

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **EDMONTON COUNTY SCHOOL**

Enfield

LEA area: Enfield

Unique reference number: 102043

Headteacher: Linda Robinson

Reporting inspector: Gulshan Kayembe

2901

Dates of inspection: 11 - 15 February 2002

Inspection number: 189873

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 to 18 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Upper School Site Great Cambridge Road Enfield London
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Gordon Thongs-George
Date of previous inspection:	October 1996

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Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2901	G Kayembe	<i>Registered inspector</i>	English as an additional language.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' and students' achievements; How well are pupils and students taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9974	D Singh	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' and students' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils and students? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
8390	R Anderson	<i>Team inspector</i>	Media Studies.	
18447	R Cohen	<i>Team inspector</i>	Government and politics.	Sixth Form.
23268	K Corrigan	<i>Team inspector</i>	Physical education	
4372	R Fordham	<i>Team inspector</i>	Religious education.	
23324	S Greenland	<i>Team inspector</i>	Special educational needs; Equal opportunities.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils and students? Citizenship.
10060	D Gutmann	<i>Team inspector</i>	Information and communication technology; Business studies.	
15023	A Haouas	<i>Team inspector</i>	Modern foreign languages.	
7084	J Haslam	<i>Team inspector</i>	Design and technology.	
31335	R Hobson	<i>Team inspector</i>		
19043	Dr D Lewis	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science.	
23082 25744	D Loach	<i>Team inspector</i>		
31688	B McGonagle	<i>Team inspector</i>	Art.	
2917	Dr J McMullan	<i>Team inspector</i>		
27719	P Metcalf	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics.	

25744	T Osgerby	<i>Team inspector</i>	History.	
18950	C Rodney	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Drama.	
23499	H Seymour	<i>Team inspector</i>	Music.	
11300	B Smith	<i>Team inspector</i>	Geography.	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is located in Edmonton in the London borough of Enfield. There are 1604 students on roll, 1364 aged 11 to 16 in the main school and 241 in the Sixth Form making it a much larger than an average-sized secondary school. The vast majority of students are drawn from the local area and come from within a mile radius of the school. Though more than half the students are of white UK heritage, the school serves a very culturally mixed intake and many different minority ethnic groups are represented; the largest include students of Turkish, Greek and Black Caribbean heritage. A relatively high proportion of students have English as an additional language (EAL). Whilst most are competent in English, many need further support to develop high level reading and writing skills. A small number, less than one per cent, are beginners in English. Whilst attainment on entry is slightly below average the full range of ability levels are represented in the intake. Standards of attainment on entry are rising gradually. The home circumstances of students are broadly average though, again, students come from a wide variety of social and economic backgrounds. This is reflected in the proportion of students eligible for free school meals, which is in line with national norms. The proportion of students with special educational needs is a little above average but the number with statements is in line with national averages.

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

The school provides a satisfactory education for its students. Though the quality of teaching and learning in lessons is good, there are a number of weaknesses in the systems and procedures for promoting students' long-term progress and driving up standards. These mean that, despite the good teaching, the overall achievement of students is only satisfactory and it could be much better. The headteacher, who took up post less than a year ago, is providing very good leadership to enable the school to develop and use rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluation and for tracking students' progress in order to raise standards. She has been very astute in her initial assessments of the school's strengths and weaknesses and identified clear and pertinent targets for action. Overall the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Leadership by the headteacher is very good: she has set a very clear direction for development.
- The quality of teaching and learning in lessons is good.
- Students' enthusiasm for school and their positive attitudes in lessons help them to learn.
- Provision for moral and social development is good.
- Relationships between staff and students and amongst students are good.
- The growing involvement of governors in the work of the school, and their capacity to ask probing questions, puts them in a good position to know its strengths and weaknesses and support new developments.

## WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Monitoring and evaluation are unsatisfactory and need to be improved in order to raise attainment further.
- Systems for monitoring and tracking of students' progress lack rigour and are not systematic enough. This has a negative impact on students' achievement.
- The provision and use of Information and communication technology (ICT) are unsatisfactory.
- Provision for students having EAL is unsatisfactory.
- Provision for the spiritual development of students is too limited.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The overall improvement in the school since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. There has been good improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and though there has been some good improvement in the GCSE results, the trend in the proportion of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C has been uneven with relatively little improvement when compared to national trends between 1997 and 2001. English test results for 14 year olds have improved well but improvement in mathematics and science has not been significant. Most of the key issues from the last inspection remain and many continue as key issues in this report because they are concerned with school improvement and raising attainment. However, the capacity to improve is good.

## STANDARDS

The table below 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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
GCSE examinations	C	C	C	C	<i>well above average</i> A <i>above average</i> B <i>average</i> C <i>below average</i> D <i>well below average</i> E
A Levels/AS Levels	C	D	C	N/A	

The results of national tests for 14 year olds were average overall in 2001. They were well above average in English, average in mathematics and below in science. Science results tend to be a weakness and have fluctuated from well below average to average over the last four years. Mathematics results reached average levels in 2001 after having been below for the previous three years. This brought the mathematics results up to the same level, when compared to results nationally, as they were at the time of the last inspection.

GCSE results for 2001 were in line with national averages overall, though the proportion of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C fell to below average, having been average in previous years. Conversely, the proportion of students gaining five or more or one or more GCSEs at grades A\* to G was well above average, a significant improvement from previous years. The school met some, but not all of its targets for performance at GCSE. A Level results were in line with national averages in 2001 based on the overall



points scores. However, there was a wide variation in the results from subject to subject and this has been the case over the last three to four years. Results in drama, general studies, government and politics and history are usually above or well above national averages. AS Level results were low in 2001.

Inspection evidence points to overall average standards for 14 year olds, 16 year olds and in the Sixth Form. Achievement is broadly satisfactory though there are pockets of underachievement such as for higher attainers in mathematics and in modern foreign languages.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most students are positive about school. They are enthusiastic and keen to participate in lessons and activities outside lessons. However, a minority display negative attitudes. There is often too much boisterous or immature behaviour in corridors or on stairs, and this is not helped at the lower school site by the narrowness of stairways.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall. In most lessons the behaviour of students is good, but a minority behave badly in and out of lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good. The overall personal development of students is satisfactory.
Attendance	Above average.

The rate of fixed rate exclusions, though it reflects the challenging behaviour of a minority, is too high and a disproportionately high number of black students are excluded.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of the teaching is good. It is good in English and satisfactory in mathematics and science. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which is usually well used to develop students' own knowledge and skills, for example through effective question and answer sessions and clear expositions. Planning is also a good feature of teaching and in the best lessons work is very well planned for different abilities and groups of students. Overall, work is matched effectively to students' needs, though students with EAL are not as well catered for as other groups and, particularly in Years 10 to 13 this does affect the rate at which their learning progresses. Satisfactory attention is given to the development of literacy and numeracy. In the majority of lessons students are effectively managed but in the lessons that were less than satisfactory, a key failing was ineffective control of behaviour. Pace can be slow at times and in some lessons high attaining students are not sufficiently challenged.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory in Years 7 to 11 with the exception of ICT, which is unsatisfactory. A broad range of GCSEs, including heritage languages, are on offer in Years 10 to 11, but there are no vocational courses for those who might prefer them.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision by the learning development department is good, is reflected in their good progress and creditable performance in examinations, particularly at GCSE. However, subject departments provide more variable support. Provision for students with emotional and behavioural difficulties is a developing area. Overall, provision is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Unsatisfactory. Though students in Years 7 to 9 who are beginners in English make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress, the majority of those at later stages of learning English and older students are not receiving sufficient support to extend their English language competence to the higher levels of which they are capable. As a result some groups of minority ethnic students are not achieving as well as they should be.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. Good for moral and social development but unsatisfactory for spiritual development. The school still does not meet the requirements for a daily act of collective worship. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory but the school is not doing enough to celebrate the rich cultural diversity within the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory provision is made for child protection and health and safety. However, monitoring of students' progress, and using assessment data to support planning and to target support accurately at students who are not achieving as well as they could are unsatisfactory. This is reflected in the high proportions of students who gain a grade D, and who just miss the higher and more prestigious grade C.

The National Curriculum requirements for ICT are not met in Years 7 to 11 and in the Sixth Form there is insufficient provision for religious education to meet statutory requirements. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory. However, the extent to which the school goes out to work with parents, especially those for whom English is not a first language, is limited.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides a very clear direction for development. Systems and procedures for managing the school and ensuring that there is accountability are being put in place but are not yet fully effective. Many members of the senior management team are new to their role but are beginning to work as a team and to develop an understanding of their roles. Clear and rigorous expectations of the roles of middle managers are beginning to be established.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are aware in broad terms of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are fulfilling their responsibilities effectively. However, they have in the past received little detailed monitoring information to have a sufficiently in-depth grasp of issues that need to be tackled and the areas that need to be improved. Governors' overall roles are currently satisfactory but improving well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. There have been few systems and procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. Data analysis is weak with no real analysis of students' performance by ethnicity other than data provided by the local authority.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall, though in some respects the school is not making the best use of its resources because the approach to financial planning is narrow. Principles of best value are not being taken into account fully.

The school development plan is poor and has been replaced by an initial action plan by the new headteacher. This focuses the school much better on key targets that are pertinent to its future success and raising achievement. Resources are satisfactory and staffing is good. Accommodation is unsatisfactory.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Their child is making good progress.</li> <li>• The school expects their child to work hard.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable about approaching the school with a query or a problem.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homework.</li> <li>• Behaviour.</li> <li>• Information about their child's progress.</li> <li>• Links with parents.</li> </ul>

The positive views of parents are largely well supported by the inspection evidence, though there is room for students to make better progress, particularly in Years 10 to 11. The homework provided is satisfactory in quantity and quality, though homework which prepares students for their next lesson is rare. Most homework requires students to complete work started in the lesson. Behaviour is good in most lessons but unsatisfactory in a few. Behaviour in the corridors and when students are unsupervised is not always good enough. The school has not instilled in students the notion that they should be exerting self-discipline and be responsible for controlling their own behaviour. The information to parents is limited. The lack of systems for analysing assessment information and using it make it difficult for the school to provide better information. Links with parents are satisfactory but there is room for the school to improve its partnership with parents.

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE SIXTH FORM**

The Sixth Form consists of 235 students and is larger than average. It has increased in size since the last inspection. There are slightly more female than male students are on roll. The students' home circumstances are very mixed and representative of a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. A relatively high proportion of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds: 20 ethnic groups are represented in the Sixth Form. A well-above average percentage of Year 11 students continue their education full time at age 16. Just over half of them elect to enter the school's Sixth Form. Students are provided with an increasing range of Advanced courses Post 16, including some Advanced and Intermediate vocational courses and key skills courses. The school works closely with local colleges of further education to extend the range of courses available to students.

**HOW GOOD THE SIXTH FORM IS**

The school provides effectively for the needs of its Sixth Formers. Provision is cost-effective. Students become young adults with mature and responsible attitudes while in the Sixth Form. Overall performance in Advanced Level courses has varied over the past few years between being below and being in-line with national averages. In 2001, results were in line but were below in 2000. Students extend their knowledge and understanding of their subjects satisfactorily largely because most teaching is good and some is very good. However, the full impact of the teaching is not realised as there is a lack of rigour in areas such as data analysis and monitoring of students' attainment and progress in order to inform planning and promote higher standards. The leadership and management of the Sixth Form are satisfactory and are based on a shared vision for increasingly higher attainment. However, they are not currently backed up enough by rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluation.

**STRENGTHS**

- Teaching is good and leads to good learning in lessons.
- The curricular opportunities are good with a growing range of courses that match students' needs well.
- Students have mature and responsible attitudes to school and study.
- There is good provision for aspects of pastoral support, which enables students to enjoy and appreciate the worthwhile experiences that they gain in the Sixth Form.
- The new Sixth Form block provides very good accommodation and promotes students' social development and private study well.

## WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- There is a lack of sufficient monitoring and evaluation of the work of the Sixth Form including a lack of rigour in the creation, monitoring and evaluation of data for assessing students' attainment and progress.
- There are insufficient opportunities for students to engage in independent learning, including through the use of ICT.
- Provision for students' spiritual development is insufficiently well developed.
- Religious education is not provided. There is no daily act of collective worship. In these respects, the school does not meet legal requirements.

*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.

<b>Curriculum area</b>	<b>Overall judgement about provision, with comment</b>
Mathematics	Satisfactory. Standards are below national averages but are improving as a result of teachers' good subject knowledge and confident exposition. The most able students are not sufficiently challenged. There is insufficient monitoring of pupil progress.
Biology	Satisfactory. Results in examinations have been below or well below average over the last three years. Though teaching seen was very good, assessment and its use are weak and act as a block to students' progress. Students lack skills in independent learning.
Business studies	Good. Though examination results have been below average, good teaching leads to good progress. Good leadership effectively promotes good teamwork in the department. Monitoring of students' progress based on accurate statistical evidence is a weakness.
Music	Satisfactory. The quality of teaching is good and helps students to build effectively on their achievements at GCSE. However standards of musical performance are below average.
Media	Good. Good and improving examination results are being sustained. These are due to good teaching and the enthusiasm of students. However, there are insufficient opportunities for students to take responsibility for their own learning.
Sports Studies	Good. Standards are currently in line with national expectations, but are improving beyond this. Teaching is consistently good. High expectations enable students to achieve well.
Art and Design	Satisfactory Standards in the Sixth Form are in line with national norms. Students are enthusiastic, but they are working within a structure that is too narrow and which provides little opportunity for exploration using modern technology. Teaching is satisfactory overall.
Politics and Government	Good. Standards are above average and students make good progress. Teaching is very good and students learn well as a result. Leadership is good but rigorous monitoring of students' progress and use of data are weak.

Geography	Satisfactory. Standards in the Sixth Form are slightly below the national average, but achievement from GCSE is satisfactory. Teaching is good and students are receiving good skills' training in a subject they enjoy.
History	Very good. Results are regularly well above average and students make very good gains on their standards at GCSE. Students achieve very well because of the very good teaching they receive.
English	Satisfactory. Results were above average in 2000 but the 2001 results showed a decline at A Level, and unusually, in the AS literature and language examination. Students in Year 12 underachieve in the AS literature course. Teaching and learning are good.
French	Satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. There is insufficient emphasis on development of students' oral skills and they are not given enough opportunities to research topics for discussion in the foreign language.

In other subjects, lessons were sampled. Teaching in these was good overall, and sometimes very good, for example in a Physics lesson, where lively teaching helped students appreciate the concept of calculating the power of a motor. In design and technology, students achieve well because teaching is consistently good. There is a lack of ICT support for studies in the Sixth Form, particularly in the area of computer-aided design. The teaching in drama is very good and so the standards of work are high.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SIXTH FORM**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
How well students are guided and supported	Students receive helpful guidance when choosing their courses. Induction into the Sixth Form is very good. They receive very good guidance concerning higher education. Academically, students are not well supported through their courses and their progress is insufficiently monitored.
Effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Sixth Form	Leadership and management are effective at ensuring a sound quality of provision for students. However, there are some key weaknesses in leadership and management. There is a lack of use of existing data, which means that standards of work and results are insufficiently closely analysed in order to inform decisions on future provision. Similarly, teaching is not closely enough monitored in order to guarantee a consistency of high standards.

## STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

<b>What students like about the Sixth Form</b>	<b>What they feel could be improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good challenging teaching enables them to learn successfully.</li><li>• Teachers provide individual help and support when needed.</li><li>• They are helped to settle into the Sixth Form well and given helpful information on courses.</li><li>• They are treated as responsible young adults</li><li>• Excellent new facilities which give excellent social and private study areas.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Access to the internet to aid independent learning.</li><li>• More frequent and more accurate Information about their progress throughout their studies.</li></ul>

The inspection evidence agrees with students' views. Teaching is good and teachers willingly provide individual help with work when it is needed. Many guide students to work more independently, helping them towards managing what will be expected of them in higher education. Students are treated as young adults and expected to act responsibly. This is reflected in their sound level of maturity and clear sense of purpose. The school's leadership, the head of Sixth Form and his team are supportive of students and ensure that they settle in well. However, because of the lack of sufficiently rigorous systems for monitoring and tracking students' progress, students are right to express concern about the lack of information they receive about their progress. The access to the Internet is poor and so students are correct again to express concern about this.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The attainment of students when they enter the school is below average, but not markedly so. The results in national tests for 11 year olds taken by the current Year 7 students shortly before leaving primary school indicate that the proportion who reached expected standards was in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science. However, although there were fewer who reached the higher level than was the case nationally in English and mathematics, in science results for the higher level were in line with national norms. The results of commercial tests administered by the school in Year 7 indicate that for those currently in the school, students tend to score best in the non-verbal ability tests and least well in the tests which examine their verbal ability. There has been some variation from year to year in students' attainments in these tests. Overall, the results are below average for most year groups but not markedly so other than for students in current Year 11.

2. The overall results of national tests for 14 year olds in English, mathematics and science in 2001 were in line with national results, but there was wide variation between the subjects. English results were well above national and similar school averages and mathematics results were similar to the national average and above the average of similar schools. The results in science were below national and similar school averages. English results have improved well over the last few years rising from being average in 1998 to well above in 2001. The improvement in English from the time of the last inspection has been significant and is a testament to the effectiveness and success of the English department in raising standards of literacy. There has been steady improvement in the mathematics results since 1998, and the 2001 results brought the school back in line with national norms, where they were at the time of the previous inspection. Performance in science tests has been rather erratic and though results were in line with national averages in 1999, in most other years they have been lower, quite significantly so in 2000. The last inspection report highlighted a number of issues in science and these are only now beginning to be addressed successfully under the excellent leadership of a new head of department.

3. In English, the gap between the girls' and boys' results in the national tests for 14 year olds is similar to the gap nationally. However, in mathematics, girls on the whole do not do as well as the boys and their results have been consistently lower over the last few years and to a greater degree than has been the case nationally. There is usually little difference between the results of boys and girls in science. The most marked differences were in 1998 and 2000 when girls' results were lower than those of boys and the gap was larger than the gap nationally by a small but noticeable margin.

4. Analysis of test results carried out by the local education authority (LEA) indicates that in English in 2001 students' performance was very good in relation to their prior attainment. It was just about satisfactory in mathematics and science, though in mathematics, lower and higher attaining students did not do as well as average attainers.

5. Analysis of results by ethnicity indicates that there are some differences between different ethnic groups. Pakistani students performed well in 2001 and their results show a good trend of improvement over the last few years. The trend of improvement is good also for students of Black African and Black Caribbean origin. The Students of Bangladeshi, Greek and Turkish backgrounds perform less well, particularly the Turkish students.



6. The overall results in GCSE examinations for 16 year olds have been in line with national averages for the last four or five years, and in line with the averages of similar types of schools. Between 1998 and 2000, the proportion of five+ GCSEs at grades A\* to C was also in line with national standards, but fell to below average in 2001 though it remained in line with the average of similar types of schools. The school did much better than usual however in relation to the percentages of students gaining 5 or more, or one or more, GCSEs at grades A\* to G. The proportion gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to G was above average and the proportion gaining one or more GCSEs at grades A\* to G was well above average. In both these cases, the results were well above the average of similar types of schools. However, the proportion of students gaining five or more GCSEs at the higher grades of A\* to C has been falling over the last three years. The gap between the school's results, in terms of the percentage of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C, and results nationally is now much wider than at the time of the last inspection. This drop can be explained partially by a lower ability group in 2001, but this was not the case in the year before.

7. The GCSE results for 2001 when compared to the same students' results in the tests for 14 year olds two years previously indicate that they have made satisfactory progress. Lower attainers, made much better progress than higher attainers, amongst whom there was some underachievement.

8. GCSE results in English in 2001 were in line with the national average and above the average of similar types of schools in terms of the proportion of students gaining a grade A\* to C. They made good progress between Year 9 and Year 11. Mathematics results were also in line with the national average and the average of similar school and students made satisfactory progress. However, in science the 2001 results were below average and below the average of similar types of schools indicating a measure of underachievement. GCSE results in art and design, business studies, French, information technology and geography were also below average, and significantly so in art and design, information technology and French where students did not do as well as they should have. However in geography, and business studies, though overall results were low, students did at least as well as might be expected given their prior attainment.

9. The 2001 GCSE results in all other subjects were in line with national averages with the exception of drama where they were significantly above. Though overall results in design and technology were in line with national averages, there were some variations in the different design and technology subjects, results in food studies were very good, but in graphics there was a measure of underachievement, particularly amongst boys. Some underachievement was also evident in the German GCSE. Achievement, based on the prior attainment was good in English literature and physical education and very good in food studies and religious education. The proportion of students gaining grades A\* to G was above average in almost all subjects. However, in many subjects, the proportions of students gaining grades D or E was high and this is where the school needs to focus its energies in order to ensure that standards are improved. There has been insufficient monitoring and tracking of students and use of data to reduce the numbers of D and E grades and transform them to C grades. The school did not fully meet its targets for performance at GCSE in 2001. Whilst it exceeded the target set for the average points score, the targets for the proportions of pupils gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C and five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to G were not met.

10. Inspection evidence provides a largely similar picture of attainment as given by results of national tests and examinations. The overall attainment of students is broadly in line with national standards by the ages of 14 and 16. Achievement, based on progress made against prior attainment, is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and Years 10 to 11. However, there are some variations between, and within, subjects in the standards students reach and the long-term progress they make. In English, mathematics and science the standards of work

are in line with national norms by the end of Years 9 and 11. However, by Year 11, the gap in English between the attainment of boys and girls is wide and boys do not achieve as well as girls. Achievement in English is good between Years 7 to 9, so that students starting with below average attainment in Year 7 are reaching national standards by the end of Year 9. Achievement in Years 10 to 11 in English is satisfactory with not the same progress being made higher up the school as lower down in Years 7 to 9. It is particularly in written work that the progress in Years 10 to 11 slows. Achievement in mathematics and science is satisfactory across the school, though able students do not make enough progress in mathematics and hence do not achieve as well as they might. Conversely in science, the ablest students make significant progress and not only grasp new ideas and knowledge at a very good pace but also learn to apply these to new situations. However, middle and low attainers make more measured progress in science.

11. In other subjects, good standards of work were seen in design and technology and physical education in Years 10 to 11 and students' overall attainment here, as seen during the inspection, was above average. However, in design and technology a high proportion of students in the current Year 11 have been disapplied so it is difficult to make necessarily fair comparisons with standards found nationally or the GCSE results in 2001 when nearly all students took a GCSE in a design and technology subject. Nonetheless progress is good in both design and technology and physical education in Years 10 to 11.

12. By the time students reach the age of 14, their standards of work are broadly average in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, some modern foreign languages (Spanish, Greek, Turkish) music, physical education and religious education. They are also in line with national averages in art and design, history, GCSE ICT and religious education by the age of 16. However, standards are below average in French and ICT at the age of 14 and in geography, non-GCSE ICT, modern foreign languages (French and Spanish predominantly) and music by the time students reach the age of 16. Where standards are low, students are generally not making enough progress other than in geography where those students currently studying a GCSE course have come in with low prior attainment and are in fact making good progress. In music, progress in Year 10 to 11 is satisfactory overall, but lower attainers are making rather modest gains, especially in relation to their skills of performance. Able musicians attain very well and make good progress. In non GCSE ICT, and French and Spanish, students are not doing as well as they should.

13. In ICT the progress of students is unsatisfactory because there is insufficient regular use of computers in subjects and in fact the school does not have sufficient resources for this to be possible at the current time. Those students who have chosen to follow a GCSE course in ICT are doing much better and are making good progress. Overall, good progress, and hence good achievement, is also evident in design and technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education throughout the school i.e. through Years 7 to 11.

14. Students with special educational needs make good progress overall in Years 7 to 11. Each year, almost half of the students on the register progress to a lower stage or leave the register altogether. Forty three per cent of current Year 8 students on the register have improved their reading age by more than their chronological age. In 2001, of the 15 Year 11 students on the Learning Support option, 14 attained the highest level of Certificate of Achievement in ICT and nine the highest level in English. In addition, all students on the register achieved at least four GCSEs in the A\* to G range and 30 per cent of them achieved eight. Their progress was judged to be good in English, art and design and design technology, and satisfactory in all other subjects.

15. The progress of gifted and talented students is satisfactory overall. It is very good in science, where very good provision is made in terms of extension classes and activities. In art and design and physical education it is good, and it is satisfactory in other subjects. At present no overall record is available of the attainment of the students on this register.

16. Students with EAL make variable progress. Those who are new arrivals or beginners in English tend to make satisfactory progress, and often good, progress when they receive support. For example, a pupil from a French speaking African country who had no English when he started at the school and could only write haltingly in French, was producing short, written pieces in English within a year of his arrival. Though the written work still contained errors of grammar, the pupils' writing showed that he was able to communicate ideas effectively. Those at the later stages of learning English do not make enough progress in widening their range of English vocabulary and usage. Whilst these students operate effectively in English in terms of ordinary day-to-day use and in being able to read texts and communicate in writing, there is insufficient development of their in-depth knowledge and understanding of the English language. Hence the extent to which they can engage in the rigorous academic study required at GCSE and Post 16 Level is limited. This is a direct result of unsatisfactory provision for students with EAL.

## **Sixth Form**

17. The overall standards of work in the Sixth Form are broadly in line with national averages. Students enter the Sixth Form with broadly average attainment, though this varies from course to course, ranging from above average in some courses to below average in others.

18. The overall results of A Level examinations, based on the total average points score, for 2001 were broadly in line with the national averages. The pattern over the last four years has been a mixed one with results alternating between below average, in 2000 and 1998, and average, in 1999 and 2001. The average points score for Advanced GNVQs was, however, lower in 2001 than in 2000. 2001 results were in line with national averages, but 2000 results were above.

