and several members of staff, including a member of the office team, have first aid training. Notices concerning fire evacuation procedures and named medical officers are very much in evidence in and around the college. Medicines are kept in a secure place and there are good arrangements for dealing with emergencies. Work-related opportunities conform to health and safety criteria and the college promotes healthy and safe living. Risk assessment is undertaken regularly and the site manager and his staff undertake necessary minor repairs as necessary. Legal requirements are met in relation to portable appliance testing.
66. Very good child protection procedures are in place. They are fully understood by staff and comply with local procedures. Child protection awareness forms an important part of the induction programme for new staff and all staff receive training to maintain and update their knowledge and understanding. The college complies with current legislation to ensure that there are police checks on staff.

67. The college now has effective procedures in place for improving attendance, although these have yet to have a full impact. These include a breakfast club, cups awarded to the tutor groups with the best attendance records and regular checks on attendance by tutors and heads of year. There is, however, an omission in the college's attendance policy which does not make it clear at what point a student is no longer late, but absent for a morning session. This has resulted in under reporting of unauthorised absences. The college is now aware that this is unsatisfactory and had already addressed the issue during the inspection week. In addition, there are weaknesses in the registration systems for the VAP group and the sixth form. Neither of these groups of students has a centrally held master register. This is unsatisfactory. Registers in the main college are taken efficiently and marked correctly. Parents reported they are contacted promptly if their children do not attend regularly and promptly.
68. There are very good procedures and clear expectations for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for eliminating any oppressive behaviour. These are rigorously pursued. Several different strategies are available to support individual students. These include: the provision of learning mentors, a pastoral support programme, support from the Learning Enhancement Centre, the college community service programme, a behaviour steering group, and a club specially devised for students who need support in their relationships with other people. Staff have high expectations of students as outlined in the behaviour policy, which is in evidence throughout the college. Many of these procedures have had a marked impact on improving behaviour over the last year and on decreasing the levels of exclusion.
69. Procedures for monitoring and supporting students' academic progress and their personal development are good. However, pupils who enter the college with low levels of literacy skills do not receive appropriately targeted literacy support, unless they are being supported by the special needs team. The college has a very well-developed target setting programme. It reinforces the links between students' academic progress and their personal development. The use of individual education action planning sessions offers students the chance to work on an individual basis with their tutor. Information is passed from curriculum managers and this, coupled with the tutor's knowledge of each individual, enables appropriate and relevant targets to be set. The programme undergoes rigorous monitoring and is considered to be very effective by both students and tutors alike.
70. The ethos of the college is positive and supportive and this is evident in all aspects of the care the college provides. The college provides well for the support and guidance of pupils who have recently come to this country and those for whom English is an additional language .
71. The college meets the requirements for students with special educational needs that are outlined in their statements. There is very good provision for the many students who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. A primary-secondary transfer project eases the transition of students who have experienced such difficulties in primary school before joining the college. Their progress during the first few weeks in the college is closely observed and appropriate counselling and support is provided. The Learning Enhancement Centre successfully provides suitable courses in anger management and social skills to help many students cope with their emotions. They receive further effective support from teaching assistants and learning mentors which helps them to overcome their difficulties and participate in mainstream lessons. In Years 10 and 11, a vocational access programme provides a suitable course of study and work experience for some students on the special needs register, many of whom have been excluded from other schools. As a result, many students with severe social and emotional difficulties remain at college and achieve qualifications. Students with literacy difficulties also receive good support in many subjects from special needs support staff. Provision for students with specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, is good. These students are withdrawn from one lesson a week for extra help with literacy skills.
72. The college has very good arrangements to monitor and support the welfare of students on the special educational needs register. It maintains close links with many external agencies to ensure that it provides for the needs of students as outlined in their statements of special needs.

The needs of looked after children are closely monitored. A teacher from the Learning Enhancement Centre has responsibility for these students and ensures that heads of year and form tutors are aware of their needs. The college has close links with the local social services department. On entry to the college, teachers help students to identify targets, linked to their personal and social development, which will help them settle into the college. They are then given sufficient support to help them achieve these goals.

Assessment

73. The college has introduced a comprehensive assessment, tracking and monitoring system in September 2001. College policies are mirrored in most departments and practice is generally in line with college policies. Systematic use of data is relatively new in Years 7-9, although monitoring of progress against expectations from end of Year 9 test results to GCSE results has been in place for several years. The analysis of progress for students of different prior ability, gender and ethnicity has been used to inform whole college and some departmental planning. Global assessments are gathered twice during each academic year, contributing to reports to parents. These include assessments of attainment, attitudes to learning and strategies to improve. Students have welcomed the introduction of bi-annual individual education action planning days. Parents are invited to a September day, which combine review of progress for the previous academic year, with target setting and agreeing action for the year to come.
74. A database of prior attainment from end of Year 6 tests and standardised national tests has recently been set up. This also includes the bi-annual whole college assessments and results in external tests and examinations. Year managers and senior managers use this for tracking and monitoring progress against expectations and providing an agenda for intervention with students identified as under-achieving. Some departments, such as science, geography, and mathematics already use the database, supplemented with more frequent subject-specific assessments, to monitor progress in the subject and tailor teaching more finely. There is room for further development of this approach, particularly in the foundation subjects in Years 7 to 9.
75. Students' work is marked regularly and, in most cases, effectively. Whilst there is generally good individual guidance and support for students, the marking does not always identify how they can make further progress.
76. The college has good procedures for identifying and assessing the needs of students on the special educational needs register. The needs of most pupils are quickly identified through information from primary schools and further assessment during their first few weeks in the college. As a result, the special needs department is able to provide teachers with clear advice about how to support individual students at the beginning of the college year. Special needs support staff write very useful individual education plans for these students, with clear, precise targets. Students and their parents know what they are expected to achieve and most subject teachers take account of these targets in their planning to help students learn effectively. Students' progress towards these targets is reviewed regularly. Annual reviews of students' statements are also carried out efficiently. However, the special needs department spends too long over the assessment of students with literacy difficulties. The individual reading test that is used provides limited information and takes up valuable teaching time at the beginning of the term. The college identifies half of its students as having special educational needs. However, many of these students experience few difficulties in lessons, but remain on the special needs register. Criteria for placement and removal from the register, therefore, need to be clarified. Teachers are also aware of the need to monitor more closely how well students on the special educational needs register achieve over time.

Sixth form

Assessment

77. Although the students are overwhelmingly positive about the support they receive, the support and guidance provided overall by the college is less consistent than in Years 7-11 and is therefore unsatisfactory. Students appreciate the support they receive from the majority of their teachers. Year 13 students were very appreciative of the support available through the revision clubs. Reports are often helpfully detailed. Students welcome the details given to them of their progress each half term. However, the progress checks are insufficiently used and followed up by teachers to ensure that consistent progress is made by all students. In some subjects, for example, in science, students receive weekly feedback so that they are aware of how to improve their work. This is not the case in all courses. Procedures for monitoring and assessing students' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory and this affects the speed with which the college can identify those students who are not succeeding.

Advice, support and guidance

78. Attendance in the sixth form is not routinely monitored, which prohibits the college from dealing with the variable levels of absence from some sessions. Some students are well supported through individual tutorials with form and subject teachers, which students report they value. However, the time available for academic counselling is inadequate, given the needs of these students. Furthermore, only about half of the students attend form periods. Individual students have targets, but these have not yet been developed into action plans. The lack of overall management concerning individual student needs limits the ability of the college to provide appropriately for all students, for example in developing students' competence in English and mathematics.
79. Careers education and advice to individual students, for example, through mentoring, in the main college is carefully structured to support students to make appropriate decisions about their plans post 16. Students are interviewed twice during Year 11 and at the beginning of Year 12 to ensure that they are placed on appropriate courses. Details of the interviewing process, however, are sketchy and inadequate to inform others of the reasons for the decisions that are made. Students' files contain insufficient information to be useful. Provision for careers education in Year 12 is delivered on a three-weekly cycle, but many students fail to attend. Work experience makes a good contribution to students' understanding of industry. Within the careers programme, there is too much emphasis at present on higher education, given the revised focus on vocational courses. Students' Records of Achievement are very well presented but do not always reflect a broad range of experiences matched to students' aspirations. Sixth form students have little involvement with the rest of the college, limiting an important part of their personal development opportunity. Although the numbers are small, the percentage of students going on to higher education has increased and is now approaching the levels of other sixth form providers locally.
80. Weekly lessons of personal, social and health education include religious education. Where they are taken by teachers with appropriate expertise in using interactive teaching strategies, they provide good support for students to develop their personal skills. For example, students were skilfully enabled to debate complex moral issues, because the teacher used structured group work and focused students' thinking through skilful questioning. Opportunities for problem solving and working with others is well promoted through courses such as leisure and recreation but there is no consistent approach to the development of these skills.

HOW WELL DOES THE COLLEGE WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

81. Parents and carers are pleased with the work the college does, including those parents with children in the sixth form. They are confident that their sons and daughters are happy, well cared for and are treated with respect. Parents say that behaviour and values fostered by the college are good and that the college is well run. Some parents would like more information on how their youngsters are progressing and what extra-curricular activities are available. The inspection team broadly agrees with parents' positive views, but judges that information on college life is good, overall. Approximately half of the sixth form students completed the students' questionnaire. These were overwhelmingly positive and there were no criticisms of the college.

82. Annual reports to parents on students' progress are of good quality and include work covered, what individuals know and can do and targets to help them to improve. They are not so consistent in information provided and targets for students in the sixth form. Reports are of better quality now than those reported on in the previous inspection. Parents are offered a good range of opportunities to find out about their children's progress. These include parents' evenings, individual target planning sessions, telephone contact with teachers for good (or bad) news and regular newsletters.
83. Students with special educational needs, behavioural problems or other difficulties are offered good support, with families involved promptly and fully. Some parents who do not speak English experience difficulties in accessing information as translation is not routinely done. This is unsatisfactory. Few of the language support staff speak languages other than English.
84. There is no Parent Teacher Association at the college and there are no plans to form one. The Headteacher says that she prefers to involve the whole local community in events such as Cultural Festivals and that fundraising is not appropriate in this community.
85. Overall parents make a satisfactory contribution to the college's work. They show a keen interest in how students are getting on and participate by attending meetings, helping with homework and responding positively to the teacher's contact with them. The great majority of parents and carers send their youngsters to college each day ready to learn and with good attitudes to college. This satisfactory involvement has a positive effect on learning. However, there are still a group of students who fail to attend school regularly or punctually, for whom parents and carers have a shared responsibility with the college to improve the situation.

HOW WELL IS THE COLLEGE LED AND MANAGED?

86. Overall leadership and management in the college are good. The leadership from the headteacher is a strength of the college and is well supported by the deputy headteacher. The headteacher provides a clear educational vision, which is shared by her senior management team, the staff and governors, generally. This has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning and the drive to raise standards in the college. Particular emphasis is placed on educational inclusion, improving behaviour and raising the quality of teaching and learning. Clear gains have been made in these areas since the last college inspection. The college has high expectations of its staff and of its students.
87. The college is committed to continuous improvement and has embarked on seeking additional funding to support these improvements, such as the Sports College Status, the Training School for initial teaching training, the City Learning Centre and the appointment of five advanced skills teachers. Most of these initiatives are recent and their impact has not had time to develop fully. However, indications are that they are already making a difference to the ethos and standards in the college and in the standing of the college within the local community. A number of trainee teachers undertake their initial training in the college's excellent training school facility, whilst newly qualified teachers have also received excellent support and guidance, using classroom video playback.
88. The college is an institution in challenging circumstances with very low prior attainment of a significant number of its students on entry to the college. The college's raising achievement plan (RAP), therefore, concentrates on raising achievement of all the students; developing positive student management and developing the community and outreach aspects of the college. The plan is a two year plan and appropriately involves all staff in the college. It is fully costed and has appropriate and clear success criteria. This will enable the college to effectively self evaluate. The Key Stage 3 Strategy is built into this plan and it is underpinned by high expectations. The plan was recently reviewed and is appropriately viewed by staff as a working document. Departments understand the relevance of the whole college plan and are able to reflect the whole college strategies within their departmental plans. It is a good strategic document, supporting the further development of the college.

89. Clear line management responsibilities have been assigned to senior and middle managers. The senior management team form a cohesive and effective team, which works hard to secure improvements and to ensure staff consultation, support and participation. All senior staff are involved in evaluating the quality of teaching, using an agreed and uniform system, which provides useful and developmental feedback to teachers. This has been a high priority for senior staff. Recently, the good quality of teaching was validated by external LEA evaluation. The college's system of performance management is in place and supports the information gathered on teaching and learning, within a developmental framework. Indications are that this is having a positive impact on standards within the college.
90. A recent borough wide HMI report identified that the provision in the sixth form was not cost effective. The college had previously been discussing this issue and took immediate steps to change the provision for Year 12 in September 2001, developing a curriculum along vocational lines. The college is in a transition phase this year in terms of making the sixth form provision fully cost effective. The sixth form curriculum will be further enhanced with other courses next year. The students that the college has retained are lower achieving students and are unlikely to move into further education directly from college. Although the resultant sixth form numbers are low, these students with predominantly low attainment are making good progress in their present placement.
91. Heads of department provide good professional leadership. There is no one with oversight of ICT across the curriculum, which leads to weaknesses in this aspect of ICT teaching. The teachers delivering the personal and social education programme are an effective and coherent team. Heads of year and their teams of tutors are very effective in providing good support and care for students.
92. The wide range of provision for students with special educational needs is well managed. Since the last inspection, the college has clarified the roles of the special needs coordinator and other key staff so that students' needs are met more effectively. The special educational needs policy has already been modified to meet the requirements of the new Code of Practice.
93. Governors provide a good level of support and challenge to the headteacher and bring a range of expertise to the college. They know the college well and have appropriately assigned responsibilities. They are able to contribute to the planning cycle of the college and understand the imperative of addressing the sixth form curriculum provision and its cost effectiveness. Governors take an effective strategic role in the college. Governors' committees work effectively and report back to the main Governing Body. Good relationships exist between the governors and the senior management team.
94. Procedures for financial management and control are effective and efficient. Governors exercise responsible oversight of the college's income and expenditure and are very ably guided by the college's director of finances and facilities. Together, they ensure and apply most effectively the principles of comparing, challenging, consulting and competing to ensure good value for money in the main part of the college. Government grants and standards funds are well managed, the latter supporting development within the raising achievement plan and performance management. The staff development programme is good and the college has recently been awarded 'Investors in People' status.
95. The college has a well qualified staff, although there are insufficient, fully qualified specialist mathematics teachers. The match of staffing levels, qualifications and experience is otherwise satisfactory. Classroom assistants are well deployed and teachers have been innovatively employed to support the college's drive towards educational inclusion.
96. The site manager and his staff work hard to ensure that the college's facilities are tidy. The learning environment is good in most teaching rooms and has effective display representing students' work from the subject area. Since the last inspection, the departments have been given suited rooms to ensure ease of communication and to create structured departmental areas. An ongoing programme of redecorating ensures that, for the most part, the college presents well.