19. There is some variation in the performance of individual subjects. Subjects where examination performance is strong include: drama, general studies, history, government and politics and sports studies. In these subjects, results tend to be above or well above average with a good proportion of students attaining the highest grades, grades A and B. Results in GNVQ in media studies and leisure and tourism are also good and again tend to be above average. A Level results in biology, business studies, French and music have tended to be low, often well below average. In the remaining subjects, results have a tendency to fluctuate between being below average and above. Results in English literature, physics and mathematics were below average in 2001, but have been better in the previous three years in all three. Geography results have tended to be below average over the last 4 years.

20. The achievement of students in the 2001 A Level and GNVQ examinations was satisfactory given their GCSE performance. However, boys, achieved better than girls, making greater improvement on their GCSE results than expected. This was particularly the case for boys with high or low prior attainment.

21. Advanced supplementary (AS) results for 2001 were low last year as staff grappled with the examination requirements for the new AS examinations. Results were relatively good in English literature and language, drama and politics where close to half, or more, students gained the higher grades of A or B. In most other subjects, relatively few grades

A or B were gained and in many a significant proportion of students did not gain a pass grade. Observations from inspection evidence indicate that the attainment of current Year 12 students who are following AS courses is better than that indicated by the results of 2001.

22. The picture of attainment provided by the examination results of 18 year olds is largely reflected in the quality and standards of the work seen during the inspection in subjects which were inspected. Standards are high in English language and literature, history and physical education. They are broadly in line with national averages in art and design, business studies, English literature, geography, mathematics and media studies but below in biology, French and music. Given students' GCSE grades, they are making good progress and mostly achieving well in art, business studies, English language and literature, government and politics, history, media studies, music and physical education. In the remaining subjects, achievement is satisfactory but in mathematics higher attainers in particular are not achieving well enough. There is some underachievement in French also in terms of the quality of the students' written work.

23. Standards of literacy and presentation skills are good in ICT. Students use technical vocabulary well in music and geography whilst in politics, they speak effectively during debates. They use the Internet and secondary source materials in geography and in politics for research and investigative work. In politics, they display good précis and note taking skills, which contribute to good writing skills. In English, students use a collection of literary criticism to develop their interpretative and evaluative skills. In the combined Year 12 and 13 Key Skills lesson on the media, students demonstrated an increasing awareness of the techniques used in advertising when targeting specific audiences.

24. Subjects which were sampled generally showed students to be achieving appropriately though in drama and design and technology students achieve very well. Standards of work in drama are particularly high and A Level results in 2001 were well above average.

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

25. Students' attitudes to learning and school are good and a positive feature of the school community. They are complemented by students' sound behaviour and effective relationships with each other and most teachers. This enables them to serve the school in a mature and purposeful manner.

26. Most students are confident, disciplined and motivated learners. They concentrate well and persevere to complete tasks. They co-operate well and work effectively in small groups exchanging information and ideas. Many students respond positively when given the opportunity to work independently, which was not evident in the last inspection. In a Year 10 dance lesson a significant number of students demonstrated a sequence of movements to other students, which enabled them to learn from each other. Students reported they value the opportunity to work independently and some English, geography, and religious studies lessons confirmed this. Students continue to display these positive characteristics and show interest in most subjects and lessons, particularly science, physical education, geography, music, history, and ICT lessons. Students with special educational needs share the positive attitudes, which are evident throughout the school. A small, but a significant number of students are not keen to learn. They take longer to settle down and frequently interrupt learning and teaching. Low achievers often cause this inappropriate behaviour. This was evident in some mathematics, modern foreign languages, ICT and personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons, as well as some registration periods.

27. Most students have a good attitude to extra-curricular provision and support their achievements by actively participating in these activities. For example, during the inspection a significant number of students were observed enjoying basketball, which supported their social interaction. Other students were observed actively using computers at break time and this enabled them to develop their ICT skills, and to successfully complete homework tasks. A number of teachers indicated that this pleases students.

28. Through formal and informal interviews, students shared their positive perception about the school and indicated that staff are caring, sensitive and supportive. They felt that most teachers offered good teaching and interesting lessons. A significant number of students felt that the school valued their aspirations and some reported that staff empathised with their differing needs. These views contribute to effective relationships and a culture conducive to learning.

29. Standards of behaviour are satisfactory overall. They are good in most lessons and satisfactory around the school. Despite the congestion in some of the narrow, long corridors and stairways, the school functions largely as an orderly community, though the congestion at the lower school site does result in unnecessary pushing and shoving. Many students demonstrate a pride in their school and its traditions. Students are friendly, polite, courteous, and most speak confidently and informatively to adults, both inside and outside of the classroom. Some welcome the opportunity to please teachers and visitors. However, a small minority of parents and students reported concerns about bullying and other inappropriate behaviour, which have been documented by the school and were evident during the inspection. Most parents and students are adamant that bullying is dealt with effectively.

30. During the last school year there were 150 fixed period and 11 permanent exclusions, involving 97 students. The permanent exclusion rate amongst boys was particularly high and much higher than that of girls, which is average. In addition, the rate of exclusion amongst black students, especially those of Caribbean background, was disproportionately high. For example, 50 per cent of the permanently excluded boys and 25 per cent of those excluded on a fixed term basis were of Caribbean heritage, although they only form 10 per cent of the student population in the school. These figures are disproportionately high with respect to the minority ethnic groups represented in school. Inspection evidence indicates that the disproportionate numbers represented in the statistics for permanent exclusions was due to a very severe assault against two black students by seven Caribbean students. Four students, who had also been excluded for this, were reinstated after appeal. Whilst this incident skewed the figures for that year for permanent exclusions, the issue in terms of fixed term exclusions remains and requires improvement. The new headteacher, members of the senior management team and governors are developing strategies and exploring more effective use of the learning support unit to reduce the overall number of exclusions.

31. The quality of relationships throughout the school is constructive and purposeful. Students relate positively to their peers, teachers and other adults. They treat each other with respect and are willing to help each other in a variety of ways. Older students serve the school as prefects and support the wider community through work experience. Many of these students have opportunities to work closely with younger students supporting their learning needs and raising standards. Inspection evidence also highlights the value and appreciation that employers attach to the maturity shown by students on work experience. Students throughout the school serve on the school council and represent their school community in sports tournaments in a productive way. During the inspection Year 8 students were observed undertaking reception duties in a very mature and responsible manner. All these productive relationships effectively support students' personal development and enable them to value their school and wider community.

32. Attendance is good and has improved well since the last report. This improvement is due to the diligence of staff and the close working relationship with the educational welfare officer. They work in a pro-active manner and rigorously investigate and discourage absences. Unauthorised absences are slightly above the national average for similar schools, but the school is working in a purposeful manner to reduce existing levels. A very small minority of students arrive late for lessons and registration and this evidently causes disruption to learning and teaching.

33. Since the last report the school has improved its levels of attendance and sustained the satisfactory behaviour and effective relationships. Students across both sites continue to serve the school and community in a responsible and mature manner.

## **Sixth Form**

34. Most students have good attitudes to learning. Their good behaviour in the classroom, values and relationships contribute to their achievements, as well as promoting a friendly environment for learning. Most students enjoy the Sixth Form and their levels of attendance are satisfactory. These motivated learners concentrate well and persevere to complete their work. They co-operate well and work effectively in small groups. They respond positively when given the opportunity to work in together in collaboration. Most show enthusiasm and pleasure in their work. This was particularly evident in a Year 12 key skills lesson, where students were observed working in a manner which enabled them to share information and ideas about ICT. This was also evident in a number of English, music, ICT and business studies lessons. Students' attitudes to visitors and younger students are often constructive and purposeful. They value the opportunity to speak effectively about others and promote learning for students in Year 7, 8 and 9 by sharing reading and other learning activities. These attitudes help to raise academic standards in the school and enable all students to adopt a positive attitude to learning inside and outside of the classroom.

35. Students' attitudes to learning are often complemented by their mature and responsible behaviour in class and around the main school. During the inspection, students were polite and respectful and showed a strong willingness to speak about themselves and the school. They indicated that they found most lessons interesting and informative. However, very occasionally some students displayed silly and immature behaviour in the common room. This evidently sets inappropriate examples for younger students.

36. Most students enjoy a purposeful relationship with staff. They value their relationships and this contributes to their learning and personal development. Relationships between students and those from other cultural heritages are strong. During the inspection, a significant number of students were observed socialising in a friendly and constructive manner. They supported each other's comments and most were in general agreement about how they are treated by staff.

37. A number of students serve the school and community through the school council. They also organise social and recreational activities for members of the local community and serving as mentors for younger students. Students also initiate and develop fund raising events, which raise monies for a number of national charities. These activities are undertaken in a caring and mature manner, enhancing students' sense of responsibility and citizenship.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

38. The quality of teaching is good overall. Over two-thirds of lessons seen were good or better. The quality of teaching is best in the Sixth Form though the difference between the key stages is not that significant. There is more good or better teaching in the Sixth Form and no less than satisfactory teaching. In Years 7 to 11, about six per cent of the teaching is less than satisfactory. The quality of learning broadly matches the quality of teaching and where teaching is good or better, students' learning also tends to be good or better. Teaching and learning are good in English, art and design, child development, design and technology, geography, history, ICT at GCSE, music, physical education and religious education. In all these subjects, there is a good measure of very good teaching also. In drama, the quality of teaching and learning is very good. In mathematics, science and modern foreign languages it is mostly satisfactory and in both mathematics and modern foreign languages a small but significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Though science teaching is satisfactory overall, the teaching in Years 10 to 11 is good. The teaching of ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory and not enough use is made of computers to promote effectively their progress.

39. Teachers have good subject knowledge which is usually well used to develop students' own knowledge, understanding and skills for example through effective question and answer sessions and clear expositions. In many subjects, probing and well-structured questioning extends and develops students' thinking effectively. However, in some subjects, not enough use is made of subject specialist knowledge or it is not as up-to-date as it should be. For example, in modern foreign languages there is far too little use of the foreign language in lessons by the teachers and this results in students not making sufficient progress in their oral skills. They do not have sufficient models of the spoken language to work from and emulate.

40. Planning is also a good feature of much of the teaching and in the best lessons work is very well planned for different abilities and groups of students (i.e. differentiated work). Overall, there is effective match of work to students' needs, though there are many occasions when different work is not planned for the needs and abilities of different groups, in mathematics, for example. Individual support to students as they work on set tasks enables most to achieve at least satisfactorily what is asked of them. However, there is scope for the school to extend and share the existing good practice in relation to differentiation of work more widely across the school. In a number of subjects, not enough use is made of extension work for the ablest - in geography, mathematics and ICT. The level of challenge for the ablest is at times not high enough. This was the case in mathematics in particular. Conversely, in science able students are given demanding work which very effectively stretches them.

41. Satisfactory attention is given to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. However, this is a largely developing area and there is some variation between subjects as to the extent to which they plan to promote literacy and numeracy through their subject teaching.

42. In the majority of lessons students are effectively managed but in the lessons that were less than satisfactory, a key failing was ineffective control of behaviour. Pace can be slow at times, sometimes as a result of time spent dealing with inappropriate behaviour. In most lessons relationships are good and are well used by teachers to gain good levels of co-operation from students. Lessons are, in the main, well structured and tasks are interesting thus keeping students well motivated and on-task.

43. Marking of work is thorough and there are examples of some very good use of on-going assessment to identify for students what they need to do next in order to improve their work. This is particularly the case in English and geography.

44. Students with special educational needs learn well in the small group withdrawal lessons and in the Year 10 and 11 learning support option. The small groups allow the teacher to give individual attention so that students can work at their own pace, and teachers are skilled at building confidence and correcting mistakes without causing a sense of failure. Resources are effectively used and lessons well planned, but there is some lack of variety in activities and ICT is not exploited at all as a teaching tool in Years 7 to 9, due to lack of access to facilities. Information and communication technology (ICT) is well used in the learning support option. In subject lessons students with special needs learn as well as their peers when they are given appropriate support and learning tasks, but there are occasions when they are not properly catered for and this limits their learning. In the inclusion unit one pupil was seen to be making positive progress towards learning behaviour management techniques, due to the skill of his teacher and his obvious desire to succeed.

45. Students with EAL receive variable teaching, and its quality is much dependent on the level of support provided in class and the class teacher's expertise and understanding of the needs of students with EAL. Where there is in-class support, it is very good though sometimes hampered when the class teacher does not create enough opportunities for the support staff to work with students who are learning EAL. Occasionally, class teachers provide material that is specifically amended and tailored to the needs of these students, but on the whole this is rare. Partnership teaching is a concept that the class teachers have not really grasped even though the co-ordinator for provision for students with EAL is an excellent model and keen to promote partnership teaching.

46. Gifted and talented students learn very well in subjects such as science, where they are stimulated by activities relevant to their needs. However, not all subjects give sufficient thought to providing tasks that are fully challenging.

## **Sixth Form**

47. The overall quality of teaching and learning in the Sixth Form is good. Just over three quarters of lessons were good or better and just over a third were very good or better. Though relatively few were excellent no lessons were less than satisfactory either. Amongst the subjects inspected in depth, teaching observed was very good in biology, business education, government and politics, history and sports studies. It was good in English, geography and music, and in art and design, French and mathematics, the quality of teaching was satisfactory. Where subjects were sampled, teaching was mostly good, and in drama and design and technology it was very good.

48. Key features of teaching which stand out in the Sixth Form include good subject knowledge. This is well used by teachers in a variety of ways: it is used to ask students probing questions which help them to develop their thinking and to provide clear, coherent and well structured expositions on the topics being studied, thus, effectively helping students to develop their own subject knowledge. In some subjects, however, the use of subject knowledge is not as good. For example, in French where not enough use is made of the foreign language in lessons and teachers' own fluency and grasp of grammar are not always adequate. Conversely in English, teachers' mastery of the texts being studied is very effectively conveyed to the students and used to enhance and hone their own skills of literary criticism. Very good subject knowledge and skills in biology are used to impart specialist techniques such as how to use a microscope to observe and draw living cells.

49. Teachers have high expectations of students in most lessons and provide work that is demanding and which successfully engages students' interest and enthusiasm. Good relationships are a hallmark of Sixth Form lessons and teachers' capacity to encourage a



positive response from students to their learning helps the students to make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. In mathematics, however, though teachers establish good relationships with their students, able students are not challenged enough.

50. Whilst in many lessons, the methods teachers use are effective and at times imaginative and creative, this aspect of teaching is not as well developed overall in the Sixth Form. For example, there is not always a sufficiently wide variety of teaching and learning styles. Teachers are very skilled at delivering the 'lecture-style' lesson, and do it very well, but sometimes this is to the detriment of students' learning in that they are not able to participate actively. In French, for example, students do not often have the opportunity to prepare presentations to the rest of the class, hence missing opportunities to develop their use and fluency in the foreign language. In biology, on the other hand, well-led discussions by teachers help to enhance students' participation and involvement in lessons. In business studies, there is a good balance of individual and group work and this provides students with good opportunities to discuss their work and develop their ideas. In art, however, teachers act predominantly as facilitators helping students to develop their own pieces of work. Whilst this helps them to explore their own ideas and creativity, the style limits the extent to which students learn through collaboration with others or through direction from the teacher.

51. In most subjects, there is good encouragement and support for students to develop their skills of independent work such as researching for information and reading around the topics they are studying. In business studies, students successfully undertake research of local companies and their business needs. In geography and history, students effectively develop their enquiry skills further through research and analysis work. However, in biology, students' skills of independent learning are underdeveloped and they do not read widely enough in relation to the subject. In media studies also, though teachers have high expectations, the students do not always show enough initiative or take sufficient responsibility for their learning. The lack of sufficient ICT resources is a serious impediment to the development of independent skills of learning as well as to providing teachers with opportunities to widen their range of teaching methods. Overall, the teaching of key skills, such as literacy and numeracy, is not sufficiently well developed. Where students have strong literacy and numeracy skills this does not particular affect their learning, but for a minority of students whose key skills are not strong, the lack of sufficient promotion of skills such as essay writing, researching for information, data analysis does limit their capacity to develop relevant subject knowledge, understanding and skills. Overall, there is not enough emphasis on encouraging students to read widely and to read round the topics they are studying. As a result, students' skills in self-study are not particularly good. Students with EAL do not always take part in discussions and on a number of occasions were observed listening silently during class discussion and were rather on the periphery than fully engaged or involved. There is no provision for EAL at this level or identification of needs, especially of the late stage learners.

52. The use of assessment is variable. In some subjects it is well used to promote students' understanding go what they are doing well and where they need to improve. However, in a number of subjects, on-going assessment is too formal or insufficiently well used to highlight for students what they need to do to improve their work.

53. The third or so of lessons which are very good or better are marked by the rigorous approach to teaching and often very good use of resources, such as overhead projectors, videos, texts. In these lessons, teachers often make use of a wide variety of interesting, and at times, innovative and creative teaching methods which inspire students to learn.

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

54. The school offers a satisfactory range of learning opportunities in Years 7 to 11. Curricular provision is very good in physical education, good in English, science, geography and history. It is satisfactory in mathematics, art and design, design and technology, modern foreign languages, music and religious education, and unsatisfactory in ICT. Statutory requirements for teaching the National Curriculum and religious education are met with the exception of ICT. In Year 9 a lack of separate ICT lessons, linked to poor resources, leads to National Curriculum requirements not being met. In Years 10 and 11 the GCSE option in ICT is only taken up by a small proportion of students and for the majority there is insufficient provision to develop the required competencies.

55. In Years 7 to 9, drama and PSHE are taught in addition to the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and usefully extend the curricular provision. In Years 10 to 11 the learning opportunities for academic study are relatively good but there is a lack of opportunities for vocational qualifications for those students whose career aspirations might be better met by these. Students study a suitable core curriculum, which includes English, mathematics, science and a modern foreign language at GCSE Level and non-GCSE courses in religious education, physical education and personal, social and health education. In addition, they make four choices from design and technology, art and design, music, physical education, history, geography, religious education and ICT. Students are able to take a second modern foreign language if they wish, though few do. The school provides good opportunities for students to take-up a GCSE course in their heritage language, such as Turkish or Greek. The physical education option includes the opportunity to take the Junior Sports Leader Award. A Learning Support option provides for students who need further support with literacy and ICT and this leads to Certificates of Achievement in English and ICT. All Year 10 students have two weeks of work experience. A Student Training and Remotivation course (STAR), linked to local further education colleges, ensures the inclusion of a group of students for whom the mainstream curriculum is not suitable. A number of students are formally disapplied from modern foreign languages and design and technology in order to take combinations of subjects more suited to their career aspirations, for example drama with music. However, the rate of disapplications in design and technology is high.

56. The programme for PSHE effectively covers topics such as relationships, parenting, sex education, drug misuse and racism. Careers education is well provided for through the programme for personal, social and health education. In each year groups, some time is devoted to careers education, including preparation for work experience in Year 10. The two-week work experience for all is a particularly strong feature and is well supported by individual interviews through 'Connexions'. The course is led by an experienced co-ordinator and delivery is generally satisfactory. However, because of the difficulty of co-ordinating such a large number of tutors, plans are afoot to use a smaller team of specialist teachers for this work. This area of the curriculum is closely linked to very well developed plans for the teaching of citizenship in September 2002. A cross-curricular audit has been completed showing where subject schemes of work correspond with the citizenship programmes of study. There are plans to strengthen and support these areas through the programme for PSHE, and part of this is already being piloted in Year 7. The school is well placed to meet the requirements of the three strands of citizenship education.

57. Provision for students with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. The support provided by the learning support team is good but the extent to which subject departments amend curricular plans and adjust materials to meet the needs of students with special educational needs is variable. The support is currently targeted towards literacy and, as yet, there is insufficient support for numeracy. There is a good balance between support in-class and more specialised tuition where students are taken out of mainstream lessons,

or withdrawn, for short periods of time. In Years 7 to 9 support is through small-group, intensive literacy lessons, taught by learning support teachers, for which students are withdrawn from English reading classes and, in Years 8 and 9, from one French lesson a week. In addition, well-targeted support in many lessons by learning support assistants helps these students to keep up with mainstream learning. In Years 10 and 11 the Learning Support option, though not limited to students on the register, provides an opportunity for additional support with key skills. The learning support department liaises with subject departments as to the best way to provide for these students. This liaison has been effective in ensuring that all teachers have copies of students' individual education plans (IEPs) and are aware of their needs. However, departmental provision of suitable work and activities is inconsistent, with many teachers expecting all students to work at the same level. The department is also responsible for an Inclusion Unit which is in the process of being set up to deal with those students whose problems place them in danger of exclusion. It is too early to comment on the effectiveness of this provision.

58. Provision for students with EAL is unsatisfactory. Whilst the co-ordinator provides very good support to students, and has focused this mainly through the English department, support in other subjects is very limited or non-existent. Some departments, such as science, demonstrate that they are beginning to take the needs of learners with EAL into account in their longer term planning, i.e. schemes of work. However, implementation varies according to the level of knowledge and expertise of the teacher.

59. Although the school has had an able students policy for some years, a co-ordinator for gifted and talented students has only recently been appointed. Provision is satisfactory. A register of gifted and talented students has been appropriately compiled and the current focus of support for these students is mainly through special events and clubs. However, science provides special extension classes and there are whole-school Year 9 and Year 10 study days. The co-ordinator is currently focusing on developing the curriculum to make better provision for these students rather than working through special events. However, at present the provision of suitable extension activities in lessons is inconsistent.

60. The school has taken action to increase teachers' awareness of the Key Stage 3 Literacy Strategy and its application across the curriculum. At this stage, the literacy policy is developmental. However, there is a working party with representatives from most subject areas and the development plan provides a clear overview of what the school plans to do. Despite these initiatives, management of the policy is difficult. The allocation of time for monitoring and co-ordinating the work is inadequate particularly as the co-ordinator already leads the largest department. Some departments such as design and technology, and geography have a literacy policy but overall, most do not and teaching of literacy is not included in curricular plans such as schemes of work.

61. The provision for numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory. Adequate attention is given to the teaching of numeracy skills through subjects. However, at present, there is no whole school numeracy policy to provide a coherent framework to develop students' numeracy skills. Hence, where subjects are helping students to use numeracy as part of subject teaching, it is often in isolation of what is being taught in other subjects or in mathematics. The school has undertaken an initial audit of work and is planning training for staff.

62. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided, with particular strengths in sport. Teams play at all levels in football, netball, hockey and basketball, both against other schools and in intra-school competitions. Weekly clubs include table tennis, dance, trampolining, carting, homework, sailing (in summer), readers and writers, the school magazine, drama, art, graphics and a Christian Union 'Roots' club. The Learning Support department provides homework and reading facilities every day before and after school and at lunchtime. Geography and history provide residential fieldwork and a visit to the

battlefields of Ypres. An annual cross-curricular activities week makes time for sailing and sports tours overseas. Drama activities include public performances and theatre visits. It is planned that many of the areas of extra-curricular provision will form a dimension of citizenship education from September 2002.

63. Equality of opportunity for all is seen as a whole school commitment and this is partly catered for by the school's charging policy which means that nobody is excluded from activities, and partly by the arrangements made for disapplications when students want to follow unusual option combinations. However, there is a weakness in the provision for certain groups such as those whose first language is not English, and the delay in setting up the Inclusion Unit has led to some students who need this facility not being sufficiently well provided for.

64. There are strengths and weaknesses in relationships with partner institutions. Enfield College and Southgate college support the STAR course. Links with Middlesex University and the Institute of Education support the training of new teachers. The Enfield Sixth Form collegiate systems allows students to join groups in partner schools to study minority subjects. However, the borough primary-secondary partnership does not function well and curriculum links with feeder primary schools are weak.

65. Improvement in the curriculum since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory. There is still insufficient provision in lessons for students with learning difficulties or the gifted and talented. The provision for teaching ICT in the main school still does not meet statutory requirements. Vocational courses have not been developed in Years 10 and 11.

## **Sixth Form**

66. A good range of learning opportunities is offered in the Sixth Form and the courses offered match learners' aspirations and their potential for academic development well. However, the provision of religious education does not meet statutory requirements since all students do not have the opportunity to study the subject. Students have a good choice of courses and can choose from nineteen different subjects at GCE A and AS Level. In addition, intermediate GNVQ qualifications are offered in business studies, media studies and leisure and tourism, and the Advanced Certificate of Vocational Education in business studies, media studies, leisure and recreation and travel and tourism. A Community Sports Leader Award is also available. Key skills in communication, application of number and ICT are effectively timetabled and taught as a separate element of the Advanced Level courses. Wider subject choices are available through the Enfield Sixth Form collegiate system which enables students to study some subjects at other institutions. Choices are dictated by the aspirations of students and all subjects do not run every year, depending on the numbers of students choosing them. Currently there is only one student in the Sixth Form with special educational needs, for whom no special provision is required. Entry requirements to the Sixth Form are flexible and negotiable, based on principles of equality of opportunity and the student's commitment to study, as well as on previous qualifications.

67. All students follow an extension studies course which effectively continues many of the themes students have already encountered through the programme for PSHE lower down in the school. Together with residential courses, the programme contributes well to students' personal development. Sixth Formers have satisfactory opportunities for taking responsibility by training as mentors for younger students, and acting as school prefects and members of the Sixth Form council. They raise money for charity through events such as fashion shows and many participate in the Youth Action Volunteer scheme which takes

them into the local community to do voluntary work. These opportunities, plus units of study such as Law and Society, are already closely related to the citizenship programme of study and it is planned that they will form the basis of citizenship in the Sixth Form curriculum from September 2002.

## **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC)**

### **Main school**

68. Overall, the school makes satisfactory provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provision for moral and social development is good and for cultural development it is satisfactory. However, the opportunities provided for the development of spiritual awareness are unsatisfactory. There is little evidence that the school is aware of the importance of a coherent and cross-curricular approach to the provision for SMSC development and its impact on students' progress, attitudes and achievement or to the overall personal development of students. Though there are several references to these aspects of students' personal development in the school's documentation, especially with regard to behaviour, equal opportunities and bullying, they tend to exist in isolation rather than form part of a strategic and co-ordinated overall approach. The PSHE programme is an important part of the school's delivery of opportunities for personal development. However, there is no unifying policy or process to link the elements of SMSC development that are taught here to the rest of the curriculum. Following a detailed audit for the introduction of citizenship, there are plans to develop this aspect of the curriculum in the future. This could provide a valuable opportunity for a planned and co-ordinated approach to SMSC development across the school in terms of a shared policy for the planning, delivery and monitoring of this aspect of the curriculum.

69. Though the religious education syllabus provides good opportunities for spiritual development, along with other aspects of SMSC development, and there are valuable examples of opportunities for reflection and discussion of spiritual and moral issues, provision for students' spiritual development is unsatisfactory overall. Assemblies take place once each week, for each year group. Assemblies rarely constitute worship although one assembly did provide a small opportunity for reflection, but was not connected to the overall assembly theme. There are no plans to provide for tutor time to operate a *thought for the day* programme that is linked to assembly themes. The statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship is not met. There is a Christian group that meet on a regular basis. There is some evidence of planning in departments for spiritual development, but this is inconsistent and lacks structure. The programme for PSHE in Years 7 to 11 and the extension programme for Sixth Formers contribute little in this area. In some subjects, opportunities for the spiritual development of students were observed, as in religious education for example. Here, students are encouraged to consider and respond to questions about the meaning and purpose of life. In English, students are exposed to a range of literary works which often provide good opportunities for reflection as well as for consideration of moral, social and cultural questions. In one Year 11 lesson, the use of poetry provided good opportunities to reflect on the historical changes in South Africa. In art and design, students are required to draw upon their own attitudes, values, beliefs and experiences of the world as source material for their work. However, many opportunities in most subjects are missed to enhance this aspect of students' personal development.

70. Provision for moral development is good. Opportunities are made available largely through the programme for personal, social and health education. Topics such as attitudes to bullying, sex education, drugs awareness, values and family life, equal opportunities, police liaison and vandalism, discrimination, prejudice, and ethical issues such as human rights provide a sound curriculum for discussion and the development of attitudes and values. The school has clear expectations of students knowing right from wrong and

students respond well when they are corrected. The Headteacher and staff are good role models for students. Assemblies make some contribution to this area. Several subjects contribute well in providing opportunities for moral debate. In religious education, students are able to respond to aspects of morality using their knowledge of religious and ethical issues. In the Sixth Form, many ethical issues are discussed in the religious education examination course. In physical education students are given a clear awareness of the importance of playing by the rules. In English, students have good opportunities to become increasingly aware of making moral judgements through consideration of issues they encounter in their study of literature, such as capital punishment in the unit of work on Derek Bentley's 'Let him have it'. In drama, concepts of good and evil are explored well when students are asked to devise drama around particular themes. For example, in one Year 7 class, students were given the opportunity to explore the consequences of exchanging their emotions for an everlasting wish. In science, students are given the opportunity to consider moral issues in the way that we use our scientific knowledge, for example, by preparing talks on the rights and wrongs of cloning plants and animals. Several other subjects such as art and design, science, geography and music all provide opportunities for students' moral development.

71. Provision for social development is good. The school provides opportunities to take responsibility and develop social understanding. The programme for PSHE provides many opportunities in this area, in terms of specific curriculum provision such as rights and responsibilities, healthy environment, sex and love, citizenship, and decision making skills. These all make a valuable contribution to developing positive attitudes towards others and fostering independent thinking. The prefect system in the Sixth Form and monitors in the rest of the school enable students to exercise social responsibility and develop communication skills. In addition, there are opportunities for Sixth Formers to develop personal skills through first aid and personal protection courses. Sixth Form students also take an active part in providing help to the local community. They organise parties for senior citizens and several charity events and attend a conference on an annual basis in order to prepare them for life in higher education. Students run their own tuck shop and they organise a well-supported talent show. In addition, lunchtime sporting clubs, and participation in competitions all help to develop skills of social interaction. Students act as monitors on parents' evenings and assist with display work in the upper school. The school's council meets every two weeks and provides good opportunities for students to develop their communication skills and make important contributions to the life of the school. Most subjects contribute effectively towards social development. For example, in art and design, students explore the social contexts of the work of artists. Almost all subjects enable students to develop social skills. Their ability to work well together in groups, to participate in discussion work and to respect the views and opinions of other is a strong feature of classroom life. In English, students' understanding of social issues and their awareness of the common threads that bind communities together enable them to develop good social attitudes.

72. Provision for students' cultural development is satisfactory. There are several opportunities for students to be involved in activities that extend their cultural development. The school's curriculum, however, does not provide planned opportunities for students to develop an awareness of the diversity of cultures and traditions that exist in this country. The programme for PSHE provides some opportunities for learning about the cultures representative of Britain today. For example, topics such individual differences make some contribution to promoting racial harmony and mutual understanding of one another's differences. Some subjects make a significant contribution to the cultural development of students, such as religious education, through the study of different religions and the cultures that support them. In English, the study of literature from other cultures enables

students to appreciate different approaches to language. Visits to the theatre, museums and art galleries all provide opportunities for students to explore their own cultural heritage and those of others. Overall, though the school could do more to promote knowledge and understanding of the cultural diversity representative of British society today.

73. Since the last inspection, the provision for the moral development of students has continued to improve. The provisions for social development have improved. However, spiritual development continues to be an area of concern, and cultural development has shown little sign of improvement. In addition, the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship for all students is still not met.

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

74. There are satisfactory arrangements for students' care, support, guidance and welfare. These are complemented by the sound arrangements for child protection, which enable students to learn in a safe and secure environment. However, some incidents of child abuse are not referred directly to the designated teacher by staff. This has implications for good practice and is in breach of local authority guidelines. Some support staff are not fully aware of the child protection guidelines. All staff, including designated teachers require in service training on child protection policy and practice. These improvements should enable the school to comply further with Social Service guidelines.

75. Procedures for the health and safety are appropriately in place. Since the last report, the school has fully addressed the concerns raised then about health and safety. The school staff and governors take effective action to ensure that the school meets with statutory requirements and give priority to the safety and well being of the school community. Students know and understand evacuation procedures. Accidents are recorded, monitored and appropriate action to administer first aid. All electrical and fire equipment is checked at regular intervals and appropriate action, where necessary, is taken by designated staff and governors. However, during the inspection school staff and the inspection team identified some health and safety issues. For example, in the design and technology department the technician does not have the necessary certificate to operate machinery and welding equipment. There are no warning signs to indicate that there are inflammable gases on the school premises. Staff are aware of these and have agreed to take immediate action. The lower school site does pose some health and safety risks for the school due to the overcrowding. This is particularly noticeable on the stairwells where students are tempted at times to push and shove one another. Staff take considerable care and precaution in monitoring the behaviour of students in between lessons when they are moving from one class to another. In addition, some innovative re-modelling of the main building on the lower school site has helped to ease some of the worst pressure points during lesson changeover times. Nonetheless the overcrowding on the stairs does present a potential safety hazard.

76. The school effectively provides support and guidance for students' personal development, including support and guidance to promote good behaviour and attendance. The PSHE programme makes an effective contribution to student's personal development. The comprehensive provision ensures that students make informed choices about health and safety, and relationships and learn to work as responsible citizens of the school and wider community. The programme for PSHE encompasses the careers education programme, which is implemented satisfactorily by caring form tutors and supported by heads of year. They ensure that all students receive the level of support and guidance, which enables them to pursue the world of education and work in a constructive and purposeful manner.

77. There are effective procedures for monitoring attendance. Members of the leadership team, heads of year and form tutors work closely with the educational welfare

officer to identify irregular attendance and poor time keeping and use the information to take appropriate action. Teachers are supported by the attendance clerk who has a special brief for monitoring of absences and consistently informs parents of their child's absence and poor time keeping. Heads of year work closely with form tutors to reward good and improved attendance. Most subject tutors make checks on students' attendance in lessons and this discourages internal truancy. These methods work well and enable the school to achieve good levels of attendance.

78. Satisfactory policy and procedures are in place to ensure effective monitoring of students' behaviour and the information is used to achieve satisfactory behaviour in the classroom and around the school. Most students follow the clear expectations in the code of conduct as they progress through the school. Rewards and sanctions are used consistently, fairly and are recognised and valued by most students. Satisfactory management, organisation and control of students help them to observe the rules. The new Learning Support Unit is helping disaffected students to manage their behaviour better, though it is too early to make an overall judgement on its effectiveness. These arrangements enable students to make satisfactory progress and for older students to serve as positive role models for younger students.

79. There are sound procedures to discourage anti-social behaviour. The anti-bullying policy and procedures are implemented satisfactorily and staff take appropriate action to deal with any reported incidents. However, some teachers are not rigorous enough in challenging inappropriate behaviour in the classroom and around the school. There are occasional incidents of racism, which are consistently challenged, investigated, but not recorded, monitored and reported to designated members of the senior management team. The recommendations made by MacPherson following the enquiry into the death of Stephen Lawrence are not fully in place. However, the headteacher is fully committed to equal opportunities and is in the process of developing anti - racist strategies and a pro-active approach to eliminating racist incidents.

80. The school's procedures for assessing and monitoring of students' academic performance are unsatisfactory overall. The present assessment policy is being reviewed, but clearly identifies the methods by which teachers should record attainment and progress. Practice across the school is very varied and overall students' work is inconsistently assessed and poorly monitored. The use of assessment information to inform the future planning for students' learning is unsatisfactory. Many departments do not make sufficient use of data in setting targets for subjects and individuals. Students in Year 7, are tested on entry, but not all departments make effective use of this data to set academic targets and this affects the achievements of some students, particularly those who have EAL.

81. However, there are examples of good practice in English, science and geography, where heads of departments monitor books and students have good opportunities to assess their own learning. Some good practice is also evident in history. In English, geography and history students' work is accurately assessed using National Curriculum assessment criteria. In English this information is very well used to set qualitative targets i.e. identify what they need to do next in order to improve their work. However, the use of assessment data to track and monitor students' progress is an area of weakness in English, geography and history. Only in science are there robust computer based systems for recording and analysing assessment data and these are beginning to be used effectively to improve students' attainment.

82. Inconsistencies in the methods of assessment across departments result in assessments being insufficiently well used to set targets for groups or individuals and there are examples of varied implementation of departmental policy within individual departments. Teachers do not always assess by using National Curriculum assessment criteria and this means that comparisons within and between departments are insecure. The lack of a



coherent whole school approach to assessment is a major weakness and exacerbated by the by the lack of a computerised system for recording, analysing and managing assessment data.

83. The school has a policy for identifying gifted, talented and students with EAL, but their progress is not consistently monitored. No comparisons are made, for example, of the relative performance of students with EAL in different subjects in order to gauge if, how much and where the level of development of their English is affecting progress. However, those with special educational needs are well supported and their individual progress effectively monitored. They are assessed regularly but collective data about their progress has not been collated. Overall, there is insufficient analysis of data based on different groups, particularly by ethnicity.

84. The school feels that the inconsistencies in the use of assessment are primarily due to the lack of a central database, exasperated by the lack of a computerised assessment system to record information, which has affected communication between staff at different levels. However, it is also due to lack of sufficient awareness and understanding amongst many staff of the purposes of assessment and how assessment information can be used to help support and drive up standards.

85. The procedures for monitoring and tracking of students' academic progress are weak and there is no whole school system to alert relevant staff when a pupil begins to underachieve or under perform. This also means that the school cannot easily identify where there is scope to push students' learning further and help to promote their progress more effectively. The overall weaknesses in assessment and monitoring of students' progress limit the extent to which staff can provide them with adequate guidance, support and advice for improving their standards of work. Some guidance is provided through marking, but since the quality of marking is variable, so also is the guidance provided through written statements in students' books of how they might improve their work. Progress since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory and the issues identified in the last report in relation to assessment and its use remain.

## **Sixth Form**

### **Assessment**

86. Procedures for assessing students' work are unsatisfactory. In all subjects, teachers have an awareness of students' general strengths and weaknesses and teachers know their students well. However, assessment is not sufficiently frequent or analytical. Assessment information is not effectively enough used to track the progress of individuals sufficiently precisely or to set targets to raise standards further.

87. Procedures for assessing students' attainment and progress in many subjects require considerable development, particularly in the areas of using data as a clear diagnostic tool to measure students' performance and progress. For example, in mathematics, teachers have a very good awareness of the individual strengths and weaknesses of their students although this information is not formally recorded. Target grades are set for all students but students have little idea of what these are or what they have to do to meet them. In biology, academic support for students in lessons is very good, but more needs to be done to support students' long-term development. Assessment

needs to be more frequent and based on well-founded standards so that students have a much better appreciation of their own progress. Given that many students do not have an accurate picture of how they are progressing, developing these systems is a matter of priority.

88. Students speak highly of their teachers, and the extent to which teachers, tutors and Sixth Form leaders offer students individual help when required is very good. This is not yet backed up by a comprehensive assessment and tutoring system, thus the head of Sixth Form is not able to meet with subject teachers of every class to discuss the progress of individual students based on relevant data and decide on what action to take. Until assessment and monitoring procedures and data are in place, the head of Sixth Form is not sufficiently well informed about the progress of individual students to offer them specific enough advice and guidance on how to improve.

### **Advice and guidance**

89. Most students continue to value the good individual support and guidance they receive from the careers service and representatives from higher education and training, and employment sectors. Students also felt comfortable about approaching staff with their personal problems. However, more than a third of students did not agree that they were well advised and students raised some concerns during the inspection about the quality of careers advice and guidance. Higher education guidance is effectively provided through careers interviews, visits to higher education conferences and institutions, and visiting speakers such as from Queen Mary College on interview techniques. Students can also extend their knowledge of the world of work through taking part in a work-shadowing scheme.

90. There are satisfactory procedures in place for recording students' attendance, but not consistently implemented. Registers are taken at prescribed times and all absence are rigorously investigated. Most form tutors monitor attendance. All students in Year 12 are expected to attend school for the whole of the school day and only those with parental consent for home study are given time out. However, some students miss morning registration and arrive late for lectures. Some late arrivals do not go directly to lectures and fail to register their attendance with the school office. Consequently, attendance and absences are not fully recorded. This adversely affects levels of attendance and has implications for health and safety of the school community. Consequently, existing procedures should be reviewed to provide a more effective system to record student attendance and improve communication between staff and students.

91. There are effective procedures to ensure the health and safety of students. Health and safety is given priority, and students continue to learn in a safe and secure environment.

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

92. Most parents' benefit from the sound relationship that exists between them and the school. Most parents are pleased with the overall education the school provides for their child. Parents are particularly impressed with the leadership and management of the new headteacher. They are pleased with the good quality teaching and learning, and that the school helps students to become mature and responsible. Most parents are pleased with progress of their child, which often results from the close working relationship between teachers and students, but some parents have rightly reported that they do not feel they receive sufficient information about academic progress. Inspection evidence largely agrees with parent's constructive and positive views though there is room for the school to improve the progress that students make. However, a minority of parents also identify a number of

areas of concern. These include the quantity and quality of homework, the provision for extra curricular activities and the behaviour of some students. Inspection evidence indicates that homework provided in most subjects is satisfactory. Activities outside lessons are good and most students are actively involved. However, behaviour of a small, but significant, minority of students does give cause for concern. This behaviour, as noted by parents, does disrupt learning and teaching.

93. The overall quality of information provided to parents is satisfactory. There is regular good quality information provided through newsletters and accessible consultation evenings, which most parents appreciate and attend in large numbers. Most parents value an open door policy advocated by the headteacher and supported by most staff. The student planners are effective tools, but not used well by some parents and teachers. Parents miss valuable opportunities to keep abreast of their child's learning and development. Overall, there are clear lines of communication between home and school. This is further supported by the governors' annual report and the school prospectus, which are written in a language accessible to parents. Both documents are informative and interesting but the school prospectus does not meet with statutory requirements. It omits information about the level of authorised and unauthorised absences recorded. The end of year students' report, whilst valued and appreciated by most parents, does not fully meet with statutory requirements. The quality and quantity of information about students' progress and the level of attainment are sometimes confusing to the reader. Some teachers provide effective advice on how to improve academic performance, but comments about achievements are not subject specific and some of the targets set are too broad. The information provided for parents of students with special educational needs is often reliable and satisfactory.

94. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to their child's learning at school and home. Most parents actively support events, drama performances and some play an active role in the school association. This raises students' confidence and self-esteem and ensures parental support for the school community. Most parents ensure their child attends regularly and on time. However, whilst most students complete their homework tasks some parents do not consistently give their child adequate support in the home. Consequently, this impedes the learning of these students. The school is aware of these issues and continues to provide adequate facilities, which enable students to complete their homework in school.

95. Since the last report, the school has made no significant improvements. The issues identified in relation to annual reports for students remain.

## **Sixth Form**

96. Most parents expressed positive views of the school and the Sixth Form. The majority of parents who attended the parents' meeting, responded through questionnaires or were spoken to during the inspection praised the school and Sixth Form. They reported that their child received good quality education and an opportunity to succeed to the next stage of education.

97. Students enjoy good challenging teaching and they believe that teachers provide good individual help and support when required. They consider that they are treated as responsible adults and welcome that relationship with the staff. Students are particularly pleased with the excellent new facilities, including in particular, the new social and study areas but they feel that access to the internet, which is not currently provided, would be a

very great aid to their independent learning. They feel that they are helped to settle well into the Sixth Form, but that they require more frequent and more accurate information about their progress in their studies. Inspection evidence strongly supports students' views.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

98. The overall leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. There are some considerable strengths, for example, the very good leadership provided by the new headteacher. However, there are also some significant weaknesses.

99. The headteacher is setting a very clear and purposeful direction for the development of the school and a clear, uncompromising focus on students' learning is at the heart of this. Her early assessments of the school's strengths and weaknesses have been very well used to set in motion a train of changes to management structures and procedures in order to tackle the weaknesses. Line management responsibilities of senior staff have been precisely defined and clear expectations set of the role than was the case previously. Members of the senior management team are beginning to get to grips with their newly defined roles as line managers and it is too early to identify how effective the changes have been. However, these changes are along the right lines and provide a much more rigorous system of managing delegation and support to middle managers, some of whom welcome this. Given the rather informal and loose arrangements for line management in the past, there is a need for training and development in terms of how line management roles should, and could, be used to drive school improvement and give effective management support and development to middle managers. Currently delegation and management of delegated duties is underdeveloped, though improving.

100. Many members of the senior management team are relatively new to their roles, even though few are new to the school. The management team, given its current membership, is also relatively new as a team. Teamwork is being effectively established and there is a growing sense of working together and working towards common aims and goals. Members of the senior management team are beginning to get grips with new roles. The headteacher is working with the team to establish relative strengths and areas of expertise. It is likely that a review of the roles will need to take place in order to ensure that all members of the team are working to their strengths.

101. Monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school lack rigour and, where they occur, are often at a rather informal and superficial level. Compared to schools nationally, this school is at a very early stage of development in relation to systems and processes for self-evaluation. This is recognised by the school as a priority for development. However, there is some resistance amongst staff to the establishment of comprehensive and rigorous monitoring systems. The school has yet to institute a culture of critical self-analysis where monitoring activities provide useful management information to help inform and direct strategies for improvement and promote effective professional development and dialogue amongst staff.

102. Governors are enthusiastic and many are actively involved in the life and work of the school. They ask relevant questions at meetings and work hard to understand the needs of their school. Governors provide good support when needed, for example, they are currently working hard to help the school to raise private finance to help fund the bid to become a specialist technology college. However, their work has been severely hampered by the lack of monitoring and evaluation by school staff so that governors do not receive the useful and precise management information that such activities would normally yield. They have a reasonably clear view of the overall strengths and weaknesses of the school and

they engage fully with examining data where it is available, such as through school examination information. However, detailed information to help them better understand these statistics is lacking and hence they are not fully enough informed when making key decisions, such as on financial planning.

103. The management of students with special educational needs is good, showing clear educational direction. A large team of learning support teachers and assistants is well deployed and all documentation is properly in place. Pupil reviews are regularly carried out. Development of the new Code of Practice has been held up because the co-ordinator has taken on the temporary responsibility of head of the inclusion unit, due to illness, and this has reduced the time available to manage this. The new co-ordinator of the gifted and talented has made a good start on managing provision but has not been in post long enough for the effect of his work to be apparent.

104. The co-ordinator for provision for EAL is very knowledgeable about this area and is very clear about what needs to be done to help the progress of students with EAL and improve their standards of work. However, the poor level of resourcing for their needs means that there are far too few staff to make a sufficiently significant impact on these students' learning. The co-ordinator has made the best possible use of the very limited amount of staffing for students with EAL and targeted it rightly at those who most need it. These principally include younger students and those at the early stages of learning English. However, many at the later stages, who still require support, or older students still at earlier stages do not receive adequate support. There is strong association of the support staff for students with EAL with the special needs support staff, and this is not helpful in establishing the very different needs of both groups of students. For example, there is no separate base for students with EAL and they are expected to use the special educational needs base.

105. Financial planning is satisfactory and monitoring of spending is very rigorous. The poor quality of the school development plan does not help the school to ensure that financial resources are targeted at key educational priorities, and overall financial planning tends to be based mostly on historical spending. There is, for example, no consideration of alternative staffing structures or new models of curricular delivery to examine how these might promote more efficient use of funds. The level of teaching staff is high compared to other schools. For example, the pupil-teacher ratio is well below average, class sizes are smaller than in many schools, and the amount of non-teaching time staff have is relatively high. Some of high level of staffing is due to the split site nature of the school, but overall there has been no real evaluation of how the school assesses its efficiency and effectiveness with respect to spending. The poor resourcing for ICT and for support for students with EAL, both of which have a negative impact on students' learning, have not been addressed through sufficiently rigorous identification of financial priorities. In addition, not enough thought has been given to how additional points for responsibility are allocated and if that is in the best interests of the school or the students. Given the weaknesses in the overall monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school, the school is not in a position to that ensure the principles of best value are adhered to other than through considering the cost-effectiveness of purchases based purely on the quality of the goods/services being purchased and the costs that would be incurred through different providers. This aspect is good, but getting best value out of financial resources is overall unsatisfactory.

106. The school has appropriate procedures and programmes in place for the induction and support of newly qualified teachers. Whilst there is provision of staff development for other staff, it is not sufficiently well co-ordinated or linked to key educational priorities to promote a coherent approach and contribution to institutional development. The procedures for evaluating the success or usefulness of staff development activities are not rigorous enough.

107. Support staff provide very good help to teaching staff. They are efficient and effective in their roles. Resources are satisfactory with the exception of the poor provision for ICT and the small size of the library in the lower school. This results in insufficient books being available for students to borrow as well as insufficient space for students to make effective use of the library. The lack of computer resources means that the use of new technologies for administration and curriculum is unsatisfactory.

108. The accommodation overall is unsatisfactory. The buildings at both sites are on rather compact sites and, on the lower school, corridors and stairways are far too narrow and hence pose a potential health and safety hazard. Overall, the buildings are too small for the size of the intake and a number of departments, such as modern foreign languages, have rooms which are not close to one another. Facilities for sport are poor. In a number of subjects, students are sometimes taught in rooms that are inappropriate i.e. a government and politics lesson is taught in a chemistry laboratory. This has a negative impact on teaching and learning, sometimes causing teaching methods, and hence learning, to be constrained.

## **Sixth Form**

### **Leadership and management**

109. Leadership of the Sixth Form is satisfactory overall though there are some significant weaknesses. The headteacher and senior staff provide clear direction to ensure that all students receive an appropriate education. A weakness in nearly all Sixth Form subjects is the lack of rigorous assessment, as well as a lack of sufficient analysis of data and use of assessment information to support and guide students' progress. The head of Sixth Form provides committed support for the vision and direction of the headteacher and senior management. However, that commitment has not yet fully materialised in sufficient action to fully underpin the vision. Moreover, regular and systematic monitoring and evaluation activities, including observation of lessons, are too infrequent to ensure the spread of best teaching practice and are not part of the established practice of the school. The role of the Sixth Form co-ordinator is under developed with respect to monitoring and evaluation, development and use of whole school systems for assessing and monitoring Sixth Form students' progress and the strategic long-term development of the Sixth Form.

110. Governors do not have a separate committee for Sixth Form matters, but their committees are alert to the importance of the Sixth Form to the life of the school as a whole. Governors provide neither religious education for Sixth Form students, nor an act of collective worship for all students daily, though these are legal requirements.

111. Funding is used effectively and the Sixth Form is cost-effective. Results indicate satisfactory value added to students' achievements between the ages of 16 to 18. Use of services is managed well, as in the 11 to 16 school, ensuring that competition is cost-effective and gives a good return. Overall, the Sixth Form provides satisfactory value for money.

### **Resources**

112. Staffing is very good. There is a very good deployment of staff teaching Sixth Form courses. Teachers have good qualifications and experience. However, there are not enough qualified teachers of religious education to provide adequate enough provision to meet the requirements of the agreed syllabus. In some areas, for example, biology, support staff, such as laboratory technicians are a real strength for the subject.

113. Accommodation is good. The new Sixth Form block is well designed and provides good, flexible accommodation to meet the additional needs of senior students. However, it does highlight the fact that some Sixth Form teaching is in inappropriate accommodation.