97. The college's indoor sports facilities are inadequate and have an adverse effect on students' learning. There is also inadequate accommodation in art that precludes the development of three dimensional work.
98. The learning resources are satisfactory in most subjects, although a number of students do not have textbooks to take home for personal use. The library is well supported by a full-time librarian and has an adequate range of book resources. However, it is under-resourced in computer hardware for a modern resource centre. There are also insufficient computers overall for the size of the college and this has an impact on the ability of departments to teach the ICT required for their subject area. The City Learning Centre (a new facility with excellent computer suites, provided by external funding) is an excellent resource which is also used by the local community, but cannot be accessed by students working independently.

Sixth form

99. As a result of the college's concern about the sixth form provision, discussions within the local education authority and within the college have led to a more appropriate curriculum focusing on vocational qualifications, being implemented from September 2001. This new curriculum has been thoroughly costed to ensure that in Year 12 the main college no longer subsidises provision post-16. The rationalisation led to some students transferring to other local providers. A long-term plan has been produced to re-define the future of the sixth form.
100. There is insufficient monitoring of provision within business education, in particular, and across all courses in general. There are too few strategies for monitoring and improving students' regular attendance, especially in tutor groups and for following up on students' under- performance. Leadership and management of the sixth form are, therefore, unsatisfactory. However, management systems are being brought into line with other college monitoring procedures and close line management is now in place. Developments since the last inspection indicate that the college has the potential to improve its sixth form provision. Teachers, within courses, work collaboratively to provide coherent courses in science, information and communication technology, leisure and tourism and leisure and recreation.
101. Resources are inadequate. For example, students have too little access to information and communication technology to support their private study. The students have insufficient space for independent study, apart from the college library. Resources within the library are improving, but access to relevant information about careers, in light of new vocational courses, is limited.

WHAT SHOULD THE COLLEGE DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise levels of attainment and improve the quality of education in the college, the governors, senior management team and teaching staff need to:

- I. Raise attendance levels and improve procedures for accurately recording attendance and closure of registers for late arrivals by:
 - confirming with staff and students that lateness after an hour counts as unauthorised absence;
 - monitoring closely the attendance patterns in lessons and taking appropriate action;
 - ensuring that the vocational access programme register is sent daily to the main school office for inclusion with the whole college attendance data.

(Paragraphs 25, 67)
- II. Meet statutory requirements for information and communication technology in Years 8 and 9 and improve the application of students' ICT skills in all subjects by:
 - analysing schemes of work in all subjects for appropriate opportunities;

- timetabling subject use of ICT rooms to match identified opportunities;
- monitoring the impact of these opportunities in the evaluation of teaching and learning undertaken by the senior management team;
- ensuring that responsibility for ICT across the curriculum is designated through departments;
- increasing the number of computers as finances allow.

(Paragraphs 43, 98, 143, 157, 165, 171, 180, 186, 187, 199, 223)

III. Increase the range of teaching styles in order to improve further the quality of teaching and learning by:

- building on the already good teaching in a number of departments and using the advanced skills teachers to develop confidence in promoting a wider range of activities within lessons.

(Paragraphs 175, 199)

- IV. Promote the development of literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum by:
- the use of catch up materials in literacy and numeracy;
 - ensuring that all departments make full use of the Key Stage 3 Strategy when planning lessons.

(Paragraphs 45, 69, 124, 134,139, 145, 146)

- V. When opportunities arise, improve accommodation for indoor sports and art.

(Paragraphs 97, 157, 213)

Sixth form

- I. Improve the leadership and management of the sixth form to ensure that there are procedures for monitoring students' progress and the evaluation of provision in order to improve:

- attendance and punctuality;
- raise levels of sixth form recruitment;
- standards that students' achieve, particularly in mathematics and in business education;
- consistency of practice between teachers;
- provision for the development of key skills;
- students' involvement in the life of the main part of the college.

(Paragraphs 11, 13, 15, 28, 29, 35, 36, 41, 42, 62, 77, 78, 79, 100, 225, 227, 233, 254)

- II. Improve resources to ensure:

- greater access to information and communication technology;
- the provision of up-to-date teaching resources, particularly in business education.

(Paragraphs 101, 237, 239, 243)

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

English as an additional language (EAL)

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

Strengths

- The teachers are very committed to the students.
- The department runs a very effective homework club.
- The students are well motivated and learn quickly.
- The teaching is good.

Areas for improvement

- Provide more information to subject departments about students who have English as an additional language.
- Use more comparative data at the end of key stages to plan and inform the teaching.
- Develop additional teaching support strategies for use in the classroom.
- Ensure that there is consistent practice across the department.

103. There are 420 students in the college who have English as an additional language. About 80 of these students are at an early stage of English language acquisition. At the end of Year 11, there is no comparative GCSE data in the college to indicate the relative attainment of the students who have English as an additional language to those who do not. No overall comment can be made, therefore, about the standards of attainment in relation to national averages.

104. At the end of Year 9, there are no age-related average standards of attainment with EAL students, so attainment cannot be graded in the same way as other subjects of the curriculum. From the data supplied by the college, however, it is evident that the standards of attainment are at least on the same level as those of the other students in the college.

105. The number of students who have English as an additional language in the sixth form is very small, about seven.

106. Overall, the achievement of students over time is good. The students make steady progress in the lessons and this is well supported by the homework club. This progress is, in the main, the result of the good teaching which is characteristic of the department. Lessons are well prepared and the teachers know their students well. This provides a good basis for sound learning. The teachers use a range of methods to support the students in their learning, including prepared vocabulary sheets and the use of personal wipe boards. The students' learning would be further enhanced by the use of additional classroom strategies and methods, particularly in the instances where the lesson is led by the classroom teacher and where it is difficult to give verbal support without disturbing the lesson for other students. At times the seating arrangements in the classrooms are not to the best advantage of the students' learning, particularly when students are seated in rows and where it is difficult for the teachers to get through to help them. The teachers have a caring attitude towards the students and they are keen that they should do well. The students respect this and are eager to please and to get on with their learning. The work that is set is appropriate and demanding and, so, their learning is distinct and purposeful.

107. The attitudes and behaviour of the students are consistently very good. The students are well behaved and show an interest in their work. They are keen to learn and concentrate well on the work in hand. In the main they are able to maintain their concentration, though at times some concentration is lost, particularly when the EAL teacher is unable to give them the help they need, because of the large numbers requiring assistance. The students are respectful of the teachers and of other students, as well as being respectful of other people's viewpoints and opinions.

108. The department is well managed and there are good systems in place for the recording and reporting of students' work and progress. There is also good, extensive and detailed documentation. All the staff are part-time and, so, with the increasing number of students who have English as an additional language, it means that resources and staffing are increasingly stretched. The department received little attention at the last inspection and, so, no particular issues were raised at that time. The department is active in the use of information technology, as some of its lessons are held in the City Learning Centre. The department is making a significant contribution to the standards of literacy in the college with its emphasis on reading and writing. The department also makes a significant contribution to the provision of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimension of the college, particularly in the homework club which it runs after college. Here, students from different cultures and background work happily together and consolidate their learning. The accommodation and resources are good.

The Hearing Impaired Unit

109. Overall, the quality of provision is **good**.
110. The college houses a hearing impaired unit which is funded by the local education authority and currently supports 12 students with hearing impairment. All of these students are fully included in the mainstream curriculum and are supported in many lessons by teachers from the unit. Students make good progress in mainstream lessons. Occasionally, they are withdrawn from a few lessons for individual or small group tuition, which is often valuable in building confidence, language and communication skills. This group tuition in the unit is also effective in consolidating work that students have been learning in different subjects.
111. All subject teachers are made aware of the difficulties that hearing impaired students can experience. They use radio aids appropriately and plan their own position in the classroom thoughtfully, so that students can make the most of their lip-reading skills. Support teachers work effectively with students in many lessons. They know the schemes of work for the subjects in which they support and, when necessary, adapt teaching materials to ensure that their students can participate fully in lessons. They often provide sensitive guidance for students by providing enough help for them to complete work by themselves, but avoid the danger of students becoming too dependent on teachers' support. Occasionally, however, there is insufficient joint planning of lessons between subject and support teachers. In an English lesson, for example the emphasis on whole class discussion, led by the subject teacher, meant that the support teacher had little opportunity to help individual students.
112. The college meets the requirements for support, outlined in students' statements. For example, students with hearing impairment receive the speech therapy to which they are entitled. Annual reviews of students' statements of special educational needs and transition plans are carried out efficiently. Students' individual education plans provide useful extra guidance for mainstream teachers and parents and pupils are fully involved in regular reviews of progress.
113. The unit's arrangements for checking hearing aids and other audiological equipment are efficient. Close links with outside agencies ensure that students benefit from further advice and support when necessary.
114. The teacher in charge of the hearing impaired unit manages provision for these students very well. A particularly impressive feature is the close liaison with the special needs co-ordinator and other support staff. This results in a common approach to meeting the needs of all students on the special needs register and ensures that those with hearing impairment are included in all areas of the college curriculum.
115. Since the last inspection, accommodation for the hearing impaired unit has improved greatly. The new suite of rooms helps students to work and concentrate well in a quiet environment. Resources are also very good, although teachers are not yet making full use of the computers and digital camera which have recently been acquired.

PART C: COLLEGE DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	Years 7-11	168
	Sixth form	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and students		55

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Years 7-11							
Number	4	43	72	45	3	0	0
Percentage	2	26	43	27	2	0	0
Sixth form							
Number	0	7	10	11	0	0	0
Percentage	0	25	36	39	0	0	0

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

Information about the college's students

Students on the college's roll	Y7- Y11	Sixth form
Number of students on the college's roll	1309	94
Number of full-time students known to be eligible for free school meals	485	10

Special educational needs	Y7 - Y11	Sixth form
Number of students with statements of special educational needs	21	3
Number of students on the college's special educational needs register	680	14

English as an additional language	No of students
Number of students with English as an additional language	432

Student mobility in the last college year	No of students
Students who joined the college other than at the usual time of first admission	71

Students who left the college other than at the usual time of leaving

69

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
College data	8.6
National comparative data	8.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
College data	0.2
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 students in final Year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting Year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	122	113	235

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of students at NC level 5 and above	Boys	67	56	51
	Girls	69	41	51
	Total	136	97	102
Percentage of students at NC level 5 or above	College	58 (35)	41 (37)	43 (34)
	National	64 (63)	66 (65)	66 (59)
Percentage of students at NC level 6 or above	College	21 (7)	17 (23)	14 (9)
	National	31 (28)	43 (42)	34 (30)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of students at NC level 5 and above	Boys	48	52	54
	Girls	49	39	46
	Total	97	91	100
Percentage of students at NC level 5 or above	College	41 (24)	39 (32)	43 (26)
	National	65 (64)	68 (66)	64 (62)
Percentage of students at NC level 6 or above	College	9 (5)	14 (16)	17 (5)
	National	31 (31)	42 (39)	33 (29)

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

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

Number of registered students in final Year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	128	79	207

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of students achieving the standard specified	Boys	26	113	126
	Girls	9	61	80
	Total	35	174	206
Percentage of students achieving the standard specified	College	17 (24)	84 (85)	100 (98)
	National	48 (47)	91 (91)	96 (96)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per student	College	28 (31)
	National	39 (38)

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 students who achieved all those they studied	College	31
	National	N/A

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

Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 on roll in January of the latest reporting Year who were entered for GCE A-level or AS-level examinations	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	8	9	17

Average A/AS points score per candidate	For candidates entered for 2 or more A-levels or equivalent			For candidates entered for fewer than 2 A-levels or equivalent		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
College	13.5	11.6	12.5 (9.1)	0	0	0 (2.9)
National	N/A	N/A	N/A (18.2)	N/A	N/A	N/A (2.7)

Figures in brackets refer to the Year before the latest reporting Year. N/A = not yet available for 2001

Vocational qualifications	Number	% success rate
Number in their final Year of studying for approved vocational qualifications or	College	33
		72

units and the percentage of those students who achieved all those they studied	National		N/A
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International Baccalaureate		Number	% success rate
Number entered for the International Baccalaureate Diploma and the percentage of those students who achieved all they studied	College	0	NA
	National		NA

Ethnic background of students

	No of students
Black – Caribbean heritage	347
Black – African heritage	224
Black – other	0
Indian	24
Pakistani	80
Bangladeshi	12
Chinese	16
White	547
Any other minority ethnic group	32

Exclusions in the last college year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	33	0
Black – African heritage	5	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	1	0
Bangladeshi	1	0
Chinese	0	0
White	11	1
Other minority ethnic groups	5	1

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	89
Number of students per qualified teacher	15.5

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	19
Total aggregate hours worked per week	547

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	67
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y13

Key Stage 3	27
Key Stage 4	21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial Year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	4,743,304
Total expenditure	4,543,919
Expenditure per student	3636
Balance brought forward from previous year	442,987
Balance carried forward to next year	642,372

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the college during the last two years	20
Number of teachers appointed to the college during the last two years	35

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	8
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	6
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

1309

Number of questionnaires returned

366

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes college.	62	33	2	1	2
My child is making good progress in college.	62	35	1	0	2
Behaviour in the college is good.	52	40	2	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	45	4	1	1
The teaching is good.	58	36	1	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	36	4	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the college with questions or a problem.	66	26	2	0	4
The college expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	80	17	0	0	1
The college works closely with parents.	53	38	4	0	5
The college is well led and managed.	60	34	0	0	5
The college is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	34	2	1	3
The college provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	49	37	2	0	11

Overall, parents were pleased with the college and felt their children enjoyed college. They reported that both they and members of the local community had noticed a marked improvement in students' behaviour over the last year, in particular. They liked the rewards systems, particularly the 'stars' and thought the individual action planning sessions which they were invited to attend were good. The sanction of community service, rather than exclusion was very positive and helped students to see a better way of participating in college. There was concern about the number and quality of some supply staff in the college during 2000-2001.