114. Provision of learning resources is good. Students use the computers in the library and those in the study room extensively. Textbooks are adequate across the curriculum. However, there is as yet no Internet access and this severely impacts on students' capacity to research information and work independently.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

115. In order to improve the quality of education and the standards achieved by students, the headteacher, senior management team and governors should:

- Improve monitoring and evaluation in order to identify the school's strengths and weaknesses and use the findings from monitoring activities to inform its educational priorities by:
  - \* Establishing rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school, including the quality of teaching and learning.
  - \* Using the line-management structure to establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the work of subject departments and heads of year.
  - \* Effectively promoting the roles of subject heads and heads of year in monitoring and evaluating the work in their areas.
  - \* Putting in place rigorous systems for auditing and evaluating whole school aspects such as the use of literacy, numeracy and ICT, and the development of SMSC provision.
  - \* Establishing rigorous mechanisms for evaluating the impact of training and staff development activities on students' learning.
  - \* Ensuring that school and subject development plans are well written with clear identification of how and when progress with the targets in the plans and their impact on school work are to be monitored and evaluated.
  - \* Providing governors with regular and useful monitoring information so that they can make informed decisions about the work of the school and about spending.
  - \* Developing systems for assessing the impact of spending on the quality of work in the school, particularly on students learning, and using the monitoring information to assist in making financial decisions.
  - \* Developing a coherent approach to gathering and collating information from monitoring activities across the school and ensuring that this information is effectively used to target areas for improvement, particularly teaching, learning and standards of achievement.
  - \* Providing effective training to staff, particularly senior and middle managers, to help them monitor and evaluate effectively.
  - \* Developing the role of the head of Sixth-Form in terms of monitoring and evaluating the work of the Sixth Form.

*(Paragraphs: 38,39,99,100,101,102, 105, 106, 109, 124, 136, 137, 153, 161, 175, 185, 193, 200, 218)*



- Monitor and track students' progress in order to improve their achievement by:
  - \* Ensuring that all subjects have rigorous systems for assessing students' work and that these are well linked National Curriculum assessment criteria.
  - \* Providing training to ensure that all staff know.
  - \* Developing rigorous systems for tracking and monitoring students' progress, including a computerised system for recording data and promoting easy analysis of the data entered, including by ethnicity, gender and background.
  - \* Ensuring that the systems put in place are capable of alerting staff quickly when a student begins to underachieve in one or more subjects.
  - \* Making sure that staff use assessment data systematically to raise attainment and to identify clearly for students what they need to do in order to improve their work.
  - \* Using effectively the analysis of data to set challenging targets, qualitative and quantitative, for students.
  - \* Improving the quality of students' annual reports to parents.

*(Paragraphs: 9, 15, 40, 46, 59, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 93, 123, 134, 142, 152, 153, 161, 167, 169, 185, 193, 198, 215).*

- Improve the provision and use of ICT provision by:
  - \* Working towards improving the level of computer resources in the school so that they are in line with national norms.
  - \* Providing training to staff so that they are sufficiently proficient in the use of ICT.
  - \* Re-evaluating curricular provision so that all students have sufficient opportunity to use computers on a regular basis in Year 9 and Years 10 to 11.
  - \* Developing further the use of data-logging and control technology in science and design and technology respectively.
  - \* Giving students access to the internet.
  - \* Developing effective systems for assessing students' progress and levels of attainment when they use computers in other subjects of the curriculum.

*(Paragraphs: 12, 13, 38, 44, 54, 105, 107, 122, 135, 137, 145, 150, 154, 158, 161, 169, 175, 177, 178, 181, 185, 207, 226).*

- Ensure that there is adequate provision for students with EAL to meet their needs and improve the rate at which they learn English and engage with the rest of the curriculum by:
  - \* Increasing the number of staff supporting pupils with EAL.
  - \* Developing subject teachers knowledge and understanding of the needs of students with English and an additional language - early and late stage learners - and their skills in using an effective range of strategies to meet these students' needs, particularly when no support staff are available.
  - \* Establishing good use of different materials and resources to match the needs of students with EAL.
  - \* Establishing a base for students with EAL.
  - \* Establishing systems for monitoring and tracking the progress of learners with EAL and making comparisons on progress between different subjects, particularly between English and mathematics and science, in order to get a clear idea of students' abilities and the extent to which development of English may be holding back progress in some subjects.
  - \* Using assessment and monitoring information to place students in correct sets.

*(Paragraphs: 5, 16, 45, 58, 63, 83, 104, 105, 116, 141).*

- Improve the opportunities for the spiritual development of students by:
  - \* Carrying out an audit of the opportunities that exist for spiritual development in subjects of the curriculum and using these opportunities effectively.
  - \* Developing a policy on SMSC development.
  - \* Making better use of assemblies and tutor periods to provide relevant and meaningful opportunities for reflection.

*(Paragraphs: 68, 69, 73).*

## Sixth Form

- Establish rigorous monitoring and assessment procedures to analyse and use data to support and further students' attainment and progress by:
  - \* Establishing a clear whole school system for recording, analysing and monitoring students' progress.
  - \* Ensuring that all Sixth Form subject staff have a clear understanding of how to analyse and use data to set challenging targets for students.
  - \* Making sure that all Sixth Form students are given a clear idea of how well they are currently doing and what they need to do to improve.
  - \* Using the monitoring system to track students' progress effectively and intervene quickly when signs of underachievement are noted.
  - \* Ensuring that the sixth form co-ordinator is working closely enough with Sixth Form staff and students to be very clear about students' progress and is actively monitoring and using assessment data to promote further progress.

*(Paragraphs: 52, 86, 87, 88, 97, 109, 244, 247, 271, 274, 283, 300, 307, 319, 322).*

- Provide opportunity for the provision of religious education for students in Years 12 and 13 and meet statutory requirements for religious education, adapting the curriculum as necessary.

*(Paragraphs: 66, 112).*

- Increase opportunities to increase students' spiritual awareness by:
  - \* Carrying out an audit of the opportunities that exist for spiritual development in subjects of the curriculum and using these opportunities effectively.
  - \* Developing a policy on SMSC development.
  - \* Making better use of assemblies and tutor periods to provide relevant and meaningful opportunities for reflection.

*(Paragraphs: 68, 69, 73).*

- Increase opportunities for students' independent learning by:
  - \* Providing Sixth Form students with regular opportunities to make use of ICT and access to the internet.
  - \* Developing teaching and learning styles that promote greater independence in students' approach to their work in subjects where they are currently too dependent on their teachers.

*(Paragraphs: 50, 51, 97, 182, 235, 245, 254, 255, 256, 269, 279, 287, 293, 298, 308)*

- In addition to the key issues identified above, the school should also tackle the minor issues identified in the report such as:
  - \* Continuing to improve accommodation, in particular the quality of the accommodation and trying to ensure that subjects are suited together
  - \* Develop and extend students' understanding of the diversity in British society today.
  - \* Put in place measures to try to meet statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship;
  - \* Reduce the numbers of exclusions particularly amongst black students;
  - \* Tackle the health and safety issues identified in this inspection and, in particular, look for ways of reducing the potential risk to students on the stairwells on the lower school site;
  - \* Develop a co-ordinated to the personal development of students and provision for SMSC development.

*(Paragraphs: 26, 29, 30, 56, 69, 72, 73, 75, 108, 124, 143, 154, 161, 175, 199, 209, 210, 226, 287, 308, 323).*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	Years 7-11	170
	Sixth Form	64
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils		

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
<b>Years 7-11</b>							
<b>Number</b>	3	26	81	49	10	1	0
<b>Percentage</b>	2	15	48	29	6	1	0
<b>Sixth Form</b>							
<b>Number</b>	2	21	28	13	0	0	0
<b>Percentage</b>	3	33	44	20	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	<b>Y7-Y11</b>	<b>Sixth Form</b>
Number of pupils on the school's roll	1363	241
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	189	23

<b>Special educational needs</b>	<b>Y7-Y11</b>	<b>Sixth Form</b>
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	34	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	384	0

<b>English as an additional language</b>	<b>No of pupils</b>
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	355

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	<b>No of pupils</b>
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	32

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	<b>%</b>
School data	6.8
National comparative data	8.1

#### Unauthorised absence

	<b>%</b>
School data	1.2
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 pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year:	<b>Year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
	2001	146	130	276

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 5 and above	Boys	115	100	85
	Girls	116	85	80
	Total	231	185	165
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 5 or above	School	84 (74)	67 (63)	60 (45)
	National	64 (63)	66 (65)	66 (59)
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 6 or above	School	49 (36)	37 (34)	24 (16)
	National	31 (28)	43 (42)	34 (30)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 5 and above	Boys	64	87	90
	Girls	93	78	74
	Total	157	165	164
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 5 or above	School	57 (47)	60 (54)	61 (58)
	National	65 (64)	68 (66)	64 (62)
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 6 or above	School	11 (15)	38 (27)	21 (22)
	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 pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year:	<b>Year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
	2001	143	121	264

<b>GCSE results</b>		<b>5 or more grades A*-C</b>	<b>5 or more grades A*-G</b>	<b>1 or more grades A*-G</b>
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	50	134	140
	Girls	54	117	122
	Total	104	251	262
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	39 (42)	95 (93)	99 (96)
	National	48 (47)	91 (91)	96 (96)

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

<b>GCSE results</b>		<b>GCSE point score</b>
Average point score per pupil	School	36.8 (35)
	National	39.0 (38.4)

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

<b>Vocational qualifications</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>% success rate</b>	
Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	0	N/A

	National	N/A	N/A
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**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 / AS / Advanced GNVQ / VCE examinations:	<b>Year</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
	2001	125	99	224

		For candidates entered for GCE A / AS / Advanced GNVQ / VCE examinations		
		<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>All</b>
School	Number of candidates	52	38	90
	Average point score per candidate	14.3	14.5	14.4
National	Average point score per candidate	16.9	18	17.5

		For candidates entered for GCE A / AS examinations			For candidates entered for Advanced GNVQ / VCE examinations		
		<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>All</b>
School	Number of candidates	45	29	74	7	10	17
	Average point score per candidate	14.8	15.7	15.2	11.1	9.6	10.2
National	Average point score per candidate	16.9	17.9	17.4	9.8	11.4	10.6

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

	<b>No of pupils</b>
Black – Caribbean heritage	167
Black – African heritage	81
Black – other	79
Indian	56
Pakistani	7
Bangladeshi	25
Chinese	8
White	1181
Any other minority ethnic group	0

**Exclusions in the last school year**

	<b>Fixed period</b>	<b>Permanent</b>
Black – Caribbean heritage	38	4
Black – African heritage	14	2
Black – other	11	3
Indian	1	0
Pakistani	2	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	1	0
White	65	2
Other minority ethnic groups	16	1

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

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers and classes:

##### Y7–Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	105.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.4

#### Education support staff:

##### Y7–Y13

Total number of education support staff	22
Total aggregate hours worked per week	713

#### Deployment of teachers:

##### Y7–Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	75
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#### Average teaching group size:

##### Y7–Y13

Key Stage 3	21.7
Key Stage 4	20.8

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### Financial information

Financial year	<b>2000-2001</b>
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	£
Total income	4796900.00
Total expenditure	4632096.00
Expenditure per pupil	2930.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	65026.00
Balance carried forward to next year	229830.00

### Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	26
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	31.7

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	5
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	4

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out  
Number of questionnaires returned

1604
110

### Percentage of responses in each category

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Tend to agree</b>	<b>Tend to disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
My child likes school.	31	55	9	3	2
My child is making good progress in school.	39	46	5	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	23	44	17	2	15
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	51	22	7	0
The teaching is good.	23	63	4	0	11
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	22	41	22	9	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	45	47	5	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	39	49	6	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	20	50	17	3	10
The school is well led and managed.	22	59	5	0	14
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	25	62	6	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	48	16	3	9

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

### **ENGLISH**

The provision in English is satisfactory overall but with a number of good and very good features.

#### **Strengths:**

- Year 9 students consistently achieve good or very good results in the National Curriculum tests.
- The quality of teaching is good with some very good features.
- Assessment and target setting promote high expectations.
- The leadership and management of the department are very good.

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

- The attainment of boys in Year 11 is significantly lower than that of girls.
- The use of data to monitor students' progress is not rigorous enough.
- The provision and use of ICT are unsatisfactory.
- The provision for students with EAL is insufficient to meet their needs in learning English.

116. Results in the national tests have been one of sustained and improving performance. High standards were reached in the 2001 tests at the end of Year 9 and the results were well above the average for schools with a similar intake. These results were higher than those of 2000 and there was an increase in the number of students reaching Level 6 and above. Given their starting point, this represents very good achievement for most students. Results have improved significantly since the last inspection and the gap between boys and girls is narrowing, though girls still outperform boys. English results are better than those of mathematics and science. Inspection evidence confirms that teacher assessment is accurate. The discrepancy between teacher assessment and the actual results is accounted for mainly through the good teaching, the sharp focus on target setting, planning and writing well structured essays as well as the intense preparation for the tests. With these results, teachers are not complacent and constantly seek ways to improve teaching and learning. Data on achievement at the end of Year 9 indicate that minority ethnic students from the Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean and Turkish communities do less well than other ethnic groups in the tests. Inspection evidence indicates that in lessons, these students make as much gains as others. However, this is not reflected in the written examinations. The provision for students with EAL is inadequate.

117. The 2001 English GCSE results were below the national average. The percentage of students achieving grades A\* to G was not significantly different from the national average. The GCSE literature results were in line with the national average for those achieving grades A\* to C. The number of students achieving the highest grades, A\*/A, improved in both subjects and was an improvement on the previous years' results. The department is clearly helping some higher attaining students to achieve well. Students with special educational needs make good progress and all achieve a grade in both subjects. As at the last inspection, girls outperform boys particularly in English literature. These results were better than others including mathematics and science. Results have improved since the last inspection but when they are compared with what students achieved in Year 9 progress is only satisfactory.

118. Standards in speaking and listening are good and students communicate their ideas clearly when explaining and developing their viewpoints. By the end of Year 9, students of all abilities respond effectively during oral work. For instance, there was a high level of participation in a Year 9 lesson where average and lower attaining students gave lengthy answers to questions about Macbeth's soliloquy. Year 10 and 11 students listen carefully with good concentration and understanding. They intervene politely when giving their response. Students from minority ethnic groups take a full role in discussions as seen in the Year 10 lesson where they gave sustained answers about Dickens's portrayal of Fagin in *Oliver Twist*. Whilst most students are articulate and listen well in formal contexts, they do not routinely use a wide vocabulary or adapt their speech for more formal situations.

119. Reading skills are good for the higher and some average attaining students whilst lower attaining students reach satisfactory standards in their interpretation and analyses of texts. Students in Years 7 to 9 respond well to the themes and ideas in literary texts. They use quotes effectively to support their ideas with the higher attaining students showing significant insight into their reading as seen in the response of Year 7 students to Heaney's '*Digging*'. By the end of Year 9, higher attaining students show good textual grasp and understanding of technical terms as demonstrated in the lesson where they compared different styles of writing by McGough and a newspaper article on *The Rabbit in the Mixer*. Students with EAL and special educational needs make good progress based on the intensive support and application to the reading and comprehension skills lower down the school in Year 7. By the end of Year 11, the higher attaining students demonstrate good powers of literary analysis, both in terms of critiquing texts and films. For instance, their work on literature from other heritages and Hardy's *The Withered Arm* and Lessing's '*No Witchcraft Here*' is of good quality with skilled use of quotes to illustrate points of view. Middle attaining students often show good literary analysis for example of Orwell's *Animal Farm*, whilst lower attaining but tend to be descriptive rather than analytical.

120. Standards in writing are good for the higher attaining students. These students adopt a range of styles. They write fluently and at length, drawing on a wide vocabulary. Narrative and autobiographical writing is very well handled. Planning is good in all year groups and students; in particular the higher attaining students use the writing process extensively to produce well-structured written work. These students make detailed notes and are assured writers with a good grasp of their leaning. Lower attaining students structure essays well when they use the writing frames; however, without these, pieces are shorter and they are less secure in structuring their work and ordering their words. Spelling errors are not routinely checked in the final draft and they do not always distinguish between words easily confused. Students with special educational needs make better than expected progress when they are withdrawn and given individual support. The level of support and guidance promote good learning more effectively than when they are in class. Some of them do not always complete their written work and their handwriting and presentation are untidy. Some students make good use of ICT for word-processing their work. The short and intensive catch-up sessions increase students' literacy skills as they receive good guidance, reinforcement and support within a small group setting. Most students respond very well to what they are asked to do but a small number of students in Year 8 and 10 lack self control and are not prepared to listen carefully to instructions or observe the code of conduct when others are speaking. They lose concentration quickly and are uncooperative.

121. The quality of teaching is good with some very good features. Teachers use their expertise to mark and analyse students' work thoroughly. Procedures for assessing students' work are a distinguishing feature of the department and promote high standards. As a result, students know what they need to do to improve their work and many boast about exceeding their target grades. Lessons are well planned and teachers build on previous learning. Teachers constantly reinforce technical skills and effective questioning develops students' communication and critical skills. Approaches including grids for planning and the use of the overhead projector for modelling and collating students' ideas increase students'

understanding of the work as seen in a Year 9 reading lesson. In the best lessons, teachers set time limited exercises which are assessed, pace is brisk, there is strong emphasis on exploring the use of language in texts, students are given ample opportunity to take responsibility for their work and in using their teachers as good role models. For instance, in a Year 9 lesson, students displayed a secure understanding of Macbeth's soliloquy when the teacher used a video clip and a series of short mimed activities to emphasise the use of language to convey Macbeth's emotions. Work is sometimes matched to the needs of students. Homework is carefully selected to extend learning. Overall, relationships with students are good. Teaching is sometimes satisfactory when pace is slow. It is only ever unsatisfactory when there are insufficient strategies to deal with uncooperative students displaying little regard for the learning environment.

122. The English curriculum is broad and balanced and there is ongoing revision to reflect the recent changes. The revised Year 7 schemes of work identify the needs of students with special educational needs and EAL, and gifted and talented students. Whilst schemes of work now include ICT, its provision and use are unsatisfactory. Very good extra-curricular activities include producing a school magazine, and reading with Sixth Form students extend the gifted and talented and other students.

123. Assessment is outstandingly good and is central to all elements of the English curriculum. Teachers enter into dialogue with students about their achievements and use National Curriculum criteria well to assess work. Qualitative targets are clearly set for students based on these criteria. Students' self-assessment is evaluative and there are good systems in place to increase the attainment of borderline students in the GCSE examinations. However, the department does not make sufficiently rigorous use of assessment data to track progress.

124. The leadership and management of the department are very good. The new head of department has a clear vision for the department. Over the last two years, new initiatives have been introduced and some of these are beginning to impact on improving standards. For example, the department has put into place assessment systems and schemes of work matched to students' needs. The department monitors teaching and learning but formal line management lacks rigour. The development plan articulates the need to raise standards further but the targets for action are imprecise. There is good support for the newly qualified teachers. Accommodation is barely adequate for this large department. Rooms are scattered and storage space is derisory. This is a particular problem, given that teachers move around the buildings and across sites. Consumable resources are sufficient, but there is a shortage of textbooks to reflect the curricular changes, the Key Stage 3 strand of the Literacy Strategy and GCSE examinations. As a result, although the budget is spent judiciously, a disproportionate amount is spent on photocopying.

## **LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

125. The school has taken action to increase teachers' awareness of the Key Stage 3 Literacy Strategy and its application across the curriculum. At this stage, the literacy policy is developmental. However, there is a working party with representatives from most subject areas and the literacy development plan provides a clear overview of what the school plans to do. Despite these initiatives, management of the policy is difficult. The allocation of time for monitoring and co-ordinating the work is inadequate particularly as the co-ordinator already leads the largest department. Some departments such as design and technology and geography have a policy but overall, most do not have a policy and literacy strands are not included in schemes of work.

126. Students use good oral skills across the curriculum. For example, in music they articulate the mood and relate the visual images to sound, whilst in geography, they are eager to speak and teachers ask probing questions to encourage boys to answer more fully.

127. At the start of Year 7, students take part in the library induction programme. The English department is presently developing a new scheme of work, Readers and Writers, to improve this programme. Reading is promoted in English through book reviews, timetabled lessons and a reading club. Subjects such as geography and history encourage students to read aloud in lessons. Students have an increasing knowledge and understanding of specialist terms and vocabulary as most subjects reinforce and display key words. Students use high order reading skills in art and design and technology through research and investigational work.

128. Standards in writing reflects students' level of attainment and overall, they adopt different styles of writing across the curriculum. For instance, in design and technology, they write design briefs and specifications as well as evaluation of their work. In history, Year 7 students' writing on the Normans in Britain improved when their teacher recognised and shared quality extended writing with the class. Students learn to write creative pieces in music as part of their project work. For example, they write macabre and surreal poetry and make reference to the German language. Some subjects such as music provide word banks to increase students' vocabulary. Lower attaining students use writing frames in history, geography and science to structure their work. However, teachers do not always use these with a view to raising the attainment of all students. Students use drafting skills in history and geography. In geography they develop skills of note taking and presentation. Students understanding of grammatical features is increased in modern foreign languages. There is very little evidence of ICT for improving presentation.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Overall the quality of provision in mathematics is satisfactory.

### **Strengths:**

- The relationships between teachers and students good.
- The teachers manage the challenging behaviour of a minority of students effectively.
- Mentoring and support for trainees and newly qualified teachers are good.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- Insufficient attention is given to catering for the full ability range and challenging the most able.
- Monitoring the work of the department is unsatisfactory.
- There is insufficient use of ICT within the department.

129. Results in the 2001 national tests in mathematics were in line with national averages and above those of similar schools. The results began a trend of decline after the last inspection but this was reversed a couple of years ago so that results now are in a similar position with respect to national results as they were at the time of the last inspection. Teacher assessments are generally accurate. The performance of boys is better than girls and has continued to be better over the past three years. Students' performance in mathematics is below English and above science. Students' standards on entry to the school were in line with national averages so that achievement, at the end of Year 9, was in line with expectations.

130. On the evidence of the students' work and the lessons observed, standards at the end of Year 9 are in line with national expectations. Numeracy skills are well rehearsed, especially with the lower attaining students. The work covers all of the required aspects of the National Curriculum but there is less evidence of using and applying mathematics. The result is that thinking skills are under developed and students suffer from poor recall. Students solve simple equations, calculate angles and work out different averages as well as draw scatter graphs and identify correlation to a satisfactory standard. Higher attaining students confidently solve quadratic equations, draw cumulative graphs and effectively use Pythagoras' theorem to calculate the sides of right-angled triangles.

131. In the 2001 GCSE examinations, the proportion of A\* to C grades was in line with national averages and in line with the average of similar schools. The number of A\* to C grades has fluctuated over the past three years. The 2001 results show an improvement on 2000 but are not as high as in 1999. The performance of boys is better than that of girls. Girls and boys did significantly worse in mathematics than their other subjects. On the basis of their national test results in Year 9, achievement in mathematics at the end of Year 11 was in line with expectations.

132. On the evidence of the students' work and the lessons observed, standards at the end of Year 11 are in line with national expectations. Work is hierarchical and covers all required aspects although using and applying mathematics lacks development and students rely on their calculator too heavily, for example to multiply 250 by 100. Students satisfactorily rearrange formulae, solve equations by trial and improvement methods and use trigonometry to calculate the sides and angles of right-angled triangles. Higher attaining students solve quadratic equations confidently and use geometrical theorems well.

133. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons start promptly with a useful starter activity, which quickly focuses students' attention and encourages their involvement. The majority of teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge and have a good understanding of examination requirements. They have a good awareness of the individual strengths and weaknesses of students but recording is sketchy. Teachers manage students well and have a range of strategies for dealing with the challenging behaviour of a minority of students. However, in too many lessons, too little attention is given to the spread of ability and students' mathematical thinking is not sufficiently challenged. Where teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory, this was due to poor management of discipline and unsatisfactory subject knowledge; for example rounding two thirds to 66.6 per cent instead of 66.7 per cent. In most lessons, students concentrate well and work with conviction. In a small number of lessons, poor attitudes and engagement inhibit learning and students lack concentration, commitment and involvement.

134. Provision for students with special educational needs is satisfactory and students are well supported by the teacher and learning support assistants, when these are available. Teachers have a good awareness of students' individual needs but individual education plans rarely mention numeracy or include numeracy targets. The provision for students with EAL is satisfactory and students are well supported by the teacher and sometimes, as in a Year 8 class, by other students in the group. The provision for able students is unsatisfactory since they are rarely challenged in their classes with enrichment work.

135. The curriculum broadly meets statutory requirements and schemes of work have recently been aligned to take account of the Key Stage 3 strand of the National Numeracy Strategy and changes in GCSE from 2003. Curriculum links with partner primary school are still under development. The provision for literacy within the department is good so that, in a Year 11 lesson for example, the teacher asked students to explain the meaning of the word 'hence' to help them have a better understanding of its use on examination papers. Presentation is generally good and exercise books reflect care and attention

although some teachers own literacy skills deserve further attention. The provision for, and use of, ICT is unsatisfactory and inconsistent across the department. The department makes some use of graphical calculators, for example in a Year 9 lesson to plot straight line graphs, but use of computers is variable and further training is needed.

136. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and ensure a clear educational direction for mathematics. The head of department engenders a strong team spirit among her core team of committed and hard working teachers. She has a good awareness of the strengths of the department although there is insufficient monitoring to confirm departmental strengths and identify areas for further improvement. The department has responded well to external changes but the development plan is not sufficiently focused on raising achievement or precise enough in identifying how successful achievement of targets will be measured. The head of department copes admirably with the difficulties surrounding the recruitment of suitably qualified mathematics teachers and provides very good support for temporary, trainee and newly qualified teachers in the department.

137. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. Attainment has shown little overall improvement in terms of the national tests and GCSE examinations. Teaching still does not cater for the spread of ability and work for the higher attaining students is not sufficiently focused to meet their individual needs. The quality of teaching in the majority of lessons is at least satisfactory but unsatisfactory teaching exists where discipline procedures are not actively followed through. Opportunities for students to use ICT to support their learning and to use mathematics for investigative problems remain limited and the work of the mathematics department is still not suitably monitored.