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

ENGLISH

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

Strengths

- The consistent management of behaviour through non-confrontational, quietly assertive, techniques.
- A challenging question-and-answer approach to whole-class teaching.
- A clear focus on appropriate learning aims for whole groups and individuals.
- Effective planning to help maintain students' progress within and between individual lessons.
- The use of short starter activities to provide students with the basic information they need to make the most of both the lesson ahead and the wider curriculum.
- Lessons which develop at a brisk pace towards a final 'rounding up' of key learning points.

Areas for improvement

- Using a wider repertoire of teaching styles to fit the range of learning set out in the planning.
- Developing the support provided for students' use of ICT within English.
- Use of literacy support for those students who enter the college with low literacy skills.

116. On entry to the college, the overall standard of students' reading and writing is well below average. After three years in the college, standards show a marked increase. In 2001, the national tests for fourteen year olds revealed attainment in English close to the national average. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. At 16, however, attainment in GCSE for English is still below average. In last year's examination, the percentage of students achieving A*–C in English language fell to 22 per cent, which is well-below the average for all schools. In the literature examination, 43 per cent of students gained grade A*–C, which is closer to, though still below, the national standard.
117. Lower than average attainment is frequently seen in students' writing, where standards of organisation and sentence construction are often below the expected level for students of all ages and abilities. The department is aware of this problem and has been quick to address the issue. Since September, detailed schemes of work linked to the Key Stage 3 National Literacy Strategy have been produced, to help give students more explicit instruction in their basic skills work. It is too early to identify the impact of this.
118. Younger students often show a lack of fluency when reading aloud, which is a reflection of the large number of pupils who enter the college with a very low reading age. A concentration on wider reading skills brings many of these students to an appropriate standard by the time they begin their GCSE coursework. More able Year 8 students, working on Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, for example, show a well-developed understanding of the play through their close reference to the text and use of judicious supporting quotations.
119. Throughout the college, almost all students listen attentively in English and drama lessons. Standards in speaking, however, are often restricted by a narrow range of vocabulary. This is particularly the case where students are expected to use a more formal style of language. In some lessons, boys' talk is more limited than that of the girls.
120. Against the national trend, boys' attainment in reading and writing is close to that of girls in Key Stage 3. Equally, there is little significant variation in attainment in English between students of different ethnic backgrounds. In the 2001 national tests for fourteen year olds, for example, 55 per cent of black Caribbean students achieved a level 5 standard compared to 54 per cent of students from a white English-speaking background.

121. A strength of the department is students' desire to learn. Positive attitudes towards the subject are dominant in lessons. A willingness to contribute ideas, often spontaneously, is found among students of all abilities. Harmonious relationships between boys and girls and students of differing ethnic backgrounds are a feature of all English classes. Behaviour is almost always good and frequently very good among students of all ages.
122. The maintenance of a well-ordered working environment makes a positive contribution to students' learning. Up to age fourteen, students of varying abilities make at least satisfactory progress in lessons. In half, they make good or very good progress. In reading, many lower attaining students make good progress in their knowledge of poetic forms, from haiku in Year 7 to the sonnet in Year 8. In one Year 9 class, more able students made very rapid gains in their understanding of paragraph organisation when they were challenged to improve their writing style through a six-stage group competition.
123. While students in their final year of their GCSE course were not in college during the inspection week, those starting their examination work in Year 10 made good or very good progress in all of their English lessons. This year group has already made very good progress through the college as shown by the national assessment tests at the end of their Year 9. Students of all abilities revealed considerable gains in understanding in lessons where they were taught how to read between the lines of a poem to arrive at a deeper level of meaning. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent. In three out of four lessons, it is good or very good. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress when they have settled in and received good support from teachers.
124. The effectiveness of teaching is enhanced by the schemes of work developed in response to the National Literacy Strategy for Key Stage 3. These provide an appropriate basis for supporting students' basic literacy skills of word and sentence-level understanding within the context of the wider English curriculum. At present, however, so many students arrive at the college with levels of literacy below the level necessary for them to make the most of their secondary schooling, that mainstream English provision is unable fully to meet the needs of those students who do not receive specialist SEN support. A 'catch-up' programme to promote the basic skills in reading and writing for this group of children needs to be implemented as part of the improvements for teaching and learning currently being planned for supporting students' literacy development throughout the college.
125. Overall, the department is very well managed and has recently made significant improvements to the organisation of the English curriculum, particularly in Years 7 to 9. It is now in a good position to extend and consolidate these gains for students taking GCSE courses.

DRAMA

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

Strengths

- The very good support provided for students' understanding of key words and concepts within the subject.
- Making the criteria for successful learning clear to all students.
- The effective use of student assessments to plan work suitable for groups and individuals.
- The use of group work to develop the collaborative skills required for success in the subject.

Areas for improvement

- Seek to extend the range of teaching strategies used to promote students' experience of the themes and topics studied.

126. Since September 2001, drama is taught to all students in Years 7 – 9 outside of their English lessons. In this, students now benefit from teaching by dedicated drama specialists with good subject knowledge.

127. Attainment in lessons for some students is restricted by their limited ability to adapt their spoken language to the dramatic situation being developed. All students, however, make good progress in their lessons. By Year 9, students are able to use a range of dramatic techniques to achieve a desired meaning. An amusing example of this was seen in the close juxtaposition of scenes showing life in the house of lottery winners compared with their envious neighbours.
128. At GCSE in 2001, 38 per cent of students attained grade A* – C, which is below the national average. A Year 10 class working on exploring emotion showed communication skills which were generally below the level expected for students at the beginning of their GCSE work. The teacher, however, worked hard to ensure that every student made good progress.
129. Developing students' understanding from the point at which they begin the lesson is a feature of the drama teaching, which was found to be good or very good in all cases
130. The department has successfully developed schemes of work to support students' progression from Year 7-11. By drawing on common texts, these plans also provide good support for students' work in English.

Literacy

131. The support provided for students' basic language work is satisfactory, overall, revealing a mixture of strength and weakness.
132. Across the curriculum as a whole, departments have made good and sometimes very good progress in developing strategies to enable all students to understand the language demands of their subject. Key words are prominently displayed and taught in music, drama, modern foreign languages, religious education and geography. In geography and physical education for example, this is linked to excellent displays supporting subject-specific language and writing. Writing frames to help students structure their work are less common, but are used to very good effect in geography. In physical education a clear literacy policy promotes high quality support for speaking and listening within the subject.
133. Support for students with English as an additional language is provided in class by support teachers who are aware of individual needs and cater well for them. Additional support for literacy is provided in the homework club. These students make steady progress and acquisition of language skills is usually good.
134. In English lessons, all students in Years 7–9 benefit from the planning and teaching methods introduced alongside the National Literacy Strategy. Literacy starter activities are an effective feature of all lessons. When used, a focus on the language of key texts is also promoting good or very good progress in spelling, vocabulary and grammar for students of all abilities, including the lowest attaining. In 2001, the college recorded its highest ever overall attainment in the national assessment tests in English for fourteen year olds. Despite this, however, 20 per cent of students achieved below level 4, the nationally expected level in literacy skills for students entering secondary education at age eleven. There is no appropriate targeted literacy support programme used to teach the significant number of current Key Stage 3 students who are working below level 4.

MATHEMATICS

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

Strengths

- Achievement of low attaining students.
- Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and development of teaching skills.
- Monitoring and evaluation of students' progress, especially in Years 10 and 11.

- Addressing the needs of individual students.

Areas for development

- Access to, and use of, information and communication technology to enhance learning in mathematics.
- Development of numeracy across the curriculum.
- Achievement of middle and higher attaining students.

135. The attainment of the students on entry in this subject is well below the national expectation. There are a significant number of students who enter the college with standards of numeracy that require additional support. In Years 7 and 8, almost 40 per cent of the year group achieved level 3 or below in their National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6.
136. In the 2001 end of Year 9 tests, the attainment of the students was well below average using national benchmarks for comparing average point score and in the percentage achieving level 5+ and 6+. Results are also slightly below average in comparison with similar schools based on free school meals data. The students' performance in mathematics is similar to their performance in other subjects. In 2000, the proportion of students achieving level 6 and 7 was higher in mathematics than in other subjects. Results have been consistently below national results for the last 3 years for both boys and girls and the trend is in line with the national trend. A significant number of students entered the college during Years 7-9, with very low number skills and no evidence of prior attainment. The college has only recently introduced a standardised test against which to judge progress.
137. At the end of Year 11 the 2001 results for the GCSE examinations show that the percentage of students gaining A*-C is significantly below the national average. The percentage entered for GCSE and achieving a grade are both above national figures, a significant achievement given the low levels of numeracy on entry. The department analyses the progress made by students. This analysis shows that progress is never less than satisfactory for different groups of students. Boys' achievement in relation to their prior attainment is good, whilst progress of the girls is satisfactory. The progress of black African students is good, while white and black Caribbean students make satisfactory progress, when measured against their prior attainment. The lowest attaining students, those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make very good progress.
138. The standards observed in lessons and through students' work are below national expectations. Relatively few students show high levels of mathematical skill and none is performing at the highest levels in Years 9 and 10. From the limited work observed and scrutiny of internal assessments, this is also true in Year 11. For example, in Year 10 the most able have difficulty manipulating indices and solving equations. In Year 11, students show poor graphicacy and algebraic skills. In Year 9, a few students understand the method for estimating mean from grouped data and are able to use it in unfamiliar situations. The majority in the higher sets are eventually able to learn the technique, but apply it with little understanding and, therefore, fail if the problems are presented slightly differently.
139. In the middle and lower sets, considerable numbers of students have difficulty with basic number skills, such as multiplying by ten and calculating change from £5. They are also insecure in choosing the correct number operation. This inhibits their progress in other aspects of mathematics. For example, students will add the sides of a rectangle to determine its area rather than multiplying and use repeated addition to mask a lack of knowledge of multiplication tables. A Year 7 group were observed using the computer suite and their skills in information and communication technology are also low. Overall, attainment is below expectation at both key stages, while achievement is satisfactory at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4.
140. The quality of teaching is good, overall. All but two lessons observed were satisfactory or better. The best teaching observed was with the lower sets and in Year 10. Planning is thorough and lessons are well structured, with brisk, motivating starter activities, followed by one or two main activities and culminating in a plenary. Learning objectives and key words are displayed

prominently and used to support literacy development as well as the mathematical objectives. In a number of lessons, team teaching is used to very good effect, especially with lower attaining students. Exposition and individual practice are well balanced, maintaining a good pace. In the best lessons, teachers' detailed knowledge of individual students and their understanding of students' likely misconceptions underpin a good balance of support and challenge, leading to very good learning. In some lessons, over-direction by the teacher leads to students' unwillingness to persevere independently and masks a lack of understanding. For example, a top set Year 8 group were drawing reflections. The teacher gave answers too quickly rather than challenging them to think it through, so they rushed, guessed or waited for the answer. By contrast, a parallel group, were given differentiated transformations and when they sought help, they were challenged to think it through for themselves. In some lessons with middle ability students, the work given is too demanding for students' level of attainment. For example, a Year 9 group were estimating the mean from grouped data. The first example was complicated. Most eventually transcribed it, but with little understanding. Non-specialists teach a very high proportion of mathematics including both unsatisfactory lessons. Lack of knowledge of both subject matter and students' likely understanding and misconceptions contributed to poor learning in these lessons. A Year 7 lesson on number patterns was directed almost entirely by the teacher and the opportunity for practice and independent work was very limited. By contrast, in a parallel group, the teacher's clear, brisk and focused exposition was carefully balanced with plenty of practice, so students developed skill and understanding.

141. Students' attitudes and behaviour are good. They enjoy the subject, are well motivated and want to learn. If the starter activity is on the board, most commence it as soon as they enter the room rather than waiting to be told. In a small minority of lessons, students' concentration can lapse. This is as a result of too much exposition or learning activities poorly matched to students' understanding. As the majority of lessons have high levels of whole class interaction, students lack confidence when pursuing problems without support and guidance from the teacher. Relationships are very good and students share their methods readily with the rest of the class when asked to.
142. The curriculum provision is good. It meets statutory requirements and there are developing curriculum links with partner primary schools. The provision for literacy within the department is good and staff have a good awareness of the importance of technical vocabulary. Key words are identified in lesson planning, written on the board and referred to in teaching. Students are encouraged to share their definitions of terms. Springboard is used in Year 7 and 8 to help students working below expected levels to catch up and a numeracy summer school was introduced this year. Inclusion is a strength of the department. Provision for students with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good. Teachers have very good knowledge of students' individual needs and provide appropriate help. In some lessons, learning support assistants or additional teachers are well used, while specific adaptations such as hearing aids, large print sheets and using a native speaker to translate are commonplace. There are very few highly able students. However the department identifies the most gifted and provides extension activities, early entry for GCSE and a mathematics club. A "problem of the week" and entry to "Maths challenge" are used to stimulate interest in problem solving. The provision for information and communication technology within the subject is unsatisfactory. It is insufficiently embedded in the schemes of work and limited access to computers inhibits their regular use by all students for the development of mathematical skills.
143. Leadership and management within the department are good. There is a clear educational direction and a very strong sense of teamwork. The acting head of curriculum area is ably mentored by an assistant headteacher and three trainee teachers have excellent programmes including team teaching, mentoring sessions and paired observations. Departmental documentation, including schemes of work, is comprehensive and contributes to excellent communication within a large and diverse department. More than half the staff have substantial commitments in other departments or to whole college management. In most cases, those with subject specialisms outside mathematics teach effectively. An advanced skills teacher contributes well to the development of teaching skills for these staff and trainee teachers. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching is well developed and effective action has led to

improvements in teaching. Assessment and tracking arrangements have recently been improved and are now extremely good, especially in Year 10 and 11. Accommodation is good and lively displays of posters and students' work enhance the rooms and corridors. Resources, with the exception of access to information and communication technology, are good. However, students are not allowed to take textbooks home which reduces the quantity and quality of homework.

144. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Results have been affected by recruitment difficulties and staff changes. Nevertheless, there have been improvements in external tests and examinations and other areas for development have been addressed. Inclusion is now a strength of the department and good classroom management ensures high levels of interest and concentration right through most lessons. The department now has a strong and stable staff and a clear development plan. It is well placed to further improve the achievement of students.

Numeracy

145. The college has established a literacy and numeracy forum with representatives from all subject areas and has produced a draft policy. An audit is planned for next term and whole college INSET in the summer. There are some examples of using numerical skills across the curriculum, such as estimating the percentage of newspapers used for different types of stories in English and conducting a mini-survey and converting results to percentages in modern foreign languages. In geography and science, students routinely use charts, graphs and formulae and can calculate different sorts of average as taught in mathematics. However, this is not planned or coherent and this could usefully be addressed as part of a whole college strategy to boost the low levels of numeracy. At present, overall provision for numeracy across the curriculum is limited.
146. In contrast, while support for numeracy is sometimes effective in individual lessons, there is little evidence of a systematic approach to supporting students' number work across the college as a whole. In mathematics lessons, however, lower attaining students make good progress in basic skills. The department makes effective use of the appropriate learning objectives drawn from the National Numeracy Strategy to help secure this progress. In addition, good use is made of the NNS 'Springboard Seven' material to support targeted students working below expected levels in Year 7.

SCIENCE

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

Strengths

- Recent improvement in standards.
- Effective assessment systems.
- Good curriculum structures.
- Shrewd decisions by managers about how to create improvement.

Areas for improvement

- Consistency in the quality of teaching.
- Further improvement in standards of attainment.

147. Attainment in science is below average for all ages. Students aged 14 attained very low results in the National Curriculum tests in 1999 and 2000, compared to the national averages. Also attainment based on average point scores was well below the average for similar schools, in those years. Attainment by the same students in English and mathematics was better than attainment in science. Attainment by girls was less secure than that for boys. The key weakness in the attainment in science is that too many students completed the first three years at the college with levels below Level 4, the level expected nationally of students aged 11. The most recent results in the 2001 National Curriculum test are better, because fewer students reached only Levels 2 and 3 and the proportion attaining Level 5 and above improved. By age 16, at GCSE, standards of attainment were significantly below the national averages, for recent years. Again, standards in science were too often below the levels attained in other subjects, largely because

students did not attain above grade C. Most recent results, in 2001, are mixed in terms of improvement. Most students take Double Award science GCSE: their results in 2001 were better. A significant number take three GCSEs [physics, chemistry and biology] and their results were lower. A few students each year take Single Award GCSE. These students make good progress from a low starting point. Some students do not take science beyond age 14 because they follow a non-science vocational programme.

148. The standards and achievement in current work are still below the national average by age 14 and by age 16. Work by students in Years 8 and 9 is inconsistent in quality. For example, the work of students now in Years 8 and 9 includes some students making good progress and others for whom progress is unsatisfactory. Most of the inconsistency is that in some classes students completed work well and with care, whilst, in other classes, students leave the harder elements of the tasks incomplete. A weakness for students of all ages is progress in scientific investigation. Much of this work in Year 9 and some from Years 10 and 11 is below the levels expected. Overall, current progress is satisfactory for all ages and groups of students.
149. The improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Standards remain much as they were then, and progress remains satisfactory. Teaching was less than satisfactory in about one-quarter of lessons in the last inspection. This has now improved. Leadership is now more effective.
150. Teaching and learning are both satisfactory, in all age groups, for both boys and girls and for different ethnic groups. However, there is inconsistency in how well teachers ensure good learning. The teaching and learning with classes in Key Stage 3 vary from very good to unsatisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen within Key Stage 4 and the teaching varied from satisfactory to very good. A general strength of all teachers is the good use of assessment data linked to good plans. Teachers are well-prepared as they start a lesson. For example, teachers display key words and the aims for the lesson before the class arrives. Students are used to this; they start work as soon as they enter the room. Generally, teachers provide enough variety to interest students. They manage behaviour at least satisfactorily and sometimes well or very well. Even with these strengths, students do not all make sufficient effort, or take a strong interest. For example, a teacher explained matters very clearly to a Year 9 class but a significant number of students did not concentrate. They behaved reasonably well but made insufficient effort, so that they missed potential gains in understanding. In a very well taught lesson which led to very good learning in Year 8, the teacher insisted that students concentrated and used difficult technical terms about respiration. Behaviour and attitudes were managed very well, so that no students were allowed to guess answers and all had to answer questions in detail. Students responded and made the intellectual effort needed. Attainment levels were higher than the usual in this class. Year 10 students also have similar weaknesses as learners. Teachers secure satisfactory progress because they are well prepared. Even so, students rarely think independently, so as to sustain progress without the prompting of staff. Whenever teachers overlook students who are slipping off-task, then progress is impaired.
151. There are strengths in assessment systems and curriculum provision. The priorities for development are chosen wisely, based on effective monitoring. Assessment systems are very good. Staff make regular, accurate measurements of what students know and understand. Senior staff provide full records of previous attainment and other useful data about each student. As a result, teachers usually make sure that the work given to students matches their needs well. The curriculum provides a good range of approaches. The use of setting during Key Stages 3 and 4 is managed very effectively, benefiting both lower and higher attaining students. Students in Years 10 and 11 are offered four very distinct pathways for study. At GCSE they choose either Single or Double Award GCSE, or triple GCSE comprising physics, chemistry and biology. Some students are disappplied from science altogether, so that they follow a vocational programme. Senior staff monitor lessons, students' work and trends in results. The key strength is that managers then implement improvements which benefit students. For example, all teachers now follow similar strategies in starting and finishing lessons and about how to help students remember and use scientific vocabulary. Decisions about spending are justified in terms of benefits to students. New texts have been purchased which enhance the range and variety of the work for students of all ages. Computer resources are being re-sited so that whole classes can

benefit, rather than the current, good, but limited, use. Overall, science provision is very well managed.

ART AND DESIGN

The college's provision for art is **good**.

Strengths

- Attainment in both key stages has been raised, with good GCSE results over recent years, some well above the national average for similar colleges.
- Boys and girls of all levels of ability and from all ethnic backgrounds are able to succeed in art.
- An expert and experienced art teaching team.
- Well planned and presented art lessons, with good behaviour and productive working.
- Students receive very good individual attention in art, enabling them to develop personally expressive work.

Areas for improvement

- Accommodation for art is unsatisfactory, preventing the development of a full range of art activities, in particular three-dimensional work, printmaking and some aspects of drawing.
- The quality of students' written work in art.
- The use of ICT in art, to research art and design history, to present written work and for the generation and manipulation of images.

152. In the 2000 GCSE art examination, 65 per cent of students gained A* - C grades. This is in line with the national average and is part of an overall trend of increasingly good art GCSE results for the college in recent years. For example, in the 1999 examination, 71 per cent of students entered for art gained A* - C grades which was well above the national average. The trend continued in 2001 with 80 per cent gaining A* - C grades, a very good result indeed.
153. Current attainment in art near the end of Key Stage 3 is above expectations for the age of the students, representing good progress over the key stage from relatively low attainment on entry to Year 9. In Key Stage 4 attainment is above expectations for the GCSE course.
154. In both key stages, a strength of attainment is the individually expressive quality of much of the students' work. Students are able to develop their own responses to the set topics and, in Years 10 and 11, this often involves considerable research and experimentation over extended periods. In both key stages, students use their sketchbooks to record ideas, try experimental approaches to handling materials, explore colour, tone, line, texture and pattern and research the work of other artists and designers. As practical skills develop over both key stages, students are able to manipulate materials, tools and the visual qualities of art, for example colour, to achieve their expressive and creative intentions.
155. The topics set provide good opportunities for students to explore their own feelings and express their own responses to issues of importance in their own lives. For example, there are many powerfully expressive images related to their feelings about the September 11 attacks in New York, reflecting the deep effect of seeing those images in the media. These visual responses express ideas about moral, social and spiritual aspects, and are often inspired by the work of other artists who have reacted to conflict, as in Picasso's 'Guernica'. Another strength of good attainment is that boys and girls of all levels of ability, including the least and most able, those with hearing impairment, those in the early stages of learning English and students of different faith, racial and ethnic backgrounds, can achieve their full potential. Art teachers have paid particular attention to this inclusive aspect of their work. A weaker aspect of attainment is the lack of good quality writing about art, although many students know, understand and can use a reasonably good range of subject specialist vocabulary.
156. In both key stages, the quality of teaching is good. Some of the teaching seen was very good. The art teaching team is expert and experienced. Lessons are well prepared and presented and lessons build up a good sequence of art experience over time, enabling students to develop their skills and ideas in a sustained way. Behaviour is well managed so that lesson time is used productively and learning is not disrupted. Many of the student groups seen were very lively, full of ideas and enthusiasm about the work, placing high demands on teachers' stamina. Teachers

provide a clear structure and lesson aims, so that students understand what they need to do. Teachers work hard to provide students with plenty of detailed, one-to-one support that enables individual creative development. They provide clear guidelines on what will and will not do. Students enjoy art lessons. They come to art lessons expecting them to be good and they are not disappointed. The work is challenging and relevant and teachers expect students to give of their best. These features of good teaching and learning underpin the success the subject has had in raising attainment.

157. Leadership and management of art are good, leading to good improvements since the last Ofsted inspection. Attainment in both key stages has risen, practical skills are now strong, knowledge and understanding about art and design have improved. Since the last inspection the department has moved from its old studios that were described as 'just adequate', to other rooms which provide unsatisfactory accommodation for art. The rooms are too small for larger scale working. They were not designed for use as art studios, storage is inadequate and pillars make observational drawing difficult. This aspect of drawing and the development of three-dimensional work and printmaking are particularly inhibited by the unsatisfactory accommodation. The use made of ICT remains undeveloped in art, as noted in the last inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Overall the quality of provision in design technology education is **good**.

Strengths

- Good teaching.
- Students of all abilities fully included in the learning process.
- Good leadership.
- Good schemes of work in Key Stage 3.

Areas for improvement

- Raise standards further in Key Stage 4.
- Develop the opportunities for ICT in the curriculum.
- Use the results of the students' assessment to further improve learning.

158. Only a few students achieved A* - C in the subjects of electronics, graphics and textiles in GCSE courses in 2001. The percentage of students who passed in the range A*-G was also well below the national average. The results in design and technology were lower than the average for the college. Girls are achieving slightly better results than the boys. In the previous two years, the results in examinations were better. The sudden drop in examination grades was a consequence of a decision to enter all the students for a short course in one of these subjects. This decision has now been reversed. At the end of Key Stage 3, in recent teachers' assessments, students achieved standards that are below those expected nationally.
159. From the evidence of the inspection, at the end of Key Stage 3, the majority of students achieve a standard of work that is close to national expectations. Overall, the standard of work is below the national average at Key Stage 4. There is evidence that the standards of work at both key stages are improving as a consequence of good teaching. Improvement in standards since the last inspection is good. There is a new scheme of work and study guides help students to design and evaluate their products. There is a consistency in the quality of students' work between the three subjects and evidence that standards will improve as younger students progress through the college.
160. At the end of Key Stage 3, students can make a "steady hand game" to include the electronic circuit board to which they solder the components. Their craft skills are sound, but they are less secure in their understanding of how this circuit works. At the end of Key Stage 4, students tackle their projects with confidence, for example to design and construct a scale model of a computer workstation. Many of their designs are creative and practical. They have good

construction skills, demonstrated in the accurate 1 in 20 scale models crafted with precision from medium density fibreboard.

161. Overall, the quality of teaching is good in both key stages. The teachers know their students well and they provide an outstanding quality of support for students when they are working on their individual projects. This enables all students, regardless of their learning needs, to be included in the learning process. Good attention is paid to providing a suitably challenging learning experience for higher attaining students.
162. The teaching was outstanding in one Year 7 textiles lesson. The teacher set high expectations for learning and the students gained much confidence from her encouragement and high level of individual support. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subject. They are enthusiastic about what they teach and have good skills of communication. Individuality in the designing process is particularly encouraged. They organise their students and manage practical work to a good standard. The teachers have produced a very effective series of study guides that help students to record their work accurately and to enable them to think more about what they have learnt. Many students enjoy this subject. They sustain their concentration and they take pride in the quality of their practical work.
163. Consequently, the quality of learning is good in both Key Stages 3 and 4. The students make good progress with their studies throughout the college. The scheme of work in Key Stage 3 ensures a wide range of learning experiences matched to the National Curriculum. The quality of learning is good in all three subjects of graphics, textiles and resistant materials in Key Stage 4.
164. Overall, there has been good improvement in standards and the quality of learning since the last inspection. Students' skills in designing and evaluating items that they have made have improved. A programme is in place to further improve their freehand and technical drawing skills. All students make good progress when developing their skills in using tools and equipment with increasing precision. Procedures for assessing students' work are sound. Their attainment is monitored and recorded as they progress from year to year. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, this data is not used fully to modify the curriculum to further improve learning. Homework is set regularly and the assignments are often discussed with the class in advance. Work is marked regularly. When marking, the teachers' comments are not always full enough to help students learn from their mistakes.
165. Although food technology is not taught in Key Stage 3, there is adequate provision of a suitable range of learning experiences to cover most aspects of the National Curriculum. The curriculum is now suitable for all students in Key Stage 4. Skills in literacy are developed through the use of appropriate technical language. Key words are always on display. Students' skills in numeracy, particularly geometry, are developed well in graphical communications when they are drawing to scale in three dimensions. Currently, students are not given sufficient opportunity to use ICT in their studies. This is a consequence of recent room changes. In Key Stage 3, they do not learn how a computer can be programmed to control machines and use feedback signals from sensors to modify actions. At Key Stage 4, students are able to use a computer-controlled sewing machine if they are studying textiles. Otherwise, this aspect of the National Curriculum is not taught. Students do not use ICT to produce graphs to analyse and compare information.
166. A very experienced acting head of department manages the department to a good standard. The department has maintained a good standard in spite of recent staffing difficulties. The technician makes a valuable contribution to the smooth running of the faculty.

GEOGRAPHY

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

Strengths

- The effective teaching of literacy skills.
- The strong team of teachers who work effectively together.
- Very good teaching and learning in one third of lessons.
- Effective provision for all students including the gifted and talented, those with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language.
- The detailed assessment system which tracks the progress of students.
- The thorough curriculum planning which gives teachers very good guidance as they plan their lessons.

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient use by students of ICT for data analysis.
- Improve standards further in GCSE.

167. Students' standards of attainment are low on entry and they make good progress with their learning during both key stages, so that standards rise. The college's thorough, reliable teacher assessment for 2001 showed that results were well below expectations, but standards have risen since then and are now below average. For example, students understand the structure of the rain forest ecosystem, know how people change the rain forest environment and that these changes are perceived as good or bad by different groups of people. Higher-attaining students use a good range of appropriate vocabulary and accurately define sustainability. Students have a sound understanding of the factors that influence the location of factories and other economic activities, and write effective speeches explaining why a bank should locate in Paris.
168. The GCSE results were much lower in 2001 than in the previous two years. In 2000, students' results in geography were better than in the other subjects that they took. In 2001, the GCSE results of the higher and lower attaining students showed added value but the average attaining students did not do as well. Following the results in 2001, the geography department has taken appropriate steps to raise standards, which are now rising but are still below the national average. In classwork on coastal landforms, higher attaining students identify the main coastal landforms and explain the processes that result in their formation. They explain how global warming affects weathering rates. However, a significant minority of students need much help to identify and describe four types of rock weathering. For GCSE coursework, students work on appropriate topics of enquiry, with clear questions to answer or hypotheses to test. Their work is usually well structured and a good number make effective use of ICT, including the Internet. They collect a wide range of data. Higher attaining students analyse their information clearly and, for example, select the best location for a housing estate and justify their decision with a range of factors. Lower attaining students do not always analyse the relevant data and sometimes their analysis is superficial.
169. For Key Stage 3 and GCSE, the teaching and learning are good with some outstanding features. Teachers know students' needs and set about meeting them so that good learning takes place. There is calm, purposeful, firm classroom management that secures a good response from the students and creates a good learning ethos. Students with emotional and behavioural needs are effectively managed. Teachers set challenging work for the full range of prior attainment, including activities which help students develop their thinking skills. There are some excellent learning resources which help students achieve the learning objectives of lessons. The support for students' literacy skills is very good, with, for example, effective use of guidelines for different types of writing which helps students to sustain their concentration with written tasks, with many making good progress as they improve the quality of their written work. Teachers prepare their board work before lessons begin to make clear the lesson's learning objectives, key vocabulary and diagrams, so that students do not waste learning time at the start of lessons. Teaching

meets the needs of all students and in-class support is effective in helping students with special educational needs and English as an additional language to achieve well.

170. Occasional weaknesses in teaching include the use of questions that are too vague and whole-class teaching that is too long, so students have insufficient time for discussion and writing tasks. The scrutiny of students' GCSE work shows some weaknesses in teaching. There is repetition in some units of work. Annotations of population pyramids are not always clear. Occasionally, students' written work shows significant misunderstanding, but this is not then remedied in subsequent lessons.
171. Curriculum planning is very good and contributes to the consistently good teaching. Students' learning is enhanced by effective use of ICT for Internet research, data presentation and word processing. A Year 8 geography club has created an excellent geography web site. However, students do not have enough opportunities to use ICT for data analysis. There is a very good system of tracking the progress students make during Key Stage 3 and GCSE. For Key Stage 3, there are regular assessments with clear mark schemes and exemplars of students' work at different levels of attainment to help teachers have agreed common standards of marking. Students are given clear feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of their work, together with targets for improvement. Teachers use a good range of rewards, including postcards to parents and carers. The management of geography is effective, with very good monitoring of teaching and students' exercise books and this has helped secure the good teaching and learning. Assessment data is analysed with reference to gender, ethnicity and the value added to students' attainment.

HISTORY

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

Strengths

- Good knowledge and enthusiasm of teachers in the subject.
- Good classroom management.
- The positive relationships observed in the classroom.
- Careful lesson planning.

Areas for improvement

- To raise standards at Key Stage 3 and 4.
- Much greater access to information and communication technology resources to support students' independent research.
- To widen the range of classroom learning strategies.

172. Students' standards on entry to the college in Year 7 are well below the national expectation. Standards of attainment at the age of 14 in the form of teacher assessments remain below average. These are confirmed by classroom observations and the scrutiny of work. At the age of 16, students' attainment remains below the national average, although over time, the standards are rising. In the 2001 GCSE examination 37.5 per cent of the students achieved A*-C grades, whereas nationally in 2001, 61 per cent gained equivalent grades. History performs well against the college subject average and the department has maintained a consistency of outcome in recent years, allowing students to make satisfactory progress through the five years.
173. Observation of lessons and a scrutiny of samples of students' work confirm that, by the end of Year 9, all students make at least satisfactory progress in their first three years in the college. Students develop a range of historical skills, including the interpretation of appropriate historical evidence and data, the analysis of difficult historical issues and the understanding of chronology. They are able to use a range of materials, including thematic worksheets, pictorial evidence, timelines, writing frames and a range of primary and secondary source material. The handling of different forms of historical data is secure and students are able to work individually and in pairs to develop their understanding of history. Students are given opportunities to handle historical

sources, to interpret them and to use them as the evidence for developing essays. In Year 7, students are able to analyse the reasons for the Roman invasion of Britain, using a sorting exercise. Students' historical understanding is extended in Year 8 by studying how witches were recognised in the seventeenth century and the thinking behind these beliefs. By Year 9, students are examining the protests against the new technologies of the nineteenth century and most students are able to identify whether the causes of discontent are political, economic or social. Classes in Years 7 to 9 are mainly mixed ability and, although all students are able to manage the shorter tasks, the worksheets do not always provide a sufficient range of tasks for the full range of capability. Those with greater learning needs found the higher level tasks too complex for them to make the same progress as others in the class. Overall, many students make good progress in relation to their prior attainment, because their teachers know them well.

174. Most students continue to make at least satisfactory progress throughout Years 10 and 11 and a significant number make good progress, as they build upon the foundation of skills and knowledge acquired in the earlier years. By the end of Year 11, students have developed a sound understanding of the reasons for the rise of the Nazi party in Germany, the intricacies of Irish history up to the present day and a good understanding of the relevance of local history through their study of Bankside, Southwark. In these years there is a greater emphasis on developing extended writing and the interpretation of primary and secondary source material. In a Year 10 class, students are encouraged to make oral contributions and additional teacher support is given to a student with little English. Examination techniques and preparation are built into the scheme of work. The coursework seen is of a good standard, with a range of sources used and historical arguments systematically developed.
175. Teaching is satisfactory, overall, with some good features. There is teaching consistency across all the year groups and across the history teaching team. The overall standard of teaching has improved since the last inspection. There is considerable evidence of well planned and well-structured lessons. Teachers, however, use a relatively narrow range of strategies to develop the students' learning. Lessons begin with establishing the aims and learning objectives and these are written down. Most lessons then have a short question and answer session, concentrating on short factual answers. The activities that follow are of short duration, using worksheets and some limited writing. Mostly students work on their own with some paired work. However, little group work or extended discussion was observed. Few textbooks and other learning materials were observed in use.
176. Teachers use the time available very well and encourage the students through good management to keep to task and to take responsibility for their learning. There were several examples of students being well supported and, as a result, they gained in confidence. The atmosphere in classes is purposeful and ordered and students with a range of difficulties are able to work successfully and gain historical skills.
177. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and are enthusiastic about teaching history. This commitment is strongly communicated to the students providing a firm basis for learning. Historical ideas are clearly explained and developed and there is evidence of teachers using their knowledge, enthusiasm and teaching skills to develop students' understanding at all levels of competence. Teachers challenged students to raise their standards and these high expectations were rewarded with student commitment and involvement.
178. Overall, 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 history department. Good examples of students listening carefully to each other were observed and co-operation amongst students in all years was high.
179. The management of the department is satisfactory. The head of the department gives clear leadership and has built up a good team of young and enthusiastic historians. There is a good staffing match in expertise and qualification. Homework is set regularly and marking supports progress, learning and achievement. Teachers' comments are supportive and encouraging, particularly in the lower years and then become more diagnostic in Years 10 and 11. More

emphasis, however, needs to be put upon developing empathic writing and giving students greater opportunities to write at length.

180. The three specialist classrooms support an effective learning environment with attractive displays of historical material, although there is a limited amount of students' work on display. Capitation is satisfactory and the department is well stocked with worksheets, videos, slides and textbooks, although only a limited use was observed during the inspection. There is limited access to information and communication technology at present and the statutory requirements of ICT in the history curriculum are not being met. This area needs to be strengthened as soon as possible. Since the last inspection, teaching has improved, expectations of students are now much higher and history is taught in specialist rooms. However, greater attention to developing students' written work appropriately and further improvement to the ICT provision must be considered.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall the provision for information and communication technology is **good** in discrete lessons. Provision for information and communication technology across subjects is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- The quality of teaching in discrete lessons is good.
- Gifted and talented students and those with special needs are well catered for in ICT lessons.
- The department is well managed by a committed and hardworking co-ordinator.
- There are good links with the City Learning Centre.

Areas for improvement within discrete ICT lessons

- Address the timetable imbalance for Years 8 and 9 within the subject curriculum.
- Raise the standards of students' achievements in all years.
- Improve the structure of lesson endings and plenary sessions.

Areas for improvement across subjects

- Develop the use of modern technology as an effective tool to support learning in other subject areas by designating responsibility within departments.
- Continue to improve the quality and quantity of hardware and software resources available to other subject areas.

181. By the age of 14, the attainment of most students is broadly in line with average expectations for their age. A small minority of students are above the national expectation, with a similar minority achieving well below expectation. At the age of 16, all students are entered for the short-course GCSE examinations. Results of these over the last three years are below the national average and lower than those of similar schools. Some higher achieving 15 year-olds follow the recently introduced Thomas Telford Project 40 course, leading to formal accreditation equivalent to four GCSE pass grades at A*-C.
182. On admission to the college, most 11 year-olds have limited computer skills. By the end of their first term, they confidently use word-processors to create their own poetry and simple stories, which promote their basic literacy skills. They retrieve, save and print information. Higher achieving students extend their skills, experimenting with font styles and importing clip-art or digitised photo images. They use spellcheckers appropriately and write sample business letters or produce simple advertising publications and posters. By age 14, they have a basic knowledge of spreadsheets. For example, they input data, using formulae accurately, amending and calculating them as necessary to the lesson task. They make satisfactory progress overall.
183. In Years 10 and 11, the students make satisfactory progress. Their work is dictated by examination requirements and they consolidate and extend their earlier learning by designing databases and business spreadsheets, sorting information into different categories, such as by ascending or descending order or by type. They resolve queries, accurately locating and printing the required information. Students following the Thomas Telford Project use Internet links to

communicate with other schools to discuss business logos and advertising literature. They organise their work in well presented personal folders.

184. Within timetabled lessons of information and communication technology the quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Lessons are well planned and, where applicable, the students' individual education plans are used by teachers to ensure that the learning needs of all students are well met. The students respond with positive enthusiasm to the teachers' effectively targeted questions, demonstrating a retained knowledge of their earlier learning by using specialist vocabulary in their explanations of, for example, calculating cell values in spreadsheets. The teachers' very good subject knowledge and high expectations of good behaviour, promote students' confidence and they respond by applying themselves to their work and remaining on task throughout the lesson. Although lessons are well structured and timed to allow for both theory and practical exercises, lesson endings are less well managed. For example, during plenary sessions, teachers tell, rather than ask, the students what has been achieved. This prevents students from developing an awareness of their own learning, particularly in Year 7 where concentration begins to wane towards the end of the hour lesson.
185. In all years, good teacher and student relationships ensure a pleasant working environment and students co-operate well with each other. However, in classes where the students have a wide range of learning needs, there is insufficient classroom support, which slows the pace of teaching. Some students use the library suite for homework, which is regularly set as an extension to classwork. There are two popular after college computer clubs where students have the opportunity to learn computer animation or programming.
186. The department is efficiently managed by the subject leader. Subject documentation and forward planning are good and informed by the identified learning needs of the students. However, there is an imbalance in the curriculum offered to Years 8 and 9 which needs addressing. The subject and its teaching are well monitored. Effective procedures for monitoring and assessing the students' progress ensure good lesson planning as well as guiding older students towards appropriate examination choices.
187. The use of modern technology to support learning in other subject areas is in an early stage of development. Additionally, there is no co-ordinator for this aspect of information and communication technology. Currently, it is used well in music and science, but its use to support learning is inconsistent and insufficiently developed. For example, Year 8 students created high quality geographical work for the college website, but there is no evidence in their work to indicate that computers are used on a regular basis. Requirements of ICT for design and technology in the National Curriculum are not covered. There are similar examples to be found in other subject areas and, therefore, the use of computer technology across the curriculum does not meet statutory requirements, which is unsatisfactory.
188. Staffing levels are satisfactory. Staff training in computer technology is ongoing throughout the college. In addition to the teaching staff, the department also has an experienced full-time technician, two trainee technicians and a website manager. Accommodation is satisfactory overall and further enhanced by the college's very good links with the on-site City Learning Centre, which provides regular access to high quality resources, particularly for the students aged 14-19. The college has five computer suites, with further computers in and around the college. Many are old and unreliable and unable to accommodate modern software and their numbers are insufficient. The college has identified this problem
189. The college has a clear understanding of the weaknesses of the subject, particularly within its cross-curricular provision and is continuing to work towards addressing the issues raised by the previous inspection. The increased stability in staffing is reflected in the students' improved standards of attainment, particularly among 14 year-olds. There is now no unsatisfactory teaching.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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

Strengths

- Teaching in the department.
- Management in the department.
- Strong commitment to raising standards and to raising the profile of the subject.