## **Numeracy**

138. The provision for numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory and number work is developed well in geography through percentages and reading population tables. Algebraic skills are used well in ICT to create formulae for spreadsheets, although manipulation skills are weak in science where Year 11 students were unable to calculate speed given distance and time, or kinetic energy given mass and velocity. Spatial skills are used well in geography for measuring while measurement of length, area, time, ratio and weight as well as angles is undertaken in design and technology. Statistics work is promoted in geography for shopping surveys while GCSE coursework and fieldwork generates well-presented data with interpretation and analyses. Students produce line graphs for their favourite numbers in ICT and create scatter graphs and interpret lines of best fit in science. At present, there is no whole school numeracy policy to provide a coherent framework to develop students' numeracy skills although the school has undertaken an initial audit of work and is planning in-service training for staff.

## SCIENCE

The quality of provision in science is satisfactory.

### **Strengths:**

- Leadership and management of the department are outstanding.
- The curriculum in science is well developed.
- The use of assessment to improve attainment is good.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- Attainment in science is too low.
- Standards of numeracy and the use of ICT to support learning are not sufficiently well developed.
- Standards of behaviour in some lessons, some of which carry implications for the safety of students, are poor.

## **Standards and achievement**

139. Attainment of students at the end of Year 9 is below average. In Years 7 to 9 students progress broadly as expected from a base which is slightly below average, though a significant number in the middle of the ability range progress less well than they should. This brings down the overall attainment at the end of Year 9, though some students take the extension paper in Year 9 and gain the highest levels. In lessons, standards of attainment are generally in line with national expectation or below, though some students attain at very high levels. The highest attaining students, for example, show that they not only understand the concept of a chemical reaction very well, but that they have the confidence to use the concept in making deductions about what they observe in experimental work. Their numerical skills are good for this stage in the school. However, many students produce work which is average, rather than good, because they rely too much on their teachers to provide answers and explanations and simply copy information into their books from the board. These students could make better progress, but do not because they do not take an active enough part in lessons and allow themselves to be easily distracted.

140. In Years 10 and 11, most students progress as expected so that at the end of Year 11, levels of attainment are still below average. Again, the main shortfall is by students who are in the middle of the ability range, who fail, often by a small margin, to gain a GCSE grade C. In lessons, it is easy to see why. These students tend not to involve themselves with the lesson, leaving the real work to others in the group or to their teacher. They ensure that their exercise books contain the required material, but do not make the effort to understand it fully. As a result, they do not retain material which they should have understood lower down the school and find themselves in difficulty when they need to use it. For example, in a lesson on different types of energy, a significant number of students in a top set were unable to calculate the potential energy of a ball held one metre above the ground. And in a very well taught Year 11 class, although students engaged well with the task of preparing a short talk in which they offered their views on cloning of organisms, they found it difficult to deliver their prepared work without reading it. Had they been concentrating fully throughout the earlier part of the lesson, in which the ideas were being discussed, they would have had the security of knowledge they needed to make a brief presentation without the use of a text.

141. Students who have special educational needs or who are gifted and talented make good progress: there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Students with EAL do not make enough progress in Years 7 to 9.



142. Teaching overall is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 to 11. All the lessons seen in the main school were at least satisfactory and just over half were good or very good. Learning is nearly always as expected from the quality of teaching though in one case, in spite of skilful management of the class by the teacher, learning was less good than expected because of the poor behaviour of some students. Throughout the school, teachers plan their lessons well and share the main aims with their students. They prepare many good activities and experiments to interest students and help improve their learning. They explain scientific ideas very clearly, and lead very good discussions to ensure that all students have understood them. For example, in a very good Year 8 lesson on heat transfer, the teacher used an 'ask the audience' technique to hold students' interest, and in another part of the lesson directed her questions at specific students to make sure that all understood the ideas covered in the lesson. In a Year 10 lesson, also on heat, the teacher used data-loggers connected to a computer to help students collect and analyse data. In other lessons, students were asked to prepare presentations or posters, to design activities to follow on from the main experiment in the lesson, or to offer opinions about important moral issues. Teachers are careful in nearly all lessons to make sure that all students are well involved, and that there is material at a suitable level of demand for those students who have special needs or who are gifted and talented. Support for students who have EAL is sometimes good, but is not consistently developed in the department.

143. Sometimes, however, lessons are less successful. This is often where a few students, despite the best efforts of the teacher, are determined to prevent good learning taking place. On other occasions, learning is less good because a group of students have finished the activity and waste time whilst the others catch up. Some students do not make as much intellectual effort as they should in lessons and this means that the teacher has to go over the same material again at a later date with consequent loss of time. Although numeracy skills are often developed well in the lower part of the school, students in Year 11 sometimes show a poor grasp of the simple mathematics needed in their science lessons. There was one serious safety concern in lessons when students seemed to regard the use of chewing gum as normal. Although teachers rightly challenged students who did so, eating in a laboratory is a very serious matter for which students should be able to take responsibility themselves.

144. The leadership of the head of department is outstanding. Not only does she have a very clear vision for the department and an enthusiasm which should be a model to staff and students alike, but she also has a real commitment to making the study of science as exciting a voyage of discovery as possible. The head of science also has the skills and ambition to realise her aims. In the few months since her appointment she has introduced new schemes of work, based on those produced by the government and, more importantly, an excellent system for assessing and monitoring the progress of all students. Her assessments are firmly rooted in national standards. She also monitors the work of the staff in her department and is committed to professional development for all teachers to ensure that teaching and learning are of the very highest quality. Although the results of her efforts have not had time to be reflected in the examination results in science, her department is well placed to show good improvement in the future.

145. The department is fairly well resourced, and there is a good supply of textbooks for students to use. But, although very well represented in schemes of work, the use of ICT is at present inadequate due to lack of equipment or services.

146. Since the last inspection, the department has shown considerable variation in the attainment of students but over the last year, since the appointment of the new head of science, there has been a steady improvement which is well placed to continue.

## ART AND DESIGN

Overall the quality of provision in art and design is satisfactory.

### **Strengths:**

- Teaching is good overall.
- Teachers plan well and organisation of lessons is good.
- Learning is good overall.
- The standard of artwork is improving.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- Assessment procedures lack rigour.
- Recording and tracking systems lack sufficient detail to help identify how and where standards of work could be improved.
- The curriculum is too narrow.

147. In 2001 teacher assessments of students in Year 9 showed that they were working at a level that was above the national average for students of their age. This is overly generous when compared with the standard of work seen during the inspection which indicates that attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. This is consistent with the findings of the last inspection, that most students were achieving levels of attainment that were in line with, or slightly above, national expectations. Girls tend to work with much greater concentration than boys.

148. In the GCSE examination at the end of Year 11 in 2001, there was a significant reduction in the percentage of students who achieved grades A\* to C, when compared with the percentage that achieved grades A\* to C in 1999 and 2000. A higher percentage of girls achieved grades A\* to C than did boys. Both were well below the figures for girls and boys in 2000. The GCSE results for 2001 were much lower than the GCSE results prior to the last inspection when they were in line with, or higher than, the national average. All students who took the GCSE examination in art and design performed less well than they did in all of their other school subjects. Students' results were much lower than those achieved by students in similar schools nationally in 2001.

Students enter the school in Year 7 with levels of attainment in the subject that are below average. However, they enjoy the subject, have the desire to do well and are keen to develop their ideas and acquire new skills that will help them to communicate their ideas and feelings to others. The majority of Year 7 students produce work that is broadly in line with national expectations. The most able produce studies using coloured pencils that demonstrate good control for students of their age. In Year 8, students improve their drawing skills effectively. They make good use of line and tone to describe the form of a variety of different objects. By Year 9, students have acquired much greater control over the media and materials that they use. Most enjoy drawing and painting and seem determined to improve the quality of their work. The highest attaining students produce good work. The overall standard attained by these students is satisfactory for students of their age and is broadly in line with national expectations. Work seen during the inspection suggests that many students make reasonable progress. In one Year 9 lesson observed, students produced interesting tonal studies of masks from Borneo, New Guinea and Africa.

149. In Years 10 and 11 most students make satisfactory progress. The majority produce art and craft work that is concerned with traditional subject matter, such as still life, natural forms and studies of people. There is evidence in the visual diaries to show that these students are capable of carrying out some degree of independent research. The most able students experiment with card, thin plastics and tissue paper to produce interesting

research ideas. They are beginning to rely on their own ideas, concepts, attitudes and beliefs as source material for their art and craft work. The majority work at a level that is broadly in line with, or just below national expectations, but there remain significant gaps in their basic drawing and painting skills. On the whole, students from minority ethnic backgrounds make the same progress as other students in the school. Students with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress.

150. In Year 11, the bulk of the work produced is concerned with traditional subject matter using conventional materials. There is very little evidence that any investigation is carried out using modern technology, such as photography or ICT. Girls work with much greater concentration than the boys. On the whole, students in Year 11 make satisfactory progress.

151. Students with special educational needs work well in class and most make satisfactory progress. They apply themselves to the task of acquiring the necessary basic skills of drawing and painting, which are subsequently used effectively to communicate ideas and feelings to others.

152. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good in Years 7 to 9 and is good overall. In Years 10 to 11 teaching is good. Teachers possess good subject knowledge and understanding. They are technically competent to teach basic skills in drawing, painting and craft work. There is evidence of sound planning before lessons and good use is made of exemplar material. The teaching methods used are appropriate, ranging from whole class activity to one-to-one interaction with individual students. Organisation of lessons is good overall and time and resources are well used. The setting and marking of homework is unsatisfactory at the moment and could be improved. Members of the department do not apply assessment and recording practices consistently. There is a lack of rigour about the current assessment procedures. Management of students is satisfactory in most lessons, but there have been occasions where noisy and disruptive behaviour, by a minority of boys, was tolerated. Greater effort is required to ensure that all students learn in a more disciplined and structured manner.

153. Leadership and management of the department are just satisfactory. In response to the last report there has been some increase in resources for students in Years 7 to 9 and in Years 10 to 11. Teachers now work collaboratively to produce schemes of work that address accommodation issues in the lower school. Although there are established assessment and marking procedures, they are not applied consistently by all members of staff. Monitoring and tracking systems do not inform target setting for students. Assessment criteria are not made clear enough to students so that they can know why they have been assessed and graded at a particular level. Regular and detailed feedback is not provided for students to help them improve the standard of their work. Although some attempt has been made to standardise work within the department, it is not standardised enough to make sure that assessment and grading standards can be brought in to line with national standards as laid down by the awarding bodies. At present little use is made of objective data to inform target setting for students. Underachievement by boys remains a problem.

154. Accommodation is unsatisfactory at the moment. Year 7 students are being taught in non-specialist rooms such as science laboratories. Teachers are obliged to carry a variety of resources to and from these rooms. Inevitably, this practice will have a negative impact on achievement. Displays of art and craft work, both in the art rooms and in the school generally, are just satisfactory, but there is room for considerable improvement. There are very few ICT resources in the department, which places great limitations on what students can achieve through the creation and manipulation of images using computers, scanners, digital cameras and printers.

155. Apart from the very sudden and unexpected fall in standards in the GCSE examination in 2001, progress has been satisfactory since the last inspection. Year 9 and Year 11 students work at a standard that is broadly in line with national expectations.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision is satisfactory though there are good features within the provision.

### **Strengths:**

- Students achieve well and make good progress, including those with special education needs, because the skills taught enable them to tackle more demanding tasks.
- Teaching is consistently good; lessons are planned well and proceed at a good pace.
- Leadership and management of the department are good.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- The use of computers to deliver the strands of ICT as outlined in the programmes of study for design and technology.
- A sharper focus needs to be given to levelling and moderation of students work in each year.
- The development plan does not include the necessary focus on raising standards.
- The assessment data available to the department is not used sufficiently well to set targets and to improve standards in the department.

156. Teacher assessments of students indicate that attainment at age 14 is below national expectation. However, evidence from lessons and the review of students' work shows that standards are higher and close to national expectations. Through a series of practical tasks and design assignments, students build up a satisfactory range of skills, knowledge and understanding. Work in folders indicates that students generate and develop their ideas effectively in a range of materials and products. The quality of graphics is good throughout Years 7 to 9 and staff ensure that all students have the skill and techniques to fully represent their ideas. Students make some use of their skills in ICT and undertake a module in control technology. However, limited provision and sometimes the difficulty of access to computers holds back their development of these skills. In Years 7 to 9, students develop key planning skills and techniques alongside a range of practical skills, which provide a basis for more open-ended work in the GCSE course. Students show interest in the design assignments and many are beginning to develop a personal style. They are confident in practical situations and they use tools and equipment sensibly and effectively. There is much good work and students obviously enjoy the challenge. Students' achievements are good.

157. In 2001, the number of students gaining higher grades in GCSE examinations, grades A\* to C, was below the national average. However, there were variations between the design and technology subjects. Results in food technology were above average and in textiles and resistant materials were broadly average. However, in graphics, results were well below average.

158. The work seen during the inspection shows that attainment at age 16 is above the national average. However, a high proportion of students in the current Year 11 have been disapplied from design and technology. Students opt for a GCSE course from food, textiles, graphics or resistant materials. Graphics is a skill which all students use effectively and there is some evidence of effective use of ICT, particularly in completing coursework. However, overall use of ICT is underdeveloped. Design folders are of a good standard with considerable depth of research work and analysis of data and information relevant to

students' chosen projects. Presentation is good and there is much evidence of attractive and innovative design work. Practical work is completed carefully and students use tools, equipment and machinery with confidence. The quality of final products overall is good. Health and safety matters are given high profile and students use appropriate guards, eye protection and clothing.

159. Students with special educational needs are clearly identified by staff and copies of individual education plans are used to focus work more closely to their individual needs. As a result, these students make good progress.

160. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have created a positive and attractive learning environment within which many students find interest and stimulation. The teaching team is experienced and hard working. Work is well managed, resources appropriately organised and lessons well prepared. Schemes of work are structured and progressive and they also enable students to introduce their own ideas and influences. Assessment is detailed and provides important information to students and teachers about progress and development. The many good lessons seen had pace, expectation, structure and purpose and teachers used their enthusiasm and personalities effectively to stimulate pupil behaviour. Homework is integral to current work in class and diary/planners are used to communicate with parents. Teachers use display well and this contributes considerably to pupil interest and the development of ideas. The split lesson arrangements in Year 7 create an extra burden for teachers when planning and organising lessons.

161. The leadership and management are good. The head of department has a clear view of how the department should be developed further. There is a shared commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed. However, the development plan does not include the necessary focus on raising standards or strategies to teach basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The assessment data available to the department is not used sufficiently well to set targets and to improve standards achieved by students. In addition, assessment against National Curriculum criteria is not accurate enough. The standard of accommodation for teaching graphics has been improved since the last inspection and is now good but accommodation for food technology and textiles remains unsatisfactory. The workshop technicians provide a good level of support and make an effective contribution to the smooth running of the department. There is limited technician support for food technology and textiles. Resources available in the department for practical work are good and have a positive impact on students' progress. The lack of resources for newer technologies and ICT limits coverage of the National Curriculum and hampers progress.

### **Child Development (GCSE)**

162. In 2001 the number of students gaining higher grades in this subject were above the national average. Students take part in a number of projects in Year 10 and Year 11 to complete their course work assignments. The individual practical projects are of a good standard and include research and observational studies. The projects seen during lesson observations and the scrutiny of students' work were above the standard expected. Students take care with the presentation of their work and take pride in the quality of their project work. They are keen to discuss their work and do so with a level of confidence. The behaviour of students and their attitude to learning are always good. Students show an interest in their work and maintain good levels of concentration. They take responsibility for organising their tasks and there is much independent work.

163. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher has a good knowledge of the subject, planning ensures that lessons proceed at a suitable pace. Lesson planning is good, with careful attention paid to the sequence of activities, and this contributes to a good pace. Learning outcomes are clearly identified. Activities are well organised and the supervision of

lessons effective, with appropriate intervention to support and sustain individuals students' learning and maintain appropriate expectations. Work is well linked to the requirements of the examination syllabus. The teachers' expectations of students' performance and behaviour is high and work is flexibly planned to provide for students' different levels of attainment and interest. Students' work is marked regularly and the teacher provides helpful oral and written comments. The comments are informative and constructive. Homework is appropriately set to reinforce the content of lessons.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

Overall the provision in geography is good.

### **Strengths:**

- Teaching and learning are good, particularly in Years 7 to 9, where expectation is high
- Assessment and marking are good.
- There is effective development of literacy and use of number across Years 7 to 11.
- Students' behaviour and positive attitudes in geography lessons are good.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- Use of ICT in the classroom and appropriate extension work.
- Links with the community.
- The use of data in tracking and predicting students' progress.
- Standards at the end of Year 9 are satisfactory and in line with national averages. At the end of Year 11 they are below average.

164. Examination results at GCSE have been at the same level for the last two years and down on those for 1999, when they were above the national average. Although A\* to C grades in 2001 are below the national average, those for A\* to G are above. In addition those students exceeded their predicted grades at A\* to C and students doing geography did better than in many other subjects they took. Work seen during the inspection indicates that attainment is in line with the national average by the ages of 14 and 16, and students achieve well throughout the school. This suggests that the GCSE results for 2000 and 2001 were affected by lower attainment on entry and that the results for 2002 and 2003 are likely to be closer to those of 1999. Teachers' assessments of the work of students currently in Years 10 and 11 when these same students were at the end of Year 9 indicate that their standards were in line with national expectations. These results reinforce the view that standards in current Years 10 and 11 are better than those of the most recent group to take GCSE i.e. the standards indicated by the 2001 results.

165. Basic mapping and number skills are effectively developed in Year 7. Lower attaining students make good use of graphs in climate work and are able to use Venn diagrams to show similarities and differences. Higher attainers collect and analyse data in weather diaries and do good homework on maps and scales.

166. Number work develops across the school as does the standard and variety of writing styles. By Year 9, students are producing good extended pieces of writing on themes such as 'Why does the south-east have a different climate from that of the south-west?' Imagination is seen at work in the creation of tourist guides and brochures on coastal paths and there is a steady growth in enquiry work such as that on Japan's current and future output of nuclear energy. Students' understanding grows steadily and is demonstrated as early as Year 8 with students able to explain physical geography processes and patterns in work on coastal features. Students are encouraged to use the correct technical vocabulary and take their own notes. By the end of Year 9, they have accumulated a good volume of well-presented work showing a steady growth of knowledge. In Years 10 and 11 students

build on their previous work and learn the skills necessary for success in examinations. They are able to gather and evaluate data and make decisions, seen in an evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of Milton Keynes. Students acquire good knowledge of case studies and of more complex concepts in work on the Mississippi floods and counter-urbanisation and human influences on woodland ecosystems. Although number work is good and includes use of flood hydrographs and triangular graphs, it is not supported by sufficient use of ICT. Lack of access to computers and the Internet curtails development of skills. Year 9 work on Japan largely consists of word processing and only limited use of spreadsheets.

167. Setting and the use of broadly appropriate materials ensure that students with special educational needs and EAL make satisfactory and good progress, despite there being insufficient in-class support. Gifted and talented students are identified in lessons, but teachers do not set enough extension work to challenge them further.

168. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching and learning are never less than satisfactory and three out of every four lessons are good or very good. Teachers' planning is thorough and they share expected learning outcomes with students. Well-produced and carefully selected resources motivate students and retain their interest as in a Year 9 lesson on how industry is organised in Japan, which saw good use of audio/visual aids. Teachers have extensive subject knowledge and use humour and interesting examples to enliven lessons and maintain concentration, seen in a Year 7 lesson in which the teacher compared temperatures in different parts of his village. The management of students is very good. Teachers have high expectations, both in learning and behaviour and students respond by making good progress and achieving well.

169. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Much that was reported as good has been maintained, including the progress of all groups of students, responses, relationships and the quality of teaching. There has been a blip in A\* to C results, but in other areas results have remained satisfactory. Achievement is better overall and objectives are now discussed with students. Assessment in Years 7 to 9 is better than at the time of the last inspection and closely linked to National Curriculum Levels. Areas still requiring attention are the use of ICT in the classroom, though better than four years ago, and the provision of opportunities for extension work. Boys generally require greater practice at producing extended writing for examinations. An improving area, but one which needs further development, is in the gathering and analysis of pupil data, in order to better track progress and produce useful targets for every pupil.

170. The department has a well-organised leader with a vision for the future and a team capable of helping him to make it real.

## HISTORY

Overall, the quality of provision in history is good.

### **Strengths:**

- Standards are broadly in line with national averages and students achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is good and its impact is to make the quality of learning good.
- Attitudes towards the subject are good, and students work with great interest, thus supporting good progress.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- There is too little use of ICT, which restricts development in investigative research.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching are not sufficiently well developed. The present system does not pick up rigorously enough on aspects of teaching which are in need of improvement.

171. Standards in history are broadly in line with national averages. The reliable teacher assessments at Year 9 show students mostly performing about the national standards in both 2000 and 2001. GCSE results in both 2000 and 2001 show students performing in line with national averages. There is no significant difference in performance between boys and girls. The results in 2001 are also in line with those of similar schools.

172. The standards of work seen are satisfactory overall. By Year 9, most students handle chronology well and link cause and effect satisfactorily. Students in the upper sets use documentary sources well, as was seen in a Year 9 lesson on reasons why young men volunteered to join the British army in 1914. Students were able to contrast the various sources effectively and to reach valid conclusions about the pressures of the 1914 crisis. Low levels of literacy and weak retention skills hinder many of the students in the lower sets, as was seen in a Year 8 lesson, where most of the students were unable to grasp an exercise on the chronology of events leading to the English Civil War in 1642. By Year 11, students have built well on the basic skills learned earlier. Most can handle examination work based on sources effectively, as was shown in a Year 11 lesson on the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, where the students were able to construct good responses to questions concerning the motives of the U.S.A. and those of the U.S.S.R. The achievement of the students is mostly good, with many exceeding the national averages at the ages of 14 and 16. The provision for students with special educational needs is good, with tasks matched to their attainment. There is good teacher support for these students but limited classroom assistance. Their progress is satisfactory and sometimes good, as was seen in a Year 7 lesson, where they were able to construct good answers to a question on why the Normans won at Hastings in 1066.

173. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout. Lessons are well planned, with clear aims, so that the students know what they have to do. There is a good pace to the activities, which are sharply focused on learning. Expectations are high and students are challenged well and these factors serve to stimulate their learning. There is very good management of students, so that they remain on task and concentrate well in lessons. There were some instances of time-wasting in lower set lessons in Years 8 and 9, but these were effectively dealt with by the teacher. Learning is reinforced by good 'recap' sessions at the end of the lessons, which show how much progress has been made. Students work with good levels of interest and concentration and attitudes towards the subject are good. Students mostly behave well in the lessons. Relationships are good and there is an appropriate use of homework.



174. There is good consideration of moral issues in lessons. In Years 10 and 11, lessons were seen which required the students to make judgements concerning the problems faced by people who lived in Nazi Germany in the 1930s, or under Communist rule in the 1950s. Students appreciated well what these might have been and were able to construct effective examination answers as a result of discussion work. There are also good extra-curricular opportunities, including a day visit to Ypres in Year 9 to support learning about World War I.

175. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The head of department gives a clear educational direction for the subject, which is taught by five specialist teachers who are well deployed. Schemes of work have been thoroughly overhauled and tasks closely match attainment. There is a realistic development plan and a good commitment to succeed. Subject documentation is detailed and a good scheme of assessment, which enables the staff to monitor students' performance and set realistic targets, linked to National Curriculum Levels and GCSE grades, has been developed. Although there are frequent informal meetings of staff, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching is not fully developed. There are no written records of judgements, which would enable improvements in teaching to occur. Despite a good lesson seen in Year 7 where computers were well used, there is little use of ICT, as the department has no computer. There is also no school access to the Internet, which would increase department resources. Accommodation is unsatisfactory, as it is scattered, especially on the lower school site, where non-specialist rooms are in use and resources have to be carried about, which adds to the pressure on the teachers and limits teaching opportunities.

176. The department has improved well since the last inspection. It has built on the good practice commended last time. There is now more independent learning by students, with less dependence on the teacher. Appropriate research work is often set for the students. The study of local history has been restored to the curriculum in Year 9 and a very good example of students' work was seen, based on research into events in Enfield during the Second World War, including personal accounts, statistics and photographs. The lack of use of ICT, criticised last time, still remains, however. Overall, this is a good department, which is well led.

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

Overall provision is unsatisfactory.

### **Strengths:**

- Good teaching in Years 10 and 11 lead to GCSE standards which are in line with the national average.
- There is good technical support for computers, which are being upgraded.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- Resources for ICT are unsatisfactory.
- National Curriculum requirements for ICT are not met.
- The marking and monitoring of students' work are inconsistent in Years 7 and 8.

177. Overall standards are unsatisfactory. Standards by the end of Year 9 as assessed by teachers are below the national average overall and reflect unsatisfactory achievement for girls and boys in the limited lesson time available from when they start in the school. Students, including those with special needs, do not fulfil their potential because tasks in Year 8 are limited and students do not have timetabled lessons in Year 9. Although National Curriculum requirements for ICT in other subjects are not met, the majority of students gain satisfactory basic skills in specific ICT lessons in Years 7 and 8, and apply skills well in occasional lessons in other subjects. Students have insufficient opportunities for ICT in

English, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, modern foreign languages, music, physical education and religious education. This is mainly because teachers lack sufficient expertise and because of the lack of computer resources. As a result, they are not achieving as well as they should be.