Areas for improvement

- Use of new technology.
- Continued sharing of good practice with particular reference to students' active involvement in lessons and to meeting individual students' needs.
- Continued update of departmental schemes of work and handbook.

190. Students' attainment in Key Stage 3 in languages is well below the national average over the past three years. Teachers are aware of the new requirements of those assessments and there has been a steady narrowing of the gap between national figures and those in the college. Girls are performing better than boys, in line with the national trend.
191. Standards of attainment in 2001, at the end of Key Stage 4, are well below the national average in both Spanish and French. Results in Spanish have shown a clear and steady improvement over time. In 2001, girls performed better than boys in Spanish, as they did nationally. Results in French have not shown such improvement and were lower in 2001 than in the preceding year. Girls performed better than boys in 2001, as they did nationally. In 2000, the attainment in French was marginally above the national average for grades A*-C. There have been problems with timetabling teaching groups in Key Stage 4 and the department is working hard to address those problems. In relation to students' prior attainment at both key stages, the achievement that these results show is satisfactory.
192. The standard of attainment in lessons is similar to that in examinations and reflects the low levels of prior attainment of many students on entry to the college. At Key Stage 3, the overall standard is below national expectations and many students experience difficulty in showing that they understand and can use longer passages of French or Spanish. Some examples of satisfactory attainment were seen, for example in a mixed ability Year 7 class on the topic of classroom vocabulary. Here, students can understand classroom language and instructions in Spanish and they can also name places and objects in the classroom with good pronunciation and intonation patterns.
193. At Key Stage 4, attainment, overall, is below the national average. Most students learning French and Spanish are not able to perform at a satisfactory level in listening, speaking, reading and writing tasks. One exception is a higher attaining group learning French, where students used different tenses in a lesson on clothing.
194. The overall quality of teaching is good. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen at either key stage and, at Key Stage 3, there was evidence of some very good practice. Teachers all have very good subject knowledge and understanding. They use the target language appropriately and encourage students to use Spanish and French in all communication. For example, students can ask the teacher to repeat an instruction in French or Spanish and they can use the French and Spanish alphabets in oral work.
195. Best practice is exemplified by clear objectives, brisk starts to the lessons and good reviews of learning intentions. Teachers sustain pace and some actively involve students in their learning. For example, in a Year 9 lesson on places and activities, students are encouraged to demonstrate their knowledge in front of their peers and students are very often given the opportunity to work in pairs and groups. Teachers make effective use of time and resources. They have all developed very good relationships with their students and mutual respect was very

obvious in all lessons seen. Good behaviour management across the department has a positive impact on the students' learning.

196. Learning at Key Stage 3 is good and at Key Stage 4 it is satisfactory. Learning by students with special educational needs, including hearing impaired students, is satisfactory. Students make good progress in their understanding of language, in their ability to communicate orally and in writing and in their use of reference sources. For example in a Year 7 Spanish lesson on schools, students gain in confidence in their speaking and they learn to assess their own achievements.
197. Students' attitudes to the subject are good at Key Stage 3 and satisfactory at Key Stage 4. Positive behaviour management, well-planned lessons and well-organised teachers all contribute to raising students' achievement. For example, in a Year 8 lesson on the means of transport, students respond well to the variety of tasks set. They are co-operative and supportive of each other when working in pairs, they show interest in their work and can sustain concentration.
198. The head of the curriculum area has a clear vision and is a strong leader. Management of the department is effectively focused on monitoring, evaluation and improving the subject. Teaching and learning are regularly monitored, data are used effectively over both Key Stages and at the end of Key Stage 4. Schemes of work are continually under review, as are the handbook and departmental resources. All language teachers work together as a cohesive team, sharing ideas and good practice and raising the profile of the department within the college. Displays in the area celebrate students' achievement and contribute to raising their cultural awareness. The work of the department clearly reflects the aims and values of the whole college. The breadth of curriculum on offer is satisfactory, although there is no provision for students to study more than one language.
199. The department has made good progress since the last inspection. The impact of effective management has been to improve the standards of teaching and to improve opportunities for students to make greater progress in their learning. Listening and speaking skills are now better developed and students also have better concentration skills. There is clear evidence of consistency across the department. Good use is now made of the accommodation available. For further improvement, the department should now continue to share ideas and good practice, particularly with reference to students' active involvement in the lessons and to meeting individual students' needs. They should also focus on the use of new technology, and on continuing to update their schemes of work and handbook.

MUSIC

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

Strengths

- There is very good teaching by experienced staff.
- Students' achievement in GCSE examinations is well above average.
- Relationships are good and teachers manage students well.

Areas for improvement

- Continue to raise standards in Years 7-9.
- Greater opportunity to use computers for composition in Years 7-9.

200. Teachers' assessments of students' attainment at the age of 14 are below average, but inspection evidence shows that standards are actually in line with the national expectations. GCSE music results have been above average for the past three years and the 2001 results were outstanding with all 22 students gaining A* - C grades. Students gained higher grades in music than in their other GCSE subjects and black Caribbean students, particularly boys, achieved best of all. The gender balance is about equal, with boys performing slightly better than girls. All students, including those from ethnic minority groups, those with English as an additional language and students with special educational needs, achieve well.

201. By the time students are 14, standards are in line with the national expectation. As students enter the college with low levels of attainment, this represents very good progress over time. Although good cooperation exists with music staff in the feeder schools, many students still have under-developed musical skills on entry to Year 7. In the work observed, all students have equal opportunities to develop their musical skills. The attainment of students aged 16 is well above average and their very good achievement is due to confident teaching and high expectations.
202. A strong feature of the department is the inclusive nature of the teaching. Students of ethnic minority groups make good progress over time, because of well-planned lessons and careful explanation and reinforcement of musical conventions. This is borne out by high grades achieved in GCSE examinations by all groups. Students with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs have recently gained grade B passes at GCSE, showing the added value given by the teachers' enlightened musical approach to the subject. This represents a great improvement since the last inspection.
203. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in almost half of the lessons seen in Years 7-9, with the remainder good. All programmes of study are fully taught and teachers' wide subject knowledge impacts well on students' musical thinking, attitudes and skills. Listening skills are well-developed, because teachers include a wide selection of interesting musical extracts ranging from arrangements by Dizzy Gillespie and Oscar Peterson to the compositions of Pachelbel and Albinoni. Such music features prominently in lessons and helps to develop students' critical and attentive listening. One Year 7 class listened to Blues by Five and talked with understanding about tempo, instrumentation and mood as an effective lead into their own improvisations. Another class went further by enthusiastically singing the blues scale and the song 'I've got the blues so bad' to reinforce their understanding of the style. Unfortunately the lack of short warm-up exercises affected the quality of pitch and tone colour. Year 8 students listen to Albinoni's instrumental music to get a flavour of tonality and then use the C minor scale as a medium for their own short compositions. In a Year 9 lesson, students prepared for a class instrumental performance of 'I wanna be like you' by rehearsing their parts in groups on rhythm and bass guitars, keyboards, piano and drum kit. Much counting of beats and concentration was evident as gifted and talented students helped others in their group to improve their playing. Differentiated work is prepared, so that all abilities play a meaningful part in the exercise, demonstrating the inclusiveness of the music. Many average and higher attaining students give effective performances, showing that concentration and cooperation are well-established. Lower attaining students are less confident, although they work with determination to master at least part of the piece. Students, generally, display positive attitudes and good behaviour, although in another lesson the lack of guitar technique hindered effective learning and some off-task behaviour occurred which required the teacher's intervention. Occasionally, lessons do not allow sufficient time at the end for a meaningful summing up and a focus for future work.
204. In Year 10, the teaching and learning are very good, with standards above average because of the teachers' knowledge, encouragement and reinforcement of good working practices. This was seen in a lesson introducing a project on programme music where the teacher used a poem about thirteen skeletons and a mediaeval woodcut of the Dance of Death to stimulate students' imagination. Well-chosen extracts from Danse Macabre followed which gave students a better understanding of how music can be used to tell a story. Because of the teacher's detailed background knowledge, students developed a good understanding of the project and were able to brainstorm ideas for developing their own compositions. No Year 11 lessons were seen, due to students being on study leave, but taped examples of students' work showed that good teaching and learning were taking place. Some compositions were realised on computer, using the Cubasis software, whilst others were for voice and conventional instruments that demonstrated a high level of achievement.
205. Students use the department at breaks, lunchtimes and after college to make music. Joint musical events take place with feeder schools and the choir, gospel singers and instrumental groups also support borough multicultural and other events. College shows and the Arts Festival are very popular and well-supported by the local community. Recently a group of four students

took part in a professional performance of the opera 'Mary Seacole' at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

206. There is very good leadership and management of the department and this ensures that the subject supports the learning and aspirations of all students. The schemes of work and the development plan are in place and assessment, recording and reporting are effective. Marking, however, does not always include a comment from the teacher. Targets are set and students are aware of their levels and grades. Staffing is good, formal monitoring has taken place recently and there is a yearly review of the department's work by the head teacher and the line manager. The music rooms are large and have up-to-date displays including key words. There are five practice rooms and ample storage space. In Years 7-9 ICT is delivered mainly on keyboards which have recording and sequencing facilities: computer access is only available to a few students in each lesson. Students in Years 10 and 11 have greater access to the department's three computers which all have cubasis software installed. A large collection of CD's exists and there is a selection of music text books available in the department. The library has a very good selection of books on music, some of which are new acquisitions, a comprehensive selection of CDs and music video tapes as well as a weekly music magazine.
207. Due to the enthusiasm and high expectations of the head of department, music has continued to develop well since the last inspection and all areas for improvement noted then have been addressed. Future plans include new funding to provide a set of steel pans and the development of a performing arts course.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

Strengths

- Good teaching and students' positive attitudes contribute to a purposeful learning atmosphere and good progress by all groups of students.
- Excellent extra-curricular provision and community links enhance students' learning experiences and have a positive impact on their personal development.
- The good achievement of students, particularly by the age of 14.
- Excellent resources in lessons enhance the quality of students' learning experience.

Areas for development

- There are not always enough opportunities for students to be involved in evaluation.
- The unsatisfactory indoor accommodation has a negative impact on standards of basketball and volleyball as well as limiting the range of racquet sports that can be taught.
- Raising standards in GCSE physical education, particularly in the short course.

208. Using the new National Curriculum levels for the first time in 2001, teachers assessed that the proportion of students aged 14 achieving level 5 or above was well below the national average. Boys did better than girls in this respect. In lessons, standards are average for most students at the age of 14, although a significant number are below average. In the GCSE courses that all students take in Years 10 and 11, standards at the age of 16 for most students are below average, particularly in the short course. Although the proportion of students achieving higher grade passes in the GCSE full course remains well below the national average, results have improved considerably over the last three years, with 35 per cent of students achieving higher grade passes in 2001. The small number of girls entered for the full course does not make it possible to compare the results of boys and girls.
209. By the age of 14, achievement is, on balance, good for all groups of students in relation to their physical capabilities at the start of Year 7. In basketball, for example, most boys are developing their understanding of the principles of defensive play and have secure individual skills and techniques. The more talented shoot accurately, using a range of techniques, but a significant number still find difficulty in this respect. In football, shooting skills are secure, but the less

talented students still lack the confidence to be successful in the use of the volley. In their trampoline lessons, most girls are refining and improving their individual techniques. In the use of the front drop, for example, most break down the movement prior to attempting it. Although the body tension required for moves could be better, most have made good progress in relation to little prior experience in this activity. Most are working at appropriate levels. It was not possible to observe any swimming lessons, because the pool was being repaired. By the end of Year 10, achievement is satisfactory for all groups of students. No Year 11 lessons were observed because of the college's mock GCSE examinations during the inspection. In volleyball, most boys have secure individual skills, for example, but the quality of their play and range of shots is underdeveloped, because of their lack of use of footwork. The more talented effectively use the set, block and smash techniques in set drills, but still find difficulty in applying these in full games. The achievement of a small number of boys is unsatisfactory, because of their poor attitudes and behaviour. In one lesson, for example, they showed little respect for the hard work of the supply teacher and derided the performance of one another in skills development work. In trampoline lessons, girls have continued to refine and develop their sequence work. The more talented, for example, include front drops, swivel hips and full twists in their routines and the use of body tension has improved for the whole range of ability. A scrutiny of a selection of their theory work shows that Year 10 and Year 11 students are developing their understanding of factors affecting performance in sport and of skills acquisition.

210. Across all years, students have a secure grasp of the principles and procedures of warm-up and many, for example, suggest appropriate stretches, know the muscle groups being used and lead parts of their own warm-up when asked to do so. Students with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language receive good support that helps them to integrate well and to make good progress. In GCSE theory lessons, however, there is insufficient help and support for those students with literacy needs. Physically talented students achieve well in lessons and are provided with further opportunities through taking part in college teams. There is also extra provision for those students in Year 7 who have been selected on the basis of their sporting capabilities.
211. The quality of teaching, overall, is good and results in effective learning for all students, as a result of which good progress is made by all. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed and the overall quality has improved since the last inspection. One lesson was excellent. There is now greater consistency in approach. All lessons start promptly and efficiently. This results in students being quickly involved. Teachers have high expectations in terms of discipline and behaviour and in the ability of students to work to their best. They manage their classes well. Students' response to this is usually good, which helps to promote a positive learning atmosphere in lessons and enables all to make progress. For example, they work well as pairs and small groups and show clear respect for the capabilities of one another. In the excellent Year 8 gymnastics lesson, for example, a potentially challenging group of boys, many with behaviour difficulties, worked well together as small groups to develop their work on symmetry and asymmetry in order to produce sequences. All responded very well to the pace and challenge of the lesson and the teacher's fair, but firm, approach that included appropriate injection of humour. However, in a Year 7 gymnastics lesson, some boys lacked the ability to concentrate, thus they drifted off task and had to be challenged by the teacher. In all lessons, clear instructions, together with effective breakdown and demonstration of skills, ensures that students are aware of what is expected of them and what they have to do to make progress – this is indicative of teachers' very good knowledge and understanding of the activities they teach. In one Year 9 basketball lesson, although nevertheless of satisfactory quality, the teacher tried to cover too much theory at the expense of practical activity.
212. A variety of structured activities in lessons helps to ensure that students stay motivated. In a Year 7 girls' rugby lesson, the teacher successfully developed students' confidence through a good sequence of activities when looking at the importance of using space for effectiveness of passing. Very effective use is made of key words and terminology by displaying these on whiteboards. Teachers then refer to these throughout the lesson. On the whole, there is effective use of questioning by teachers – this not only enables them to gauge what students know and understand, but also enhances students' speaking and listening skills. Students are made aware

of their capabilities, because teachers circulate well and offer praise, encouragement and constructive criticism. Sometimes, at the end of lessons, there is a tendency for the teacher to provide all the evaluation rather than to also ask students for their responses as to what they feel they have achieved. The quality and consistency in the marking of students' theory work is good. Students are, therefore, made aware of what they need to do to improve their knowledge and understanding. More effective use, however, could be made of the 'work log' sheet. This would enable teachers to track students' progress in the completion of their theory work.

213. The curriculum has been extended in Years 10 and 11 with GCSE physical education short and long courses as well as a Junior Sports Leaders' Award course. The department has extensive links with the local community as a result of the college's Sports College Status that contributes well to students' learning. An excellent range of extra-curricular provision broadens students' learning experiences further; these involve recreational as well as inter-school competitive fixtures. As a result of the continued enthusiasm of teachers, some from other departments, individual boys and girls have achieved representative honours at local, county and regional level in a variety of activities. Year 9 and 10 girls' football teams are borough league winners and the Year 8 netball team are district league winners. Nine individuals have been chosen by the British cycling federation, from two thousand initially tested, for a further programme of tests. There are very good assessment procedures, particularly for Years 7 to 9, that are on display and understood by students. The quality of indoor accommodation is unsatisfactory and restricts the standards of attainment in basketball and volleyball, as well as restricting the range of racquet sports that can be taught. Shower arrangements do not provide the privacy expected by boys and girls because there are no cubicles. This has implications for students from some faiths. This has a negative impact on standards of personal hygiene and does nothing for students' self-esteem. Improvement, overall, since the last inspection has been good. Leadership and management are effective and the department has the capacity to continue to move forward and improve the quality of provision even further.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

Strengths

- Good leadership in the department.
- Effective teaching.

Areas for improvement

- Ensure effective assessment at the end of Year 9 to match local and national expectations.
- Make greater use of students, parents and the local community as resources in this multi-religious college for making religious education more real and experiential.

214. Overall attainment in religious education is in line with expectations for the students' age. There are no significant variations in the attainment of boys and girls. Students with English as an additional language and those with special needs do well in relation to their prior learning.
215. Attainment in the GCSE short course for 2001 is in line with the national average and is an improvement on previous years. Results have also improved since the last inspection when they were below the national average and the attainment was below that expected in the Wandsworth Agreed Syllabus. Students do particularly well as they take this examination one year ahead, in Year 10, and 54 per cent of students achieved grades A*-C. It demonstrates students' good progress in respect of knowledge and understanding of religious faith and practice and their interest and motivation in learning about matters of meaning and concern to them. In Year 11, students then study religious education as a seven week module in the personal and social education curriculum. Consideration needs to be given to the discontinuous nature of RE provision in Year 11, given the excellent grounding students receive in Year 10.

216. Students in Year 10 are developing a sound understanding of the principles and key elements of a Muslim marriage and how these are similar or different from the western notion of marriage. In one lesson, students gave particular consideration to factors about choosing a marriage partner and why Muslims take marriage seriously. They also discuss benefits and disadvantages of an arranged marriage and understand that forced marriage is not part of Islam. They know the meaning of 'Nikah, Mahr and Walimah' and the reasons behind polygamy in Islam, based on the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad, as a charitable act towards widows. They also give empathetic diary accounts of life during the holocaust and make perceptive observations about different religious perspectives about the existence of good and evil in the world. They explore the nature of evil by studying the life of Myra Hindley and Adolf Hitler.
217. Students are developing a satisfactory understanding of social and moral issues, such as suffering and its purpose, free will, sanctity of life and abortion from the perspectives of two world religions. Their responses to the issues of 'meaning' and applying religion to their own situations are generally appropriate. Students' writing skills require more attention.
218. In Years 7 to 9, attainment is broadly in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. At the start of Year 7, many students have little understanding of the subject. Progress in lessons is good, because many activities are provided to promote learning about religion and learning from it. For example, in their study about the Eight-Fold Path in Buddhism, Year 9 students carefully listen to the story of the wisdom of the crows and then discuss what wisdom is and compare it with intelligence. One student made a significant comment when he said that intelligence is 'lots of book sense and no common sense.' They understand that the eight-fold path is the middle way and they are beginning to explore mindfulness, a particularly difficult concept to understand and develop. Students in Year 8 are making good progress. In one lesson students learnt why fasting (Sawn) is important and the impact of the month of Ramadan on everyday lives of Muslims. By undertaking a case study of the Uddin family during Ramadan students explored how each member of the family felt about fasting. Year 7 students learn the story of Abraham travelling from Haran to Canaan; why he travelled and why he is important to the Jews. Some students also made the link as to why Abraham is an important person in both Islam and Christianity.
219. Students respond well to religious education, particularly where teaching is linked to their own interests and experiences. They like to talk about different religions, their relationships with each other and sharing their own experiences particularly from their own religious perspective. They work well together and respect the feelings and beliefs of others, but very occasionally a small disruptive group of students can slow the pace of learning, especially, when behaviour management is less effective.
220. The quality of teaching is mainly good with some very good and some satisfactory features. Most teachers are specialists in religious education and others are highly experienced. In most lessons, they use their specialist subject knowledge effectively. Generally, lessons are well planned and take into account the needs, interests and motivation of students. Additional help is provided for students who need support. More able students are provided with additional work, but there are few opportunities for research or for students of particular faith communities to share their own understanding and experiences. For example, in a lesson on a Muslim marriage, a number of Muslim boys and girls, who knew about it from family experience, did the same task as the rest of the class rather than being a resource in the class. On the other hand, the effective rounding off and conclusion to the lesson enabled students to share their ideas. Case studies and role play have a positive impact on students' learning. Homework is consistently set and marked and students are advised and guided about how to revise for their tests. Assessment is not yet linked to suggested levels within the Agreed Syllabus.
221. The religious education curriculum meets statutory requirements for Years 7 to 11. The college has devised a good scheme of work, based on the Wandsworth Agreed Syllabus for Years 7 to 9 and for the GCSE syllabus for Year 10. Students in Years 7 to 11 have full access to religious education and no students are withdrawn. Students have the opportunity to visit a local church, a Buddhist Temple and a Sikh Gurdwara and there are plans to invite an Imam and a priest to talk to students about religious and moral issues in Year 10. As there are students in significant

numbers in the college from Muslim, Christian, Hindu and Sikh backgrounds, it is a shortcoming that visitors or parents of students from these communities are not regularly invited to help in religious education lessons or to address assemblies.

222. Religious education makes a good contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They learn about the existence of God, explore religious experiences and reflect on good and evil. They learn to respect each others' beliefs, have opportunities to learn about social and moral issues such as marriage, divorce, abortion, giving to charity, greed and poverty. They are particularly aware of the needs of Muslim students who are fasting during Ramadan and demonstrate tremendous sensitivity to their needs, as was seen during the inspection period.
223. Religious education also makes a sound contribution to literacy creating opportunities for extended writing and short essays for homework. There was little use of numeracy or information technology seen in students' in their work.
224. Leadership is good. The present head of department took up the role at the beginning of the autumn term 2001, when the previous head of department became an advanced skills teacher. Both provide good team leadership and provide support to other members of staff

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

In the inspection, five 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 college.

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

GCE AS level courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		College	England	College	England	College	England
Graphics	1	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A
Physics	1	0	57	0	7.5	0	5.4
Sociology	2	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A
Systems and control	2	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A
Textiles	4	75	N/A	0	N/A	1.75	N/A
Urdu	1	100	N/A	100	N/A	5.0	N/A

GCE A level and AVCE courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		College	England	College	England	College	England
Art and Design	7	100	96	29	46	6.2	6.6
Biology	5	100	88	20	34	5.2	5.3
Chemistry	3	100	90	33	43	6.0	5.9
Computer Studies	1	100	86	0	23	–	4.6
Economics	6	100	89	0	36	3.3	5.5
English Literature	2	100	95	0	37	5.0	5.9
Geography	3	100	92	0	38	5.3	5.7
Graphics	1	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A
Media Studies	3	100	N/A	0	N/A	3.3	N/A
Mathematics	4	100	87	0	43	3	5.8
Sociology	2	50	86	0	35	3	5.3
Spanish	1	0	92	0	50	0	6.4
Textiles	4	100	N/A	25	N/A	5	N/A
Urdu	1	100	N/A	100	N/A	8	N/A
Business Education	2	50	N/A	50	N/A	6	N/A

Intermediate vocational qualifications

Qualification	No in final Year	% gaining qualification		% gaining merit		Average point distinction	
		College	England	College	England	College	England
Leisure and Tourism	9	100	N/A	67	N/A	0	N/A
Information technology	1	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A
Business Studies	8	88	N/A	50	N/A	0	N/A
Art and Design	8	75	N/A	25	N/A	13	N/A
Health and Social Care	7	29	N/A	29	N/A	0	N/A

SUBJECTS AND COURSES GROUPED IN CURRICULUM AREAS

The curriculum in the lower sixth (Year 12) from September 2001 has been changed significantly to cater more appropriately for the needs of the students. The curriculum now consists of a range of vocational courses supported by re-sit GCSE English and mathematics. The latter replace the key skills tests which were too demanding for the students.

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCES

Mathematics

The college has previously offered Advanced and Advanced Subsidiary Levels (A and AS levels) in pure mathematics, mechanics, statistics and combinations of these. Since the review of the sixth form in May 2001, these are no longer offered. Students are offered the opportunity to re-take mathematics GCSE to improve their grade. Work in A/AS level mathematics in Year 13 was sampled. Numbers of students have always been low and results at A and AS level have been well below national averages. A-level grades are lower than expected, based on students' prior attainment at GCSE. The standard of work of current Year 13 A/S students is low. For example, some are unable to use equations of motion in mechanics or the formula for S squared in statistics. Standards are well below the national expectation and achievement is unsatisfactory. The quantity of work is small and it is poorly presented. The college does not offer a course in the key skill of application of number, nor is this well developed in the GCSE re-sit programme.

Mathematics GCSE

Overall the quality of provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- The teaching of individual lessons.
- Relationships between staff and students.

Areas for development

- Achievement of students.
- Monitoring and evaluation of students' progress against teachers' expectations.
- Matching curriculum provision to students' prior attainment.
- Student attendance in lessons.

225. Students in Year 12 re-sit classes expect to improve their GCSE grade to C or better. While some have GCSE grade D, many have grades E and F on entry to the sixth form. Standards, therefore, are overall lower than most re-sit classes. Not surprisingly, they find the work difficult. Results over the past three years have been very low, with only five per cent achieving grade C in

2000 and 18 per cent in 2001. Standards observed in students' work and through lesson observations are also low. Many of the students find basic number work difficult and this impacts on all their work. They find it difficult to complete and use cumulative frequency graphs, or factorise and simplify algebraic expressions. Their achievement in relation to prior attainment is unsatisfactory.

226. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. In individual lessons, with students of relatively high prior attainment, it is good. Teachers understand likely misconceptions, encourage students to talk through their own methods and to persevere. For example, in a lesson on decimals, students thought 0.3 and 0.3 recurring were the same. The teacher built on the students' understanding of place value until they were able to recognise the difference. Much of the work is undifferentiated and assumes similar strengths and weaknesses for all students. This contrasts with the approach in the main college, where differentiation in response to individual needs is good. Planning is more perfunctory and there is less attention to learning objectives. Although students receive good verbal feedback, there is minimal marking of students' work and little constructive written feedback. The amount of curriculum time is insufficient for the students of lower prior attainment to realistically achieve a grade C.
227. Relationships are good and students are helped and supported a great deal in lessons. Student attendance in lessons is low, rarely exceeding 60 per cent, which affects their attainment. Their work habits are poor and, although they complete the work set in lessons, there is little evidence of extra work beyond this. It is shabbily presented, with poor attention to accuracy. Students are passive learners, waiting for help, support and guidance from their teachers on what to do and when to do it. The lack of a textbook of their own reinforces their dependency.
228. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. There is too little attention to monitoring, planning and communication. Although there is some joint planning, documentation is much less comprehensive than in the main college and there is little evidence of the systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching and students' outcomes, which are such strong features of the main college. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. Results have decreased at both A and GCSE levels and there has been little attention by the department to improving students' achievement in the sixth form.

Science

The inspection focus was on the newly introduced science Intermediate Level General National Vocational Qualification taken by nine students. The college also provides a second year of Advanced Level chemistry, biology and physics for seven students. The standards of work in the work scrutiny is average and students make sound progress. They achieved satisfactory results in their first year at Advanced Subsidiary Level. The results for biology are significantly better than those for chemistry and physics. All students have continued in appropriate further study since Advanced Subsidiary Level. All but one student have chosen to study further at the college to complete the second year of Advanced Level.

Science Intermediate Level GNVQ

Overall the provision for Intermediate level GNVQ is **very good** with many strengths and no significant weaknesses.