178. In lessons seen in Year 7 and 8, the majority of students, including those with special educational needs, develop and explore pocket money spending quite well in spreadsheets, though because of varying experience in primary schools, some students find formulae difficult to use. The school does not have a precise enough idea of students' ICT standards when they enter the school. Some students come from local primary schools where ICT is well established. In a Year 8 lesson, students again used spreadsheets, but some higher attaining students repeated work done in the previous year, and were not challenged to use spreadsheets to model business problems sufficiently well. Lower-attaining students made slow progress because some students had to share machines. Students often did not complete tasks, although achievement in the limited lesson time was satisfactory. Students' skills in computer applications specific to science and design and technology, such as data-logging and control technology, are under-developed. By the end of Year 9, many students develop good skills of exploring, developing and communicating information and researching on the internet at home, because it is not available in school. The most motivated students integrate text and graphics well on Publisher for their homework tasks, but have little opportunity in school to apply and further develop their skills through use in school subjects, and so underachieve. In addition, their progress in more complex applications such as spreadsheets and databases is limited.

179. By the end of Year 11, students' standards of ICT capability are unsatisfactory overall. Although many students use computers at home, planned opportunities in other lessons are few. Results in the full GCSE option course, taken by a fifth of the year group were in line with the national average in 2000 and 2001 and nearly all students entered obtained pass grades. Attainment in ICT is unsatisfactory in most other subjects. The lack of lesson time for ICT and opportunities to use computers across the curriculum are hindering the drive for higher standards.

180. Some good examples of GCSE projects seen involved databases of video shops and advertisements, produced by desktop publishing. Project analysis and design usually makes good use of material researched locally. Most students evaluate their work as they go along rather than just at the end, and develop good skills of working on their own to meet examination deadlines. Year 11 projects usually take real business users' views into account, and make good use of market research questionnaires from which most students produce clear graphs. Students in the small learning support group produce simple spreadsheets from a list of business costs and make good progress in lessons seen.

181. Opportunities in most subjects to extend students' ICT competence have been inconsistent but are beginning to improve. In design and technology lessons, students are starting to use computer-aided design, although no lessons were seen. Occasionally students use the data logger in science, but students seldom use computers in most other subjects except for business studies. As in earlier years, most Year 10 and 11 students use home computers well for word processing and to research web sites for homework tasks in some subjects.

182. Attainment on the Sixth Form key skills ICT course is below national expectations because most students have underachieved in earlier years and do not have an appropriate base on which to build. Steps have been taken to improve standards. In GNVQ media studies lessons, the use of ICT to edit video and sound, and to produce digital images is very good, and students make very good progress using the specialised industry standard equipment.

183. Teaching and learning overall are satisfactory, but variable. Teaching in lessons seen was good in Years 10 and 11, and better than in other years. A half of Year 10 and 11 lessons were very good, which is an improvement since the last inspection. There is a good focus on individual needs in the learning support group in Year 10. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good. Their relationships with students are always good and often very good. This helps students gain positive attitudes to learning. In the lower school, learning support in classes is good. Teachers manage the few students who have behavioural problems very well, and students in all years behave well. Most students are good at helping each other. They co-operate well with teachers in the specific ICT lessons seen. All students, including those with special needs use equipment safely and responsibly and are usually keen to use computers. In lessons students in Years 10 and 11 show good skills of working on their own and taking responsibility for improving their work. This skill is less evident in Years 7 and 8 where groups are larger, and some students have to share machines. This leads to some coming off task and losing concentration. Work is then unfinished.

184. Teachers generally plan lessons well, and set clear objectives, particularly in Years 10 and 11. The best lessons begin promptly with reviews of previous work, and teachers explain topics clearly. This helps individuals, including students with special educational needs and behavioural problems, keep on task. Students make good progress as they are frequently reminded of key terms and techniques. In GCSE lessons, teachers have reasonably high expectations but the nature of the syllabus does not encourage the highest attaining students to explore alternative designs in coursework tasks and compare different software applications sufficiently. Teachers set homework from time to time in order to extend research out of the classroom. However, these features are not so common in Year 7 and 8 lessons, where day-to-day marking is not frequent enough to help individuals who find learning difficult.

185. Overall management of ICT in the school is unsatisfactory. This is because the curriculum is very limited for most students, and assessment of ICT competence in other subjects has shown unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The school's senior management did not give ICT priority after the last inspection. An able network manager and technician ensure machine faults are dealt with quickly. Accommodation is spread throughout the school and is satisfactory overall showing good improvement in quality for Sixth Form students since the last inspection. The number of computers available to students overall is still unsatisfactory, and well below the national average. There is no Internet access yet. Computer rooms can be booked, although most subjects apart from business studies have too few computers available for immediate use. Lunchtime clubs are well supervised. The school does not have a fully operational web site at present. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory overall, since improvements in teaching and Sixth Form equipment have been balanced by shortages of lesson time and the lack of effective training for most subject teachers.

## MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Overall the quality of provision in modern languages is unsatisfactory.

### Strengths:

- The modern languages curriculum is diverse and provides access both to French and German and to heritage languages. This enhances the self-esteem of students from a Turkish or Greek background.
- Students' attitudes to learning a foreign language and their good behaviour contribute positively to their learning.

### Areas for development:

- There is insufficient use of the modern foreign language by teachers in lessons and teaching and learning styles are too narrow.
- Too much use is made of textbooks and short term planning is not linked closely enough to the demands of the programmes of study.
- Systems of monitoring and evaluating provision, including the use of assessment information to set targets and raise students' achievement, are not sufficiently well developed.
- Teacher assessment in French in 2001 indicates that attainment by the end of Year 9 was below the national average. No assessment information was available for previous years. Inspection evidence confirms that attainment in current Year 9 is also below average.

186. The proportion of students attaining the higher grades, A\* to C, in the GCSE examinations in 2001 was below the national average in French and German. Although results in Greek and Turkish were above the national average, value added analysis shows a fair degree of underachievement in these languages as well as in German. There is also a significant gender variation with girls outperforming boys by a very wide margin. The school is not aware of this and has not addressed it because it does not analyse assessment information systematically and use it to inform planning. Data to analyse trends are also not available.

187. All students in Year 7 study French with the more able adding Spanish in Year 8 and the rest having a choice between Turkish or Greek. Overall attainment in French by the end of Year 9 is just below what is expected of 14 year olds. Attainment in Spanish, Greek and Turkish is broadly in line with national expectations. The profile of attainment has not changed since the last inspection. In French, higher attaining students in Year 9 show good understanding of classroom language and answer questions related to the topics being studied. Some show a fair degree of fluency in their reading and accuracy in their pronunciation as well as an effective grounding in knowledge of verbs and tenses. This is made possible because the teacher routinely starts lessons with a quick revision of key verbs and this helps students' retention and builds on their previous learning. Students in lower sets do not have a wide enough range of vocabulary to enable them to respond adequately in oral work. Their responses tend to be short and often do not extend to more than one word answers. Students often need a lot of prompting to answer questions. Attainment in listening and responding is generally better because there are frequent opportunities for listening, effective use of taped recordings and the use of visual aids and prompts to support understanding. When reading, high attaining students identify main points but a significant number cannot read fluently and independently, use context to deduce meaning or tackle authentic material. This is due to the lack of planned opportunities to develop independent reading early enough as a regular activity. For middle and lower attaining students, their ability to refer to the past and the future with sufficient

confidence is limited and this is why the performance of the majority is still below average by the end of Year 9. In writing, high attaining students write whole paragraphs which are accurate, but the majority have not acquired enough skills to begin to use their knowledge of grammar sufficiently to begin to adapt and substitute individual and set phrases.

188. Although students' overall attainment in Year 9 is below average, the majority achieve appropriately against their prior attainment. They make gains in acquiring vocabulary and build on their previous knowledge of key phrases and benefit from the good modelling of key structures. However, many find it difficult to transfer what they have learnt into new contexts because previous learning is not constantly re-activated, recycled and constantly put to use.

189. Attainment by the end of Year 11 in French and Spanish is below average. Students' understanding in both languages is better than their speaking and writing. Even the highest attaining students are tentative in their oral responses because of the lack of rehearsal of oral skills and the lack of high enough expectations in this critical skill. In listening and responding, students attain better, although a number fail to record anything because teachers do not monitor the extent to which students understand the material heard or adapt it if it is too fast or inaudible. Whilst middle and low attaining students learn topic vocabulary, their grasp of past tenses and key structures is weak with the majority of students not transferring this knowledge into their writing particularly in French. Evidence from the analysis of students' work also shows insufficient opportunities to develop their writing skills beyond the practice of grammatical structures. There is unnecessary translation and few examples of modelled compositions which are crucial to achieving higher levels of attainment. Pronunciation is overall satisfactory but distinctly better in Spanish.

190. The majority of students, including those with special educational needs, do not achieve appropriately against their prior attainment. This is to a large extent due to the lack of high expectations in the use of the target language as the normal means of communication. The lack of emphasis on oral skills, which need extensive practice, means that the development of oral fluency and its use as the basis for developing skills in reading and writing are underdeveloped.

191. The majority of students show positive attitudes to the languages studied across both key stages apart from a small minority of students, mainly boys in Years 10 and 11. They show interest, listen attentively and apply themselves well. When they have the opportunity of working in pairs, they respond well, enjoy it and show initiative. Relationships with teachers and between students are good and there is often a positive ethos of hard work and perseverance. Although many students are well disposed to learning, teaching does not encourage them to develop their strategies for communicating in the target language with the teacher and their peers.

192. The quality of teaching is never better than satisfactory, and one quarter of lessons seen are unsatisfactory. In a number of lessons, teachers use the overhead projector effectively to present new language which enables students to practice it. In the best teaching, this is further supported by the use of visual aids as prompts to support students' oral responses. This was well exemplified in a Year 8 Greek lesson on saying the time. In this case, the teacher used a clock face with additional exemplification on the board to practice this. Once the students learnt the basic patterns, the teacher proceeded to model more complex patterns and enabled students to use their own clock faces and ask each other questions. Questioning was brisk and appropriate praise was used when lower attaining students responded well. The teacher had high expectations and the bulk of the lesson was conducted orally in the target language. This enabled everyone to have a thorough grounding in saying the time. Homework matched to different abilities was set to consolidate work done in the class and to extend the more able by providing more demanding work. However, even where teaching is satisfactory, too much English is used. This does not help students develop their fluency and understanding. Methods and

organisation of teaching are also narrow. Planning is based too closely on the textbook and focuses on topics as opposed to skills. This is often compounded by students' confusion when they are referred directly to the textbook without any preliminary practice to make the tasks accessible and intelligible. Often the work is not carefully matched to the range of abilities in the class. In some cases, students from a francophone background are not given the level of work suitable for their knowledge of the language. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, this was mainly due to the lack of subject knowledge and low expectations or little active teaching with most of the work based on worksheets.

193. The department has recently suffered from a severe staff turnover both among teachers and changes at head of department level. This means that many systems have not been sufficiently well established to ensure clear direction. The most critical issue is the lack of any monitoring and evaluation both in terms of self review and the analysis of assessment information to set target for improvement especially for teaching and learning. The current development plan is too much focused on tasks and not focused on raising standards. Although there are regular assessment tasks, the evaluation of students' work and marking are not closely related to the demands of National Curriculum Levels of attainment and used to identify short and long term targets. This is particularly so in relation to the development of students' cultural awareness in a systematic way.

194. Progress since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. Standards have not improved and the long-term vision highlighted in the last report has not yet been realised. However, the new head of department recognises what needs to be done.

## MUSIC

The overall quality of provision in music is satisfactory and there have been significant improvements in some areas since the previous inspection.

### **Strengths:**

- The high quality of teaching from the permanent staff motivates students and enables them to make progress.
- The positive ethos within the department is providing a strong basis for the growth and development of the educational provision.

### **Areas For Development:**

- The curriculum for years 7 to 9 lacks adequate coverage of some musical styles.
- The extra-curricular choral and instrumental ensembles are underdeveloped in both recruitment and standard of performance.

195. Teacher assessments show that by the end of year 9 students' attainment is in line with national expectations with all groups having an equal opportunity to progress. At GCSE Level, attainment is close to the national average, but this is due to some excellent results from the more musically able which masks some general underachievement.

196. There is some variation in the standards achieved from class to class in Years 7 to 9, but where teaching was at its most effective, students were performing well, gaining a good level of subject knowledge and working together co-operatively. One Year 7 group was working on a project on African music. Students in this lesson had a good grasp of subject vocabulary, using such terms as 'polyrhythm' and 'ostinato' naturally and appropriately. Their compositions effectively showed the creation, structuring and refinement of ideas through improvisation. Recordings were made of these compositions for appraisal and to provide evidence of progress. The standard of singing in this class was satisfactory, obviously enjoyed by the students and showed a good development of aural memory.

Singing generally however, was underdeveloped. Learning tasks were structured so as to allow all students to respond and progress well in relation to their prior attainment. Word banks were used to contribute to the development of literacy skills.

197. Students following the GCSE course show a wide level of ability. Progression from Year 9 is unsatisfactory in the case of the less able. Basic skills and knowledge were weak and inhibited development. Within the course itself, there is a lack of rigour and challenge. In a Year 11 class, one boy had composed a bass riff but seemed not to be taking it further, one girl's instrumental playing was random and unfocused and two girls were working at a duet which had been on going from Year 10, hence not enough progress was being made. Through their composition activities, Year 10 students have opportunity to engage with issues outside the subject. A project on reggae involved the composition of lyrics which encouraged them to consider the social, religious and cultural context of the music.

198. The standard of teaching was predominantly good or better, though some unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Two instances of excellent teaching were observed which were imaginative and challenging. Teachers in these lessons had students actively engaged and this enabled them to make significant progress. Lessons were well planned and teachers assessed work systematically using the school's five-point scale. The way in which this assessment is linked to assessment at the end of Year 9 is not evident and needs clarification and refinement.

199. The leadership of the department is positive and committed. Areas for future development have been clearly identified and the day-to-day running of the department is efficiently organised. The curriculum for students in Years 7 to 9 is delivered through a series of 18 units which provide a varied programme of study, but music from the western classical tradition and that of the British Isles is under represented. The schemes of work include singing though this activity needs systematic development as a separate skill if the culture of singing is to be nurtured successfully.

200. At the time of the inspection 133 students were receiving instrumental tuition. The school does not monitor this provision sufficiently well and time and opportunities are not used as productively as they should be. Insufficient consideration is given to ways in which this provision can enrich music making, in and out of class. There is a range of choral and instrumental activities available, but the number of students involved is small and the standards of performance achieved are low.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

### **Strengths:**

- The quality of teaching is good, often very good with teachers setting high expectations of students in terms of performance and behaviour. As a result, learning is good and progress marked.
- Pupil teacher relationships are very good; students have a positive, lively attitude towards physical education and feel valued for both effort and achievement.
- Leadership and management of the department are very good and is a key factor in ensuring that standards are high.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- Internal facilities are poor and adversely affect the progress of students in a number of sports.

202. The department has not fully developed and implemented policies on numeracy, ICT and SMSC provision in physical education.

203. GCSE results in physical education are just above the national average with 54 per cent of students gaining A\* to C grades. This has continued the trend of results in this subject being above, or well above the national average with students achieving relatively better in physical education than in their other subjects. Students are able to match their very good practical performances with the demands of the theoretical components of the examination. The majority of the current GCSE groups are performing at or above the level of national expectations with several students demonstrating aspects of exceptional performance, particularly in Year 10. Overall, attainment is above average by the time students reach Year 11.

204. The majority of students in Years 7, 8 and 9 are attaining at the level of national expectations. They adapt and refine existing skills effectively and apply these well to new situations. They work constructively in pairs and groups. Both examination and non-examination students in Years 10 and 11 attain above the level of national expectations. They show a good understanding of how to improve individual skills through practice as well as being able to participate effectively in team games, where knowledge of tactics and positional sense is required. In all years there is, however, a wide spectrum of attainment which teachers accommodate by planning effectively matching work to differing needs and planning a range of activities. As a consequence all students achieve well.

205. Teaching is a major strength of the department; teachers are knowledgeable, enthusiastic and are very well prepared for lessons, which are well structured, use a variety of teaching methods and are conducted at a lively pace. Teachers set high expectations of students, in terms of both performance and behaviour and as a consequence, students learn well in lessons. Students are regularly assessed, although not all as yet in terms of National Curriculum Levels, and generally know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Half the lessons observed in Years 7 to 9 were judged good or very good and all bar one in Years 10 to 11, which was satisfactory, were also judged good or very good.

206. In one very good Year 8 trampolining lesson the use of progressive activities and clear directions by the teacher enabled the majority of students to perform a front drop with precision and control. Students in a very good Year 8 dance lesson worked collaboratively, were able to demonstrate control, extension and rhythm in their movements and produced aesthetically pleasing outcomes to musical accompaniment. In a good Year 10 football



lesson, students were taught how to improve their heading skills with a variety of well-structured and imaginative practices. As a consequence students headed the ball with accuracy and control. The teacher set up an appropriate multi-skill activity in a good Year 10 hockey lesson enabling students to practice and refine their skills of passing, dribbling and shooting.

207. Despite classes being generally lively, particularly in Years 7 to 9, students are well behaved and respond to the firm but friendly control exercised by teachers. Instances of unruly behaviour are dealt with efficiently and generally with a minimum of fuss. All teachers have developed firm but friendly relationships with students providing an environment in lessons in which students feel valued for both effort and achievement.

208. The timetabled curriculum meets statutory requirements and the many extra-curricular activities, clubs, teams, and in Year 10 the Junior Sports Leadership Award, provide additional opportunities for students to enjoy sport and improve their skills. Lessons are inclusive with good provision for students from all backgrounds and boys and girls work well together in mixed lessons. In addition the open access to clubs and activities provides further enriching opportunities for these students. School teams and individual competitors have enjoyed success at a number of sports at both local and higher levels.

209. The department is very well led with a clear commitment to maintaining standards and raising the profile of the subject. However further work needs to be done on the drawing up and implementation of policies on numeracy, ICT and SMSC provision in physical education. There is not enough formal monitoring of departmental teaching and learning.

210. The department has made good progress since the last inspection but the lack of appropriate internal facilities continues to have an adverse effect on the quality of physical education provision and impedes further progress. The current level of internal physical education facilities are inadequate for the number of students at the school and the range of the curriculum. Current facilities for teaching badminton, senior basketball and table tennis are wholly inappropriate.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of provision in Religious education is good.

### **Strengths:**

- Good teaching which leads to good learning.
- Standards in GCSE in 2001 were good.
- Pupil management is very good.
- Contributions towards the SMSC development of students is good.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- The setting of detailed targets against which pupil progress can be identified and sharing these with students.
- The assessment of attitudes, values and the spiritual dimension.
- Develop further the monitoring of students' work through a systematic and planned approach.

211. Attainment in Years 7 to 9 is in line with expectation for 14 year olds in relation to the Enfield LEA Agreed Syllabus. In Years 10 and 11, attainment is in line with expectations in both the GCSE full and short courses. In 2001, standards in the GCSE full course were 77 per cent A\* to C. A good result.

212. In lessons and work seen during the inspection, attainment in Years 7 to 9 is consistent with expected levels. Students develop their knowledge and understanding of religious language, principles and concepts well. They generally make sense of what they study and can relate it to their experiences of life. In Year 7, they developed a good understanding of Jewish customs and traditions as a result of a well-directed lesson on the Torah. In Year 8, students developed a good knowledge and understanding of the development of Buddhism and the relevance of the four sights in today's world. In Year 9, students explored the respective roles of men and women in Islam. They created a newspaper article and, through a well-structured feedback session, showed an understanding of stereotyping and its impact on people's attitudes. Students with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. The teacher's use of key words, technical language and good discussion work were useful aids to improve the speaking, listening and written skills of students. Overall, learning is good. Students achieve well and make good progress. Their good behaviour and willingness to collaborate with both the teacher and other students contribute well to their achievement and progress.

213. In lessons and work seen in Years 10 and 11, attainment is line with national expectations. In the Year 10 GCSE course, students achieve well. They show a very good understanding of issues such as peace and conflict. Through a very good use of songs of peace by modern day musicians, the teacher enabled students to understand the effects of conflict on individuals and communities. They were able to relate these effects to the Christian view, and make sound judgements. In Year 11, students understood the importance of Christian and Muslim attitudes towards other religions. They were able to justify their opinions and produced reasoned and well-balanced arguments. This was due to the teacher's excellent knowledge of the topic and very good questioning skills. Students achieve well and make good progress. There are no significant differences in the standards achieved by students of different gender or ethnic background. Students with special educational needs, those with EAL and those who are gifted or talented make good progress. Overall, learning is good.

214. Teaching is of good quality and has a significant impact on pupil achievement. Planning is good. Teachers make good use of questioning to remind students of previous work and to help them to draw together their current learning. They use a suitable range of styles such as discussions, worksheets, video and audio presentations, and text analysis that enable students to *learn from* as well as *learn about* religion. Teachers manage pupil behaviour well, contributing to a good climate for learning. Extension work and homework are used to good effect in allowing students to reflect on the information they have gained in class as well as providing opportunities for research that increase students' knowledge and understanding. Teachers have clear expectations of students and challenge them to succeed, and these are effective in contributing to pupil achievement. Resources are well used, especially worksheets, and enable students with different needs to learn well.

215. Assessment of students' work is generally satisfactory and very helpful comments are made in exercise books. The procedures provide a sound basis for assessing what students know and understand. Assessment is used well in order to plan new work. The department does set targets, but they tend to be general and not related to levels of attainment. Consequently, students are unclear about the standards they are reaching and what they need to do to improve. This is recognised as an area for development.

216. The curriculum in Years 7 to 9 meets the needs of the students and the requirements of the Enfield LEA Agreed Syllabus. The schemes of work are very appropriate and are linked to the fundamental aims of the syllabus designed to assist students both to learn about and learn from religion. Lesson plans are very good, and provide sufficient flexibility to allow for staff initiative and planning for the range of abilities in

some class groups. In Years 10 and 11, all students follow the GCSE short course. In addition, there is also a full course GCSE. The course provides a sound curriculum that is in line with the Agreed Syllabus requirements and provides continuity with the syllabus in Years 7 to 9.

217. Religious education makes a valuable contribution to the SMSC development of students, and provides opportunities for students to explore world issues of justice, relationships and personal beliefs. In lessons, the teaching encourages students to explore their personal views about religious and moral issues, and work on the major world religions necessitates discussion about the cultures that support them, so preparing students for life in a multi-faith and multi-cultural society.

218. The department is managed well with a clear sense of purpose and direction. Students are provided with a rich diet of religious education in all year groups. The head of the department approaches the task managing the department with enthusiasm and commitment. There is excellent support from other departmental staff. Support and in-service training for all departmental staff is a significant part of departmental planning. The departmental development plan addresses appropriate priorities and forms a good basis for future action. Documentation is good. There are regular formal meetings of the department which provide opportunities for the discussion of important issues relating to pupil attainment and progress. The quality of display that celebrates students' achievement is very high. Curriculum resources are generally good. The monitoring of teaching and support for newly-qualified teachers is regularly carried out. It is well planned and regular with constructive feedback. However, the monitoring of the work of students needs to be carried out on a more regular basis.

219. Since the last inspection, attainment by Year 9 has improved. Standards in the GCSE full course have improved significantly. Good improvements have been made the quality of teaching. The assessment procedures have improved, although the use of levels of attainment is an area for development. There has been a significant improvement in the contribution religious education now makes to the SMSC development of students. Overall, the improvements since the last inspection have had a good impact on standards, pupil achievement and progress.

## Drama

The provision for drama is very good overall.

### Strengths:

- GCSE examination results are high.
- Inspirational teaching drives high standards.
- Students' commitment and enthusiasm for the subject are good.
- Leadership and teamwork are very good.

### Areas for improvement:

- There are inadequate specialist teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum and the option groups.
- Accommodation and storage space are limited.
- The provision and use of ICT as well as textbooks for the examination courses are unsatisfactory.

220. Drama is taught as a separate subject to all students in Years 7 to 9 and as a GCSE option in Years 10 and 11. It is a popular subject and students achieve high standards in all areas of their work. Standards in Years 7 to 9 are above national average. In 2001, the

GCSE examination results exceeded the national average with 95 per cent of students achieving grades A\* to C. Consistently high standards have been maintained over the last three years. Inspection evidence confirms that the present GCSE groups are achieving highly. Students' relative performance in drama is better than in most subjects.

221. Students demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of space, movement and gestures and the impact these have on characterisation. They demonstrate willingness to develop their ideas followed by thorough and thoughtful evaluations of their work as a whole class. They use a range of drama conventions to explore and develop a deeper understanding of their characters. Throughout Years 7 to 9, students' incisive and powerful comments border on philosophical debate when engaging in role-play. For instance, in Year 7, they hypothesised, argued and reasoned about exchanging their emotions for a gift with a magic chair. This lesson had a powerful impact on their overall development as they considered issues around good and evil.

222. Years 10 and 11 students apply good levels of self-discipline and concentration when performing so that their work gives a professional edge. They perform with zest and use improvisation skills effectively in live and physical drama. The high level of commitment to their work is reflected in their GCSE coursework reviews, which are structured and evaluative in content and style.

223. Students have very good attitudes to drama and behaviour is sometimes exemplary. They work well collaboratively and the high level of enthusiasm and willingness contribute to the high standards in all year groups.

224. The inspirational and very good teaching promotes high standards. Teachers use their very good subject knowledge to bring the best out of students. They produce meticulous plans with precise learning objectives, use interesting stimuli and briefs, which inspire and energise students to use their imaginative and intellectual skills. For instance, in Year 10, students after working on a brief for children's theatre produced polished performances using a range of techniques to explore Greek mythology.

225. There is tight control and careful monitoring of work and as a result students make very good progress in developing their ideas. Teachers' high expectations of behaviour and work, the extremely brisk pace and continuous reinforcement of technical skills contribute to students learning. Students make rapid progress when teachers do spot demonstrations. For example, the set short timed activities give students the opportunity to apply and assess their ideas. Teachers give students time to explain their ideas and there is usually a gush of them as their views are valued.