Strengths

- The new provision is very well organised.
- The progress in the first few months is very good.
- The current achievement is above average for Intermediate level study.

Areas for improvement

- Inadequacies in key skills provision impair standards.

229. The current nine Year 12 students are the first cohort for this course.
230. Achievement is in line with most of the merit and distinction criteria and well within the criteria for pass level. Work is well organised and students complete assignments in good detail. For example, students analysed and reported which materials could be used to make a cable for a cable-car. Some understood how to draw conclusions from data, others made lists, but found it very hard to complete their analysis. Progress is very good in the light of the previous achievements of the group. Attendance rates are satisfactory with just one student missing large parts of the course.
231. Teaching and learning are both very good. Students are acquiring new knowledge and understanding well. Progress in science skills is good and, for example information and communication technology is well used. However, current work shows only satisfactory progress in some aspects of number work and written and oral communication. In lessons, students work very productively and are able to organise their own work well during extended activities. Teachers are very expert. They expect high standards and they plan very effectively to secure similar standards for students. For example, they deploy resources such as guidance sheets, materials and equipment so that students understand what is required of them. A key strength in the teaching is that students are encouraged to act as employable scientists. This role is at the heart of vocational provision. Staff direct the students very well so that students work within the role. Students are becoming aware of how well their attitudes meet requirements.
232. The department has successfully managed a major transition in its provision for post-16 students. Standards have been maintained for the final cohort of Advanced Level provision. The new vocational provision has been established very effectively. Overall, this is a good reflection of the aims of the college. There has been clear improvement since the last inspection.

BUSINESS

Business Education, Advanced Vocational

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

Strengths

- Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject.
- Good relationships with students were observed in the classroom.

Areas for improvement

- Arresting and reversing the decline of the AVCE results.
- Increasing the range of teaching strategies.
- Increasing students' involvement in their own learning and their independent study skills.
- Implementing systems for monitoring, evaluation and assessment to reflect course requirements.
- Leadership and management co-ordination.
- Updating the information and communication technology in the business studies rooms and providing Internet access.
- Improving the range of books, worksheets and other learning materials.

233. Standards are below average. For three years the GNVQ/AVCE results have declined against national comparisons. In 2001 none of the three students received an award and their coursework has still to be assessed. Three years ago, five students achieved a distinction grade. The number of students taking the subject has declined in recent years; this runs counter to the national trend. There is a similar, although not as drastic a situation, in the GNVQ Intermediate course. In 2001, seven students completed the course; four achieved a merit and three a pass grade. In 2000, four gained distinction grades. Six students, this year, achieved an Advanced Level pass in Economics and Business, four achieving a D and two an E grade.

234. Observation of Year 12 lessons and the scrutiny of students' work confirm that achievement is unsatisfactory. The Year 12 AVCE folders are poorly organised, with incomplete notes and with few worksheets and support material to support the learning. The work has many gaps and is of insufficient depth to provide a sound basis for examination success. There is little evidence of information and communication technology application. There are few case study analyses and an uneven coverage of the syllabus modules. There is little evidence of marking of students' work or of any departmental records indicating which elements of the course the students have satisfactorily completed
235. Year 12 Intermediate students are able to examine a profit and loss account and calculate the profitability of a business. They are able to develop a job organisational chart and discuss the span of control concept. With teacher support, they are able to fill in bank forms, giving the analysis of cash handed in. Students largely work individually, although there is some informal paired work. In the AVCE group there is a lively discussion about the Nokia case study and students are able to draw business conclusions from the study. Students' progress is adversely affected by unsatisfactory punctuality.
236. Teaching is satisfactory, overall, and has some good features. The teachers' knowledge is sound. However, the range of teaching strategies is limited. Some teachers rely on giving information to students rather than presenting opportunities for students to analyse and reflect on business case studies and to research business issues. There was too little use of current and local business examples. The case study material used was of an international company and the statistics were five years old.
237. Students are passive recipients of teacher generated information in lessons and opportunities are lost for encouraging them to be confident independent learners. There are insufficient opportunities for students to analyse and interpret business data rather than answering simple questions and making notes. There is too little use of well-presented worksheets containing the basic factual information to accelerate the pace of learning, allowing more time in lessons for students to discuss and reflect on issues. There is a narrow range of activities and insufficient academic rigour in lessons to develop students' confidence in their learning and their progress in learning. There is too little evidence of homework or of sustained work on the longer assignments required. Students' files contained little evidence of feedback from teachers to indicate the level at which they are performing. There was little evidence of students making use of higher-level skills of analysis and evaluation either in lessons or in the work examined. The monitoring system is insufficiently well developed to involve the students in assessing their own progress or to provide feedback to students about the gaps in their portfolios. Attendance in the classes observed was never more than 60 per cent, indicating a need for improvements in the regularity and effectiveness of systems for monitoring and assessment.
238. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. At present, there is a lack of co-ordination and organisation, leading to a poor flow of information to the other staff. No new textbooks have been bought for the AVCE course this year and there is a paucity of printed resources for both courses. Staff are offered no guidance or in-service training for the new specifications and discussion within the department appears patchy and uneven. Worksheets are mainly photocopied from secondary sources and there is little evidence of support material, using the latest information and communication technology.
239. The business suite of rooms appears tired and in need of refurbishment. There is a limited amount of students' work displayed or any other business material. Many of the computers are now dated, several were not working during the inspection and there is no Internet access. The accommodation does not reflect a business environment or support and encourage independent student learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Information and communication technology

Provision for ICT in discrete courses of CISCO Systems is **satisfactory**. Provision for Information and communication technology across the sixth form is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths:

- The quality of teaching in discrete lessons is good and students achieve well.
- There are regular timetabled links with the City Learning Centre.

Areas for improvement:

- The teaching of modern technology as a key skill in other subject areas post 16.
- Plenary sessions at the end of lessons are unstructured and inconsistent.
- Students' confidence in their abilities.

240. The recent reorganisation of the sixth form curriculum means that there is no Advanced Level examination option for students in the sixth form. They now follow courses leading to Intermediate and Advanced vocational qualifications in computer technology. It is not possible, therefore, to make comparisons against previous examination results. However, within the examination modules already completed, the standard of work is good. Higher achieving students may choose to follow the Cisco scheme, leading to formal accreditation in the designing, building and networking of computers.

241. Students make good progress and achieve well. Much of their coursework is linked to business and commerce. They write and prepare agendas, invoices and orders. They design and produce business cards and documents, making effective use of the Internet to generate new ideas. Their work is very well presented in neat and organised folders which display good use of their desktop publishing and photo imaging skills. Those students on the Cisco scheme demonstrate a good knowledge of networking systems in their discussions on physical topographies. For example, they argue well in comparing the advantages and disadvantages of ring and star networking against spine networking.

242. Within discrete lessons of information and communication technology, the quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Lessons are well planned and the teachers meet the needs of all students well. Although teachers provide good opportunities for independent research, many students lack self-confidence and rely too heavily on following the teachers' directives and display little initiative. Nevertheless, their responses to teachers' questions are well-considered. Their growing confidence in the use of business terminology in their explanations indicates good prior learning. For example, they share ideas when discussing their designs for logos or planning the layout of commercial documents. The teachers' very good subject knowledge promotes the students' confidence and creates a positive atmosphere for learning. There are very good relationships between staff and students. Although lessons are balanced and well structured, lesson endings are less well managed. For example, during plenary sessions, teachers tell rather than ask the students what has been achieved. This limits students' awareness of their own learning.

243. The subject co-ordinator provides very good leadership to a strong team of experienced staff. However, the use of modern technology in other post-16 courses is unsatisfactory, because there is no cross-curricular co-ordinator. As a result, the planned teaching of basic computer skills to support learning in other subjects is ineffective. There are good procedures for monitoring and assessing the students' progress. This enables teachers to plan lessons efficiently and provides a good basis for guiding older students towards appropriate examination choices. For example, the moderation of the students' first completed modules directs them towards either Intermediate or Advanced work. The Cisco scheme attracts students through interest and aptitude. Higher achieving students may combine this course with their vocational studies.

244. Staffing levels are satisfactory. In addition to the teaching staff, the department has an experienced full time technician, two trainee technicians and a web-site manager. Accommodation is satisfactory and is enhanced by very good use of the on-site City Learning Centre. However, insufficient use of information and communication technology across all the sixth form courses makes provision unsatisfactory, overall.

HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

Leisure and Tourism GNVQ Intermediate

The provision for leisure and tourism is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- All students were successful in 2001.
- Personal support and guidance for each student within lessons.
- Opportunities to study leisure and tourism in the community.

Areas for development

- Insufficient opportunities to use information and communication technology.
- Inconsistent marking.

245. In 2001, students achieved six merits and three passes, standards, therefore, are comparable with national expectations. Students' achievement is satisfactory. For example, they give clear descriptions of leisure and tourist industries, but are weaker in evaluating leisure provision for an area or making comparisons. For the extended assessment at the end of the marketing unit, all students had completed much preparation based on visits to two cinemas. A higher attaining student applied theory work to a specific cases of two cinemas, while an average attaining students' preparatory work was briefer and made less use of the theory work from earlier in the term. Although students have a weekly lesson to develop their skills in information and communication technology, they make insufficient use of it in their day-to-day work.
246. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Strengths were seen in some lessons and units. For example, students' work was well structured and included different types of written task to practise skills such as analysis and synthesis and, therefore, to reach higher standards. Teachers worked hard to support individual students in all lessons, but the best support gave students clear advice about how to improve their standards. In one lesson, students' learning was well promoted when they worked in pairs, using the examination assessment criteria to grade work that had been completed on last year's course. This gave them a good insight into the standards required for the course. In good lessons, teachers successfully reinforced the technical language that students should use. This vocabulary was further reinforced through the displays of the students' work. Lessons are well managed and this helps secure good behaviour and positive attitudes from the students. However, students are not confident and a significant proportion do not show initiative or take sufficient responsibility for their own work. Teachers provide a good range of paper learning resources to support the students' research.
247. The quality of marking is not consistently good for each unit of work. The best marking identifies strengths and weaknesses in the work and gives clear advice about how to improve. Occasionally, marking consists largely of ticks and does not identify students' errors. In one lesson, the pace of learning was slow and students did not achieve enough during the lesson and, in another, the work was not well matched to the needs of all the students in the class, so this slowed the learning of some students.
248. The scheme of work to guide teachers as they plan their lessons is satisfactory, but not as detailed as those for other courses the teachers plan for younger students. The range of links with business is satisfactory. For example, students visit travel agents, local cinemas, a leisure club and the tourist facilities at Greenwich. These visits provide stimulating resources for assessment tasks. In addition, they have a two-week period of work experience in a relevant business. The

retention rate is satisfactory and relatively few students leave, once the course has started. The management of the course is sound. The manager monitors students' work and has monitored some of the teaching. However, the monitoring of teaching is insufficiently rigorous to improve the quality of students' learning. The teachers agree common standards for students' work so that there is consistency in assessing different units. Students made well-informed decisions when they chose the course.

Leisure and Recreation Advanced Vocational

This advanced vocational course has been introduced this year. It is not possible, therefore, to make any comparisons with previous work.

Strengths

- Students achieve well particularly in practical activities.
- They gain good levels of confidence and self-esteem.

Areas for development

- Students' basic skills in communication, application of number and the use of information technology.

249. At this stage of the course, standards are comparable with those nationally. Students achieve well. They have good experience of a wide range of sports and recreational activities. For example, they plan and deliver sessions to maintain the fitness of adults and they work with younger children to stimulate their involvement in sports. They develop good levels of self-confidence through directing activities for their peers. They learn to evaluate each other's performance sensitively and constructively.

250. Teaching is good. There are excellent relationships between teachers and the students. Teachers encourage students to take responsibility and students rise to the expectations well. There are good opportunities for students to evaluate their own performance and that of their peers. Lessons are well-focused and their good pace ensures good student involvement and satisfaction. The students' learning is well supported through paper resources, reference materials and a wide range of community resources. Students' work is well monitored and students receive regular, well-focused feedback. This ensures that students are well motivated and persevere well. Work in students' folders is carefully presented but limited in both the breadth and the depth of work. Attendance has now stabilised. Nevertheless, in some lessons there is a slow start and missing students are not tracked sufficiently promptly.

251. The leadership and management of the course is good. Staffing is appropriate and teachers have good levels of knowledge and expertise. However, there is insufficient structure to ensure the development of students' key skills of communication, application of number and information and communication technology. The accommodation is dull and dated and there is too little provision for students to study as a group in close proximity to sports facilities. Opportunities for developing students' weak study skills and their basic skills are, therefore, missed.

ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

English GCSE

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

Strengths

- Whilst students' achievement is satisfactory overall, some achieve well.

Areas for improvement

- Attendance is poor.

- A comprehensive course of key skills is necessary to improve students' low levels of literacy.

252. Provision for students taking English in the sixth form is now limited to a GCSE retake course for those students seeking to improve their original Year 11 grade in English language. Because only Year 12 students were in college only two lessons of English were observed during the week of the inspection.
253. Students skills in literacy are low on entry to this course. In 2000, the success rate of students taking this course was poor, with only seven per cent attaining a C grade. The course was not offered to sixth formers in 2001. Standards of attainment as judged from samples of work are below the national average.
254. During the inspection, attendance on this course was poor, with fewer than half of the students present in one lesson and only one in a second. Of the eleven students seen during the week, however, all made at least satisfactory progress and some were making good progress. They produced newspaper articles as part of a unit of work on report writing. In each case, their writing revealed attainment at least one grade higher than the one achieved by the student in last year's GCSE examination. For eight of the students, attainment was within the level C range. Overall, students' achievement is satisfactory.
255. In this small sample, the teaching was satisfactory. An introductory focus on key words and concepts helped students to structure their writing appropriately. The teacher used a variety of texts to help students to model the language and style of newspaper reporting. During an effective conclusion to the lesson, the teacher drew out the key learning points from students' work. A scheme of work, based on the GCSE syllabus, provides a clear structure for the progression in students' learning, as they progress towards the examination. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.