226. Leadership and management of the small team are very strong. Assessment is well conceived and applied with students taking part in self-assessment. The major setback for the department is a shortage of specialist teachers. This presents many difficulties as extra curricular activities are curtailed and more students are prevented from opting for this successful subject at GCSE Level. There is also increasing pressure on the specialist staff to monitor work and provide in-depth support to non-specialist staff whilst teaching the subject at different levels. There is limited drama space in the lower school and a shortage of ICT resources and textbooks to match the GCSE and Advanced Level curriculum.

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

227. In the inspection, 12 subjects and courses were inspected and are reported on in detail. Work in other subjects and courses was sampled and contributed to the overall picture of teaching and learning in the school.

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

229. In the inspection, 12 subjects and courses were inspected and are reported on in detail. Work in other subjects and courses was sampled and contributed to the overall picture of teaching and learning in the school.

230. The following tables show entry and performance information for courses completed in 2001, the latest year for which national comparisons are available.

***GCE AS Level courses***

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
French	1	100	78	N/A	13	1.00	1.65
Physics	1	N/A	52	N/A	4	N/A	0.90

### **GCE A Level and AVCE courses**

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art and design	9	89	96	22	46	4.89	6.57
Biology	14	71	88	7	34	2.29	5.25
Business Studies	36	86	92	19	32	4.56	5.50
Chemistry	10	100	90	20	43	4.80	5.90
Communication Studies	2	100	93	-	31	6.00	5.53
Computer Studies	1	-	86	-	23	N/A	4.6
Drama	6	100	99	67	38	8.33	6.59
English Literature	21	95	95	24	37	5.14	5.19
French	3	100	89	-	38	4.67	5.59
General Studies	11	91	85	64	30	7.09	4.91
Geography	23	83	92	30	38	4.61	5.74
Graphical applications	1	100	88	-	22	4.00	4.74
History	12	10	88	67	35	8.17	5.45
Mathematics	26	81	87	12	43	3.45	5.80
Other Languages	1	100	93	-	56	2.00	6.84
Other Social Studies	12	100	87	33	34	6.50	5.30
Physics	12	75	88	25	40	4.17	5.67
Sociology	1	100	86	100	35	10.00	5.32
Sports/Physical Education Studies	8	88	92	25	25	5.00	5.09
Vocational Studies	10	100	76	60	26	7.40	4.36

### **Intermediate vocational qualifications**

Qualification	No in final year	% gaining qualification		% gaining merit		Average point distinction	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Business Studies	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	9.00	10.00
Leisure and tourism	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	12.00	10.06
Media Studies	5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	12.00	11.62

## SUBJECTS AND COURSES GROUPED IN CURRICULUM AREAS

### MATHEMATICS

231. The curriculum in the Sixth Form includes provision for A and AS Level examinations covering modules in pure mathematics, mechanics, statistics and separate mathematics as well as an option leading to AS further mathematics.

### MATHEMATICS

Overall the quality of provision in mathematics is satisfactory.

#### **Strengths:**

- The teachers' very good subject knowledge and confident exposition.
- The positive and supportive relations in the Sixth Form.
- The provision and range of courses offered in the Sixth Form are good.

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

- Teaching does not cater for the full ability range and in-class support for the least able is not offered.
- There is too much teacher direction so that students are not actively enough engaged in their learning.

232. Standards in the mathematics A Level examination in 2000 were in line with national averages with all students achieving a pass grade and 27 per cent achieving the higher A and B grades. The 2001 results were below those in 2000 in terms of the percentage of A to B grades, the A to E grades and the average point score. The A Level results have fluctuated over the past four years although the performance of girls and boys is similar. Boys perform significantly worse in mathematics than their other subjects. In relation to their prior performance at GCSE, achievement in mathematics is in line with expectations.

233. Students in the Sixth Form were also entered for GCSE re-sit examinations, AS Level mathematics and A Level further mathematics but the numbers are too small to make any meaningful comparisons against national averages. The provision for Key Skills (Application of Number) in the Sixth Form is satisfactory although success rates in the examinations are low due to a lack of guidance from the examination board, low attendance rates because of timetable clashes, fortnightly lessons, which are too infrequent, and poor student motivation.

234. Standards at the end of Year 13 are average as a result of more regular assessments and careful monitoring of underachievement. The work covers modules in pure mathematics, statistics, mechanics and decision mathematics. Students can factorise linear and quadratic equations but, for many students, numeracy skills are weak so that they have trouble squaring 13 in their head and use a calculator to calculate  $1 - \frac{1}{2}$ . Students use co-ordinate geometry to find the distance and gradient of a line joining two points and, in statistics, they have a good understanding of the binomial distribution and can link this to work on Pascal's triangle. In mechanics they work on force and motion and can apply their work on circular motion to consider safe speeds to drive around bends and the effect of banking on roads.

235. The quality of teaching and learning in the Sixth Form is good. Teachers demonstrate very good subject knowledge. They provide confident exposition and clear explanation so that students' learning is carefully considered and thoughtfully developed. Lessons get off to a quick start and in a Year 12 lesson, the lesson started with an oral test on decision mathematics which quickly focused students' attention and acted as a useful consolidation of earlier work. However, in too many lessons, teachers do not give enough attention to the spread of ability, and less able students are required to undertake too much additional work outside of the class. Teacher talk dominates the lesson and there is insufficient emphasis on learning so that students' thinking skills are not sufficiently encouraged.

236. Teachers have a very good awareness of the individual strengths and weaknesses of their students. Common homework assignments are set regularly and marking is completed to a high standard using examination mark schemes. Useful and supportive comments are provided on the work and supported by model solutions. Target grades are set for all students and assignments are assessed against these targets allowing a dialogue between the students and the teacher on progress in meeting those targets.

237. Attitudes and behaviour in the Sixth Form are good. Students show interest and enthusiasm for their work and enjoy good humoured relationships with their teachers. Relationships with one another are positive and supportive so that in a Year 12 lesson on cubic equations, students helped one another to use their graphical calculator in order to find the gradient of the curve. Students complete work to a high standard although their presentation skills are variable and some work is very untidy and badly organised.

238. The curriculum in the Sixth Form is flexible to accommodate students in different option blocks and those wishing to take A Level further mathematics. The provision for literacy in the Sixth Form is satisfactory and the department makes good use of technical vocabulary although errors in the spelling of words such as 'variance' and 'semmetrical' are common and reading around the subject is not sufficiently encouraged. The provision for ICT is satisfactory and the department makes good use of graphical calculators so that in a Year 12 lesson students identified the maximum and minimum turning points of a cubic equation by zooming in on different areas of the graph.

239. The provision for numeracy across the curriculum in the Sixth Form is satisfactory. Basic number skills are rehearsed in science for standard form and negative powers although work contains a number of careless mistakes such as  $12/5=2.2$ . Algebraic skills are used well in physics to determine the forces acting on a car and calculate the acceleration of electrons. Students cope well with the theory of simple harmonic motion and make good use of graphs although there is less evidence of any analysis. Good use is made of statistics in Sixth Form geography fieldwork where students take measurements of stream flow to calculate discharge and velocity. Students recognise the use of mathematics across the curriculum and identify the use of correlation in business education, log graphs in geography and significance testing in biology. At present, there is no consistently applied numeracy policy to provide a coherent framework to develop students' numeracy skills across the curriculum.

240. The leadership and management of the subject in the Sixth Form are good. The leadership of the department ensures a clear vision and educational direction for mathematics Post 16. The head of department has a very good awareness of the strengths of department as a result of her monitoring and her analysis of assessment data and external examination results. The department has embraced the introduction of Key Skills and responded well to changes at AS and A Level as well as overcoming the



difficulties raised by the lack of textbook resources for this new course. The head of department engenders a strong team spirit among her committed team of well-qualified teachers and encourages their attendance on courses to support their ongoing professional development.

241. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. The A Level results have fallen below national averages. Attainment in lessons in the Sixth Form remains above average. The quality of teaching in mathematics remains a strength and students' attitudes and behaviour are good. The marking of students' work has improved since the last inspection and they are well supported through diagnostic marking, model solutions and target setting which ensures that students performance is constantly monitored. The department is well placed to continue to improve and to raise standards.

## SCIENCES

242. The main focus of the inspection was on biology, but lessons in physics and chemistry were also sampled. In a very good Year 12 physics lesson, a good practical investigation helped students to understand some of the factors which affect the flow of current in circuits which include an electric motor. In a good Year 12 chemistry lesson, students made good progress in understanding how addition reactions involving alkenes may be explained at a molecular level. And in a Year 13 chemistry lesson, students showed how they could plan an investigation which allowed them to identify several compounds by carrying out a series of chemical tests on them.

## BIOLOGY

The quality of provision in biology is satisfactory.

### Strengths:

- The quality of teaching is good.
- The use of lively and well informed discussion helps to improve students' motivation and progress.
- Teachers' relationships with students and their understanding of students' progress are good.

### Areas for improvement:

- Levels of attainment in examinations are low.
- Students' skills in independent learning are not sufficiently well developed.
- The quality and use of assessment to help students to understand their own progress are unsatisfactory.

243. Although the school requires at least a grade C in GCSE examinations before a student can start a Sixth Form course in biology, the profile of attainment of students overall is below expectation when they come into the Sixth Form. They progress broadly as expected during the course and their results at the end of the one year AS course and two year A Level course are still below the national average. In 2001 they were well below expectation. However, some students have gained the highest grades, A and B in the recent past. After allowing for the inevitable random variations, students' results in A Level biology have been broadly constant over the last three years.

244. Teaching in biology is very good. In three-quarters of lessons seen, the teacher inspired the students to learn very well so that real progress was made during the lesson. Often this progress stems from the teacher's very good knowledge of the subject and of how young adults learn, and this helps the teacher to inspire students to achieve well. For example in a Year 12 lesson on microscope techniques, the teacher had prepared a lesson designed actively to improve drawing skills. Not only did these skills improve noticeably during the lesson, but students also gained in their understanding of the tissues which were used as practice specimens. And another class, in Year 13, showed that the gain is sustained, paying dividends in other contexts later in the course. Discussions led by the teacher are a real strength of the department, and teachers' own biological understanding enables them to take up students' own enthusiasms and use them to increase motivation and hence learning. This subject enthusiasm was seen in most lessons, and particularly in a lesson on digestion in humans. Teachers know their students well, and are able to support them well in class. There is a good system in place for monitoring progress, but it is not used enough to help students to learn as well as they can. Assessment rooted in national standards is not undertaken often enough to help students gain a better awareness of their own progress. The excellent system for assessing and monitoring students which is used in the rest of the science department up to Year 11 is not yet used in the Sixth Form.

245. In some lessons, however, students' motivation is a major bar to progress. Not all students attend lessons regularly, and ensuring that they catch up when they return to school uses valuable time which the teacher could use to help other students. More generally, most students' skills of independent learning are underdeveloped. Students do not read as widely as they could as part of their course, or use the experience they gain from reading to ensure that they are able to cope with language written for a variety of audiences. Equally they do not practise writing answers to examination questions which express the crucial ideas as economically as possible.

246. At the time of the inspection, the head of biology was on long-term sick leave, and judgements about management are about the effects of what had been done previously, rather than what was happening during the inspection. Leadership and management in biology are satisfactory. Teachers understand the needs of students in the school well and have adopted good systems to support them. Within the context of the science department as a whole, leadership is clear, and staff are inspired to work towards raising attainment. The head of science regards this as a priority and has drawn up a very good action plan for the department. There are good resources available to support teaching and learning and members of the department make good use of them.

247. Academic support for students in lessons is very good, but not enough is done to support students' long-term development. Assessment is not frequent enough or based on well-founded standards so that students have a much better appreciation of their own progress. Given that many students do not have an accurate picture of how they are progressing, developing effective systems for assessing and monitoring progress is a matter of priority for the department.

248. The department has shown little progress since the last inspection. However, the new head of science who has an overview of the whole department has a very clear vision and the subject is well placed to improve significantly in the near future.

## **ENGINEERING, DESIGN AND MANUFACTURING**

249. The school has recently begun to offer an A level course in designs and technology graphics with ,materials technology and though this was sampled, it was not inspected in depth. The first group of students to take an examination in design and technology will do so in June 2002. The standards of work of current students were above average. Students are

achieving very well in relation to predictions based on GCSE results. In the lesson seen they were doing very well as a result of very good teaching which demanded much of them. The lesson structure and activities clearly focused their learning. Students recall knowledge well and apply it successfully to their project work shows the same confidence as their class work.

250. The principal features of the very good teaching were clear objectives, sharp planning, brisk pace and a range of teaching strategies to bring about learning. The teacher had very good subject knowledge and used this well in questioning and structuring the tasks set. The lesson provided opportunities for students to practice what had been discussed and their skills and techniques improved as the lesson progressed.

## **BUSINESS**

251. Provision in business education includes AS/A Level business studies, AVCE business studies (advanced), intermediate GNVQ business studies. Accounting A Level was also sampled during the inspection, although business studies was the main focus this subject was briefly sampled during the inspection. Results at A Level are well above teachers' and national expectations at the highest grades of A and B. Advance supplementary (AS) and A Level grades achieved by the lowest-attaining students were disappointing, indicating that they found the course too difficult and might have been more suited to a GNVQs course, where there would be more emphasis on coursework than examinations. Teaching and learning seen in the lesson were good and students made good progress in understanding accounting concepts. Students prepared bank reconciliation statements neatly and accurately from financial information provided. They made good use of the published final accounts of public limited companies, but little evidence was seen of the use of ICT to model financial problems (such as costing or break-even) using spreadsheets.

### **Business Studies**

Overall provision in business studies subjects is very good.

#### **Strengths:**

- Teaching: teachers have very secure subject knowledge of business and plan lessons well to consolidate and apply business concepts.
- Teachers' very supportive relationships with students help them to make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of business
- Students attain at least in line with national expectations and often better, particularly in GNVQ and A Level Accounts.
- A good range of subjects meets most students' needs very well.

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

- Students do not draw sufficiently on work experience or part time-jobs to enrich their coursework students are not given enough opportunities to use ICT in lessons.

252. Standards overall are average, and build on good achievement at GCSE, where pass rates are also average. Attainment in GCE A Level results in 2001 was average overall, but above teachers' expectations for the top grades of A and B. Results were in line with the school average. Lower attaining students do not attain as highly as teachers expected. They make good progress and gain maturity, although a GNVQ course might

have suited their needs better. Results in last year's new AS Level examination were encouraging. Students attained above national and school expectations. Advance supplementary (AS) and A Level results show good and sometimes very good achievement over time for the majority of students, most of whom have already taken a GCSE in business.

253. On the vocational business GNVQ courses, pass rates at both advanced and Intermediate Level were above average in 2001. The proportion of students obtaining merit grades was average, but there were no distinction grades. The good standards of previous years have been maintained. There were more higher grades in 2001, with three quarters of students obtaining merit or distinction at both levels. When account is taken of the students' GCSE grades at the start of the course, their overall achievement is good. Business was not reported on in the last inspection.

254. In the lessons and work seen in Year 12, standards reached were satisfactory overall for female and male students. This applied to AS Level and AVCE courses, and there were often few differences in the knowledge and understanding shown by students on AS Level and AVCE courses. Higher attaining students showed a very good understanding of cash flow forecasting on both courses. Students related theory very well to practice, although there were few examples of local businesses in AS and AVCE students' notes. Examples of very good evaluations included ways a mobile phone company intended to use the cash raised by a flotation to reduce its debt. Students' analyses of the marketing strategy for a fast food company reflected good awareness of market conditions. AVCE students' course work assignments were sometimes presented with a mix of word-processed and hand-written notes, and this affected the overall quality because ICT was not used sufficiently to produce graphs from data or to integrate graphs and statistics into text. Many students of average attainment did not label graphs, and lower-attaining students made graphs too small. The AS students showed good knowledge and understanding of the difference between autocratic and democratic leadership styles, and the links between a firm's competitiveness and capacity. Although the majority of students, including those with good first language English skills, sometimes lacked fluency in their oral answers, they showed a generally good understanding in discussion of key concepts and their relevance, although several AS students questioned were not clear about the relationship between businesses' ownership and their size.

255. The achievement of current intermediate GNVQ students in lessons and work seen was good. In their individual oral presentations they showed good understanding of organisational structures and an awareness of different job roles in business. This was based on short visits to local businesses, and, for a small proportion of students, experience in part-time jobs. Those who used this experience to add relevance and detail to their presentations achieved very well. Students generally knew the difference between flat and tall hierarchical structures but had not explored a sufficient range of examples. In their presentations, students did not use ICT to add force to their points, although they were just beginning to develop good communication key skills and the ability to evaluate each other's work. Students' evaluation skills were not yet sufficiently developed to enable them to obtain distinction grades.

256. Students in Year 13 on business and accounting courses are making good progress in lessons and work seen. In a very good Year 13 business lesson seen, A Level students showed very good knowledge about sources of business finance, and could rapidly calculate dividends per share. Using relevant examples of high and low-g geared companies, they understood the likely effects of high gearing on firms' cash flow. One strength of students' work lies in their steady accumulation of knowledge, well organised in their

folders, and the basic understanding they show in discussions and tests. However, AVCE and A Level students do not make enough use of relevant work experience to relate business concepts to local examples. A Level students do not make enough use of ICT to present their work or model relevant financial problems using spreadsheets.

257. The overall quality of teaching and learning was good or better in all nine lessons seen during the inspection. A third of lessons were very good. Teachers' strong and secure subject expertise underpinned discussion with students very well, and lessons had clear aims and good pace. There was a good mix of activities combining individual and group work, sometimes involving computer use, particularly in GNVQ classes. This engaged students' attention and kept them well motivated. In a good Year 12 AS marketing lesson seen, students enthusiastically explored the way firms could improve profitability by producing new specialist products. Their discussion, in groups, was well guided by the teacher, who set them an interesting scenario based on a published case study. In a very good Year 12 AS Level lesson, the teacher ensured students understood capacity and utilisation very thoroughly through well-focused individual questioning, and encouraged students to ask their own questions to develop a critical understanding of the issues. Boys tended to be livelier in discussion than girls. At the end of the lesson, the teacher reviewed the key concepts effectively, so that students were fully aware both of economic concepts underlying capacity (economies of scale) and business problems that might arise when firms failed to work to capacity. The teacher did not, however, sufficiently relate capacity to cash flow. Year 13 students were given well-chosen examples of high and low gearing from which their numeracy skills were well developed. Students were encouraged to undertake further research in local companies and through web sites, though insufficient computers or Internet access were available in school. Students work very well together both individually and in groups to complete their tasks, and both female and male students show mature attitudes in discussion, and a good capacity to work independently, bringing in relevant research from local business visits, particularly on GNVQ courses. They support each other well when evaluating work. Overall, students' motivation is very good.

258. Teachers' assessment procedures meet examining board requirements very well. Marking is thorough, regular and consistent across the department, and this helps students improve. The assessment of AVCE assignments clearly shows students how to obtain higher grades by resubmitting their work, although some male and female students seemed reluctant to do so to obtain the top A (distinction) grades. Intermediate GNVQ assignments incorporated key skills of communication, numeracy and ICT, although assessment of these was undertaken through separate timetabled lessons which were not directly linked to their GNVQ/AVCE/AS/A Level coursework. The school has considerable experience in GNVQ assessment, with good internal and external systems for checking marking. Schemes of work are well written, with several units of work being taught simultaneously by different staff, but well co-ordinated.

259. Leadership and management of business courses are very good, and a clear sense of direction in the department has been shown by the well-planned introduction of the new AVCE and AS Level course. Students' progress is well monitored over time, with their performance measured against target minimum grades. However, the department plans to use a more rigorous system based on students' previous points scores at GCSE to measure their full potential and whether it is achieved. The local consortium helps provide economic class sizes in business and accounting. Although improvement since the last inspection can only be estimated, on evidence seen, it is likely to be good. The department is well placed to improve further.

## HOSPITALITY SPORTS LEISURE AND TRAVEL

260. The emphasis was on physical education but the school also provides for the delivery of the AVCE in Leisure and Recreation and the GNVQ in Leisure and Tourism, and some of the lessons in these areas were sampled. Whilst the number of students on these qualifications is relatively low, those who do study these courses consistently perform at or above the national average. In the one satisfactory Year 13 AVCE lesson observed, students were able to compare the effects of and issues surrounding media coverage of different sports. The attainment of students as demonstrated by their portfolio work shows that they are achieving very well, with very good research from appropriately designed assignments.

## SPORTS

### Physical Education

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

#### **Strengths:**

- Standards are currently in line with national expectations but are improving beyond this.
- Teaching is consistently good, high expectations are set and students achieve very well.

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

- To continue to push to maximise students' results.

261. A Level results have been improving in recent years and in the last two years have been in line with the national average grade (between C and D). Students performed equally well in the new AS qualification in 2001. The department is particularly proud of the first A Level A grade obtained in 2001. Inspection evidence shows that students currently in Years 12 and 13 are producing work, and attaining in lessons, above the national average. All students achieve well in lessons. Students have a good knowledge of the anatomy and physiology aspects of the A Level course and are able to apply these to the relevant sporting components of the course such as health and fitness, training and skill acquisition.

262. In one excellent Year 12 lesson on 'arousal and performance', students were able to describe the links between the two, knew the relevant theories associated with the topic and were able to discuss the physiological effects of arousal on performance. In one good, imaginatively structured Year 12 lesson on 'the cardiac cycle', students worked collaboratively in groups to role-play the actions of the heart, developing a good understanding of how the various components reacted to electric impulse. Students in another good Year 12 lesson demonstrated how a good understanding of the important issues of race, nationalism, drugs and finance affected the development of the Olympics in the twentieth century. Students in Year 13 knew the different methods of training very well and were able to relate them to training schedules for different types of athletes.

263. Students are very positive about physical education in the Sixth Form and have developed a responsible attitude to their studies. In discussion with students they feel they are well supported by approachable and knowledgeable staff who have genuine concern for them to do well. There are many additional opportunities for Sixth Form students to enhance their skills and participate in sporting activities through the extensive range of

clubs and school teams. The Community Sports Leadership Award provides excellent opportunities for students to develop their personal, social and leadership skills. Several students help with extra-curricular activities; in one instance a Sixth Form student led a Year 7 dance practice with skill and confidence.

264. Overall the teaching of A Level physical education is very good. Teachers set very high expectations, prepare imaginative and well-structured lessons and have developed pleasant and constructive learning environments in which to work with students. As a consequence learning is good and students achieve well. The department is very well led and managed and the large number of staff who contribute are well supported. There is a determination to improve standards further and raise the profile of the subject in the school.

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

265. The focus was on music, art and design and media, but drama was also sampled. In art and design, results have improved over time. AS results in 2001 were very good, with nine out of thirteen students obtaining passes at grade C or above. At A Level, eight out of ten students obtained passes at grade C or above. In media, all students passed the GNVQ Intermediate course with merit, indicating above average standards of attainment and good achievement in a new area of study. A level results in drama were well above average in 2001 with a high proportion of students gaining the high grades A or B. Teaching in drama is very good.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

Overall the quality of provision in art and design is satisfactory.

### **Strengths:**

- Teaching is good and students are encouraged to work independently.
- Teachers possess appropriate training and skills to support students.
- Students make effective use of visual diaries.
- Students are encouraged to plan thoroughly and to critically evaluate their own work.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- The narrowness of the Fine Art curriculum means that there is little opportunity for work involving ICT and photography.
- Assessment and recording systems lack relevant detail and more formal written feedback is required.
- The monitoring of work combined with the use of objective data to inform students about their performance is not well enough developed.

266. The GCE A Level examination results in 2001 showed a significant decline in standards over the previous two years. The percentage figures for both male and female students achieving the highest grades, A and B, were well below the national average. Female students' performance was significantly lower than that of male students, which goes against the national trend, where more females achieved grades A and B than did males. In relation to their GCSE results, this was significant underachievement, as these students had performed at a level that was broadly in line with national standards at GCSE in 1999.

267. However the standards of work seen during the inspection are broadly in line with national expectations. In Year 13, students achieve well in relation to their GCSE results. In lessons seen most were producing work of a satisfactory standard as a result of good

teaching. Students are actively encouraged to develop much greater independence in their ways of working and to develop the ability to resolve problems themselves. In one lesson observed they were making good use of material derived from investigations into the work of other artists and craftspeople to inform their own studies in two dimensions. The more-able students are beginning to develop confidence in their abilities to generate and to develop ideas. There was no obvious difference in attainment between male and female students.

268. In Year 12 students are working to acquire technical skills in drawing, painting and in manipulating various three dimensional materials. They are also learning how to plan and carry out evaluation of their own work more effectively. Although the pace of work is quite slow at present, there is evidence to show that the students are acquiring the capacity to think and act for themselves. Most are coming to terms with the greater freedom that they have been given and with the responsibility that goes with this freedom, namely, to work from their own ideas, concepts, attitudes, values and beliefs. Frequently they are asked to write their own briefs through Personal Projects that ensure that they develop genuine independence in their work.

269. The current Sixth Form curriculum lacks breadth. There is too much emphasis on a traditional fine art model of the curriculum which limits students to working with water-based paint, poster paint or acrylic paint on paper or card. During one lesson observed however, one student was working with a combination of paint and plaster that was being applied to heavy card. On the whole there is very little evidence of any significant experimentation with a wide range of media and materials. Little use is made of modern technology, in the form of computers, scanners, digital cameras and printers, or photography, as means for creating and generating images. There is therefore a predictability about much of the work and little evidence of design or problem solving within a work-related, vocational context.

270. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to good and is good overall. At this level teachers see themselves primarily as facilitators, whose primary role is to develop self-confidence and self-reliance in their students and to encourage them to work independently. There is evidence of sound preparation and good planning before lessons. Objectives are usually clearly set for students who know what is expected of them. Good subject knowledge is demonstrated through lines of questioning that are designed to draw out appropriate responses from students. In one lesson observed the teacher spent a considerable amount of time assessing the work in students' portfolios, then offering advice and making suggestions as to how the quality and standard of the work might be improved. This led inevitably to an interesting change of views. Overall however, there is a need, across the department, for much greater consistency in the use of positive criticism to help improve the standards of students' work.

271. During the inspection there was very little evidence of setting homework or of marking of work. Assessment was usually carried out during lessons in an informal basis, and immediate feedback provided for students. However there was very little evidence of a more formal, written assessment process, which could be relied upon to help in the improvement of students' work. Recording and tracking systems were inadequate and it proved difficult to see how realistic targets could be set for students. Little use was made of objective data to aid this process. The creation of an assessment framework that involves regular written feedback to students is an area for improvement.

272. In lessons observed most of the students enjoy freedom to explore their own ideas and concepts through drawing, painting and by manipulating various materials. They are keen to acquire appropriate skills and techniques that will enable them to communicate



ideas and express feelings more effectively. For the most part they learn through traditional activities involving conventional materials. They form good relationships with one another and can be both supportive and critical when asked to comment on one another's research studies and final pieces of work.

273. As their confidence grows, students' capacity for real independent research improves. There were good examples of clear thinking and independent research in the students' visual diaries. Most are capable of finding sources for their own work, either in the immediate environment, from direct observation, or from the work of other artists or craftspeople in both an historical and a contemporary context. There remain however, significant weaknesses in terms of individual students' abilities to process this information and produce interesting final pieces of work.

274. Leadership and management of the department are satisfactory. Staff meetings are held regularly and issues for discussion are raised. All members of the department are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Standardisation exercises have been held, involving all staff, in an attempt to achieve greater consistency in assessment and grading of students' work. Assessing, recording and tracking procedures can be improved further and more formal structures created to provide accurate feedback to students regarding their performance. At present, monitoring of students' work, based upon objective data, leading to target setting is unsatisfactory. There is however, a recognition and a commitment from the members of the department to improve all monitoring, assessing and recording procedures.

## **MEDIA REPORT**

Overall, the quality of provision in media is good.

### **Strengths:**

- Good and improving examination results sustained over several years.
- Good quality of teaching. Teachers use their subject-knowledge well and plan lessons effectively.
- Students' enthusiasm for the subject is good.
- The quality of marking is good.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- Not enough and consistent opportunities are provided for students to take responsibility for their own learning in all units of work.
- The procedures for monitoring and tracking students' attainment and progress are not rigorous enough.

275. Standards in media are about average. Since 1999 the proportion of students gaining merit grades at GNVQ Intermediate level has remained broadly in line with national averages, though with a small number of students being entered. These results indicate good achievement, since students often start the course with average GCSE attainment. There is no discernible difference in results between students on grounds of gender or of ethnicity.

276. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are about average and that students overall make good progress over time. They can use technical terms confidently and with accuracy, in speech or writing, showing that they understand the concepts and techniques which these terms define. Year 13 students starting a unit of work on film studies, for example, showed an understanding of various types of camera shots and cutting and editing which was based on earlier very sound teaching and their consolidation of film

language. In group work, students in both years sustain well-focused discussion and while Year 13 students animatedly considered how to approach their task, some Year 12 students were prepared to offer controversial opinions. Higher-attaining students make good progress.

277. The quality of written coursework is satisfactory. Students in both years create accurate logs of work and records of information. A few produce perceptive evaluations of media texts in a way that identifies the elements that create meaning. Records of work on audio tapes show good development of skills and the majority learn quickly the principles of data collection. Evaluations of students' own work or of media texts frequently lack development, or are merely descriptive. Research work is sometimes superficial. While extended writing is mostly sustained satisfactorily, arguments and opinions frequently suffer from a lack of supporting evidence. Students make good use of word-processing in presenting their findings, though technical weaknesses in writing persist. Their own knowledge of the media successfully informs their practical and theoretical work.

278. Students' portfolios contain some good practical work across a range of media, which includes still photography, multi-track sound recording, and animated sequences with synchronised sound-track, and desk-top publishing. Scripted audio stories are well planned and constructed. They demonstrate students' good awareness of genre, familiarity with basic conventions and confident handling of ideas. Scripted talk radio programmes prove to be more of a challenge. A sample of photography portfolios contains sensitive and thoughtful compositions. Written accounts of the work are frequently detailed but lack sufficient analysis of their target-audience response. A project on community print publication combined research that was structured and written up well with detailed production and design specification. This resulted in the creation of an attractive leaflet for a community group, which was a substantial improvement on the groups' original publication.

279. Teaching is good overall, with some very good features. Teachers plan and manage lessons well. In a very good Year 12 lesson on the role of marketing, the teacher sustained students' attention successfully for the whole of a double lesson by providing a sequence of varied and appropriate activities, all conducted briskly: at the same time she made very effective use of her knowledge to support and extend their learning. Teachers' high expectations of their students' work are not always fulfilled, and Year 12 students in particular are not consistently able to show initiative or to take responsibility for their pace of learning. Lessons are characterised by very good working relationships and mutual respect between teacher and taught. Teachers' responses to class work are always constructive and their marking of written work is very good. Comments here are detailed, diagnostic and developmental. Essays are marked accurately and consistently, while assignments are evaluated with exemplary thoroughness. Teachers' skill and enthusiasm ensure that the great majority of students are well motivated.

280. Students learn well. They are attentive and respond well overall to tasks and challenges. They always work hard at writing essays and assignments. Students' understanding of concepts such as audience and genre is more assured in Year 13 than in Year 12, though most students quickly learn the codes and conventions of media representation. The majority has had little previous experience of media work, save in GCSE English, but they rapidly assimilate a basic working knowledge because they are enthusiastic about the subject, and are well taught. They collaborate very well in groups and usually work at a good pace.

281. No judgements on the quality of media provision or standards were made in the previous inspection, but standards of attainment at the end of Year 13 have remained consistently good over the last three years, and are improving.

282. The quality of teaching and learning resources is very good. Students' practical work benefits especially from very high-quality recording and editing facilities. These include state-of-the-art multi-track audio recording equipment and a digital video-editing suite, which allows for stop-frame animation. This enables students to produce good quality image work. Digital cameras and desk top publishing facilities are also well used, but recent increases in the sizes of teaching groups limit their availability. Students are well satisfied with ICT resources, though limited access to colour printers sometimes delays the production of their work.

283. The subject is well co-ordinated and managed. The courses are taught by four staff who cover the theoretical, practical and artistic elements, and is managed overall by the teacher in charge of vocational education. This system works effectively as the team meets every few weeks to review students' progress and the development of portfolios. procedures for monitoring students' attainment and progress are being developed and self-assessment opportunities are being created, but these require further work and consistent application across all elements of the course.

## MUSIC

The overall provision in music at this level is satisfactory.

### Strengths:

- Good committed teaching based on positive, supportive relationships between staff and students.
- Good accommodation and improved curriculum organisation.

### Areas for Development:

- The range of opportunities in music technology is limited.
- Instrumental/vocal performance is under developed, both in terms of opportunities to perform and level of attainment.

284. Although recent A Level results indicate that attainment is below the national average, the current students in Year 12 and 13 are making good progress in relation to their prior attainment and the staff's anticipated improvement in performance is realistic. Some of the practical work is a little below the standard which might be expected at this level in terms of technical facility. This will reduce the chances of achieving higher A Level grades. Some students gain performance experience by playing together in a band. This could be extended to include other vocal and instrumental ensembles and by directing rehearsals and performances themselves.

285. Students were able to apply their knowledge of musical structures and techniques in the analysis of contemporary scores. This showed a sound grasp of technical vocabulary and well developed stylistic concepts. The learning that took place in the Year 12 group was reinforced and extended by them applying the same compositional procedures to other themes specially created. Two students demonstrated an elementary use of notational software including input through midi. Reference notes drew heavily upon photocopied material with little evidence of individual research and collation of information which would help students internalise knowledge and develop essay writing skills.

286. The overall quality of teaching is good and demonstrates a very secure and confident grasp of the subject knowledge involved. Material is thoroughly prepared and in lessons observed in both years, the students were able to understand the technical analysis of contemporary scores and in the case of Year 12, they also attempted applications of those techniques themselves. Teachers' expectations are high and suitable methods of teaching are employed.

287. Currently, the teaching of two year groups together does not always promote sufficiently effective learning. Accommodation is unsatisfactory and does impact on teaching and learning. The provision for ICT is unsatisfactory and means that students do not have sufficient opportunities to use electronic means to compose music. Students receive good guidance and support and they respond positively to the subject.

## HUMANITIES

288. The focus was on geography, history, and government and politics but religious education was also sampled. Results in A Level History and Government and Politics were well above average in 2000 and an above average proportion of A and B grades were attained. Results in 2001 were similar. Most students achieve what they should. AS results in 2001 were strong and equipped students for A Level. Of the lessons seen, all were at least satisfactory, and a high proportion were of very good quality, providing stimulating and challenging learning experiences for students, who are highly committed to the subjects. The three subjects inspected are popular with students and the staying-on rate between Years 12 and 13 is very good.

## HISTORY

Overall, the quality of provision is very good.

### Strengths:

- Examination results are good - in 2001, they were above the national average.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- The students respond very well and are very interested.

### Areas For Improvement:

- There is little use of ICT.

289. The standards in history are good. The GCE A Level results were good in 2000, with 45 per cent of students achieving Grades A/B, but in 2001, this figure improved to 75 per cent, including 7 who gained Grade A. Numbers are small and all gained grades. This performance showed an improvement on GCSE results.

290. The standards of work of current students are above average. All the students, except one, have Grades A\* to C at GCSE and are building well on that performance. The teaching is very effective and demands much of them. A Year 13 lesson on 'Consensus in British Politics after 1945' was very challenging and the students tackled the complicated issues involved with great interest and enthusiasm. They have good knowledge of the period and the personalities, gained through good teaching and effective background reading and were able to reach viable conclusions for examination purposes.

291. The quality of teaching is very good and the students learn very well as a result. The principal features of the teaching are well planned lessons, with very clear objectives, which are shared with the students, very good pace and a variety of appropriate activities such as document study, the use of the overhead projector and video excerpts. The teachers have very good subject knowledge and the learning is very focused. A Year 12 lesson on 'The failure of Weimar Germany by 1933', not only used the previous knowledge of the students, gained at GCSE, but also linked it very effectively to the skills required in answering the new AS Level style of question.

292. The students respond very well to the teaching they receive. They work with very good levels of interest, carry out effective research and contribute well to discussion points. They all chose history out of interest in the subject and are happy with the course. Several of them intend to continue their studies of history at University.

293. Facilities for the students are only just satisfactory. The accommodation is in two older classrooms, without a resource base. The textbook supply is adequate, with limited stock in the library. The provision of ICT is unsatisfactory, in particular, there is no access to the Internet, which provides a valuable research tool, especially for those students who do not have the facility at home.

294. History is flourishing, due to very good teaching and the consequent very good progress of the students. The subject is well led and managed, with very good results and future prospects are good.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

Overall the quality of provision is satisfactory.

### **Strengths:**

- Teachers' knowledge is good.
- Assessment of progress and information to students are effective.
- Development of writing styles and use of number are successfully promoted.

### **Areas For Improvement:**

- Development of hypotheses is an area of weakness in students' work.
- Not enough use is made of ICT in lessons.
- Use of assessment data in tracking progress is not rigorously enough developed.

295. The provision in geography caters for 37 students following AS and A Level courses. Over the last four years A to B grades at A Level have been erratic, but in 2001 they were a great improvement on the previous year. Although they were below the national average, given the size of entry, the difference is acceptable and reflects the attainment at age 16. A to E grades are also below average and reflect the generous criteria for entry to A Level courses for students with lower GCSE grades. Advance supplementary (AS) Level examination results were satisfactory in 2001 with 30 per cent of students gaining A to B grades and matching attainment at GCSE. Retention rates are good and students express satisfaction with the courses. Female students, apart from in 2000, do marginally better than males and in 2001 all the females' grades were B and C, whereas the grades attained by males were spread across the grades.

296. In lessons and work seen during the inspection the standards of current Year 12 and 13 students are consistent with the national average. They are achieving satisfactorily. Year 12 students are working at grades B to D and those in Year 13 are at about grade C.

297. Students in Years 12 and 13 have developed a good range of writing styles. Folders and exercise books contain a good volume of well ordered notes, essays and examination questions and there are good examples of in-depth physical studies as in the comparison of two Welsh river systems, looking at drainage basins, river cross-sections, flood hydrographs and showing a clear understanding of the processes involved. The students also work confidently with number and use formulae in studies of river gradients and discharge and in nearest neighbour analysis. Students use a good technical vocabulary in the right context, such as psammosere and hydrosere in studies of ecosystems. Students use a variety of sources to aid their research and they have gained a useful understanding of study skills to help accuracy and presentation in examination conditions. Though there is little use of ICT in everyday classroom situations, there is growing independent use, seen in a homework 'Slums of Hope' comparing Calcutta's Bustees and the Favelas of Sao Paulo. Good use of a network room was also seen in a Year 12 lesson on Conflicts and Resolutions in National Parks. This is an improving aspect of Sixth Form work but it requires the addition of internet facilities for research purposes. Sixth Form students have built on skills learned previously and are able to focus well on interpretation and judgement rather than description, seen to advantage in coursework and fieldwork investigations. An area for improvement is in the ability to develop fully arguments for which information has been diligently collected.

298. Overall teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and teachers have good specialist knowledge that they use effectively. This knowledge also is evident in the quality of assessment and the very useful feedback sheets that students receive on all aspects of their work and which provide good guidance for development. Teachers target their questions well, in order to involve all students and in one lesson students received good practice in assessing the quality of each other's work and matching it to the marking scheme. Students are encouraged to work in pairs and they gain confidence from this. In conversation students comment on the heavy workload, but do not feel out of their depth. They regard the teachers as always helpful, friendly and supportive. They appreciate the encouragement to use outside libraries and alternative sources, but they regret the lack of ICT resources in the school. Students receive a lot of teacher support, but they are not spoon-fed. They are required to think for themselves and are reminded that they are now working at a different and higher level.

299. Students in Years 12 and 13 achieve satisfactorily. They behave very well and show a positive attitude to their work. Relationships are very good and students show trust and confidence in their teachers.

300. The Sixth Form provision is managed well and an experienced and committed team delivers the work. Work is up to date, with good case studies and an appropriate concentration on study and examination skills to give students at a range of attainment levels the best chance of success. Assessment of progress is good, but better use can be made of the increasing amount of data coming available to trace individuals more precisely and set targets accordingly in order to raise standards further. Geography students are very positive about the school and the value of the Sixth Form.

## GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Overall, the quality of provision in government and politics is good.

### **Strengths:**

- Results are well above national averages.
- Students' attitudes and responses to learning are very good.
- Very good teaching leads to very good learning.
- The head of department is an excellent role model for teaching.

### **Areas for development:**

- Procedures for monitoring and evaluation pupil progress are not rigorous enough.
- Access to internet facilities to aid research is inadequate.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory.

301. In GCE A Level, the results in 2001 were well above national averages for students obtaining A to B grades. Standards attained by current students, in both Years 12 and 13, as seen in their written work and in lessons observed are above average in their respective courses.

302. In the AS course, Year 12 students have developed an early enthusiasm for the subject and they develop a good understanding of the central concepts of the subject. They understand and interpret effectively political information in a variety of forms, and they are good at selecting and organising relevant materials to construct arguments and explanations leading to reasoned conclusions. For example, in their study of the advantages and disadvantages of devolution, students, in a class debate, communicated their arguments and explanations with relevance, clarity and coherence.

303. In their A Level course, Year 13 students analyse effectively and evaluate skilfully, the relationships between institutions, processes, ideologies and concepts. For example, in their studies of pressure groups and their political roles, students identify and analyse, with considerable depth of understanding, parallels, similarities and differences between the roles and activities of pressure groups in the UK and the USA.

304. Students across the ability range make good progress and there is considerable evidence in both their oral and written work of the acquisition of analytical skills to augment their increasing knowledge. However, the higher order independent research skills are not yet fully developed and there is a tendency to rely too much on the teachers' knowledge and teachers' well-prepared source material.

305. Students' response and behaviour are very good. With the exception of a very small minority of students who are happy to remain as passive recipients of teacher input, students engage diligently in their work. They sustain concentration and have a responsible attitude to the subject.

306. The very good response from students reflects the very good teaching which they receive. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, which they present in a lively, and sometimes inspirational, manner. This motivates and stimulates the students and leads, therefore, to very good learning. A significant characteristic of the teaching is the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject, which is infectious and which has a favourable impact on students' learning. There is, however, a slight tendency to be overly didactic and students are not always encouraged to become independent learners.

307. Leadership of the subject is good. The subject leader has charisma and is an excellent role model as a teacher committed to high standards. In this he is supported by his colleagues. He, in turn, supports them. However, monitoring and evaluation of pupil progress, is not sufficiently rigorous and the department needs to compile and use diagnostic information much more effectively in order to monitor and support students' academic performance.

308. Accommodation for the subject is unsatisfactory in that the subject has no real base room and its stock room is removed from most classes. There is, also, a lack of internet access which severely impedes pupil progress in research.

## **ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION**

309. The focus was on English and French.

310. Results in English literature were above average in 1999 and in 2000. In 2001, they were below. Too few students take French to make valid comparisons with national results. Over the last few years students have obtained a pass grade but never obtained the higher grades A or B.

## **ENGLISH**

The provision is satisfactory, overall.

### **Strengths:**

- Results in A Level literature have improved over the last three years.
- Teaching overall is good.
- The marking and assessment of students' work is thorough.
- Relationships between teachers and students are good and students have a high regard for their teachers.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- The use of data to monitor progress is not rigorous enough.
- The AS Level literature results are low.

311. The GCE A Level literature results in 2000 were below the national average in the proportion of students obtaining grades A or B. This was a decline on results over the last two years when they were above the national average. Male students' performance was unusually low in comparison with their results between 1999 and 2000 when they outperformed females. Over the last three years there is a good record of 100 per cent or just under gaining A to E grade. In the 2001 AS language and literature examination, close to half of those entered gained grades A or B. Only one student did not gain a grade. Whilst students did well in this examination, the AS Level literature results were much lower in the number of students gaining grades A or B. Out of fifteen students entered, only one gained grade A and after an appeal, a boy's grade was raised to grade B. As a result of the lower than expected results, the department has raised the entry criterion to the A Level courses. It is also making greater use of the assessment objectives to increase students' awareness of examination criteria and techniques.

312. Standards of achievement of students on the literature and language course in Years 12 and 13 are good, whereas, achievement for those on the literature course is satisfactory. Files show that students have a rich body of material and information on the subject specification as well as the Examination Report to inform their approach when analysing



texts. In lessons in Years 12 and 13, students' attainment in speaking and listening were satisfactory with some good features. Those taking the language and literature course reach good standards in analysis and explanation whereas those on the literature course tend to be more passive in lessons, rarely volunteering answers and so making it difficult for teachers to assess their knowledge of texts. When they are fully engaged in their work, they achieve well in critical thinking and answers are explicitly relevant to the questions. For instance, in the Year 13 lesson they discussed Othello's characterisation in the last scene of the play. At best, the higher attaining students give sustained responses and at its worst, comments are sometimes muted and far too brief with some lacking the confidence to express their views at length.

313. Critical reading skills are good for the higher attaining students and satisfactory for the average and lower attaining students. Students textual grasp and appreciation improve when they use the assessment objectives to analyse the linguistic features of their reading. The Year 12 students on the literature course read with insight when analysing both fiction and non-fiction texts. Although they are only part way through the course, they have established a critical approach to interpreting texts and making connections with other works to understand literary tradition. For example, in their reading of Stoppard's *Arcadia*, they drew on their wide reading of writers such as Ben Jonson and Swift as they discussed the use of comedy in literature and examined the learned pre 20<sup>th</sup> century thinking on comedy. The Year 12 students show good textual appreciation and understand presentational devices, but it is the higher and some average attaining students who achieve well in their response.

314. The literature and language students maintain a good standard when analysing linguistic structures. They are accurate in their interpretation and application of conventions as seen in their work on Coleridge's '*Kubla Khan*'. In this lesson, students used the assessment objectives to explore how language, structure and form contribute to meaning of texts over time.

315. Standards in writing are good for the higher attaining students. Their essays are carefully crafted, and technical and specialist vocabulary are used effectively. They use a wide vocabulary and skilfully weave quotations into their commentary when focusing on the impact of language as illustrated in their analysis of the speeches by Anthony and Brutus in *Julius Caesar*. Critical writing of average attaining students shows good structuring, particularly after extensive redrafting. Lower attaining students do not always express their ideas clearly, there is also less annotation and notes even though they have access to the same material.

316. Students exhibit good attitudes to their work and most are highly focused having the expectation that they will achieve well. They work hard, efficiently and absorbedly often rising to the set challenges. They work well collaboratively and make good use of the literary commentaries in the library as part of their independent reading and research. They value their teachers' work, the induction programme and the extra curricular activities, which gives them the opportunity to work with professional writers.

317. The teaching in English is good with very good features, overall. Teachers know their subject very well and give careful targeted advice at the start of lessons. They are aware of students' learning needs and seek to reinforce technical details so that they have a clear understanding of critical interpretation of language. Teachers use their knowledge of the advanced courses to promote good learning. They use well-chosen resources to help students make gains in understanding of characters and linguistic devices. In addition, the overhead projector is used effectively for modelling and collating students' feedback in some lessons. Teachers employ a variety of strategies that increase students' involvement in their learning and provide them with the opportunity to apply the taught skills. For example, using the 'envoy' technique with students tutoring each other. The well-structured lessons

challenge students through effective questioning to think critically and make connection with previous work. Central to teaching, particularly in the literature and language lessons, are the use of assessment objectives and a range of exercises, which consolidate learning and increase students' understanding of the skills and knowledge for the exam. Teachers use a range of exercises to expose students' strengths and areas for improvement so that they are in no doubt about what they need to do to improve their work.

318. The provision for the GCSE retake is unsatisfactory. The arrangement whereby students complete some of the work in the Key Skills lessons and in their own time is having an adverse effect on their success.

319. Leadership in the Sixth Form is good. There is good communication, guidance and support across the department. The management of changes to teaching the new examinations has been good and teachers seek new ways to ensure that students understand and interpret the examination specifications and texts accurately. Extra curricular activities are good: the work with professional writers and reading clubs appeal to all students and stretch the gifted and talented. Examination results are analysed and findings used to inform planning and teaching. However, monitoring and evaluation of students' work is undeveloped and even though teachers know their students well, the information is not used sufficiently to raise attainment. There is a shortage of textbooks for the new AS Level courses. The English department has made good progress since the last inspection. Standards have risen over time, assessment and recording are good, target setting based on students' analysis in the GCSE exams and coursework is carried out and students know their predicted grades.

## FRENCH

Overall, the quality of provision in French is satisfactory.

### **Strengths:**

- Teachers are enthusiastic and work well as a team after a period of staff changes. This is providing a firm foundation for effective curriculum planning.
- Students have very positive attitudes to the subject and this has a positive impact on the progress they make.

### **Areas For Development:**

- There are insufficient planned opportunities for extended speaking to enable students to improve their fluency and accuracy in French.
- Assessment procedures and use the data to set targets for improvement are unsatisfactory.
- Not enough attention is given to helping students to work independently.

320. Over the last four years, entries to AS and A Level in French were small and results have been below the national average and the average for the school in other subjects. The evidence from work seen in lessons and in students' files shows that standards are below the national average. However current numbers in Year 13 are still small and comparisons with the national average are inappropriate. Students achieve appropriately against their prior attainment. They demonstrate satisfactory understanding of authentic texts adapted from newspaper articles and when viewing videos. However their oral response is tentative and the majority do not show sufficient skills when speaking at length or develop their ideas for instance when arguing for a particular point of view. Students' pronunciation still has anglicised features. They have good research skills and a grasp of topic vocabulary, but the quality of written work sometimes lacks grammatical accuracy. Although the most able presents well argued points of view, a number of students among the least able still make

basic grammatical errors. Attainment in Year 12 is also below average. The majority of students achieve appropriately against their prior attainment at this stage of the course with the most capable making better progress. They achieve better in listening and comprehension. Many are less confident when speaking, especially if when discussing a new topic with pronunciation not being always accurate. This is often because teachers rarely intervene to correct students and provide them with regular practice in this skill. Insufficient opportunities are provided for students to practice speaking at length, for instance through prepared presentations.

321. The quality of teaching in French in the Sixth Form overall is satisfactory. In the best teaching, students benefit from the model presented by a native speaker of the language and good subject knowledge, often reflected in clear and illustrated exposition of cultural topics. Grammar is carefully explained and modelled, enabling students to note exceptional usage of certain structure and consolidated through further written practice. Students are appropriately supported when writing essays through modelled practice focusing on how to introduce the topic and develop arguments for and against. However, not enough use is made of reading material and other sources of information as a model for students' own writing. In some of the teaching, English is being used unnecessarily, even at this level, to instruct or summarise what students have learnt. There is also often a lack of balance between teacher presentation of new material and opportunities for students either to use their own research and preparation to make presentations to peers or its use by teachers to develop discussion skills. In some cases, teachers' own fluency or mastery of grammar is not fully adequate.

322. The department has experienced difficulties with regard to continuity mainly caused by staff leaving and the lack of direction at Sixth Form level in the subject. This is still currently the case. However, the current staff are enthusiastic and working hard as a team to develop the curriculum. Other critical aspects of the subject's development especially assessment and its use to inform planning and target setting are underdeveloped.

323. Although resources are generally adequate, limited access to ICT and other media, such as video or satellite, means that students' contacts with the French speaking countries are restricted.