

INSPECTION REPORT

LEA VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Enfield, Middlesex

LEA area: Enfield

Unique reference number: 102050

Principal: Janet Cullen-Cornelius

Reporting inspector: David Bate
1545

Dates of inspection: 11th – 15th March 2002

Inspection number: 222914

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 students: 11 – 18 years

Gender of students: Mixed

School address: Bullsmoor Lane
Enfield
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Postcode: EN3 6TW

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Sheila Grayston

Date of previous inspection: 20 March 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1545	David Bate	Registered inspector		What sort of school is it? The school's results and students' achievement What the school should do to improve
9189	John Horwood	Lay inspector		Students' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its students? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
3643	Derek Jones	Team inspector	Mathematics Equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?
4151	Cedric Sanders	Team inspector	English	Sixth form coordinator
20243	David Benstock	Team inspector	Science	How well are students taught?
8240	Elaine Dearmer	Team inspector	Information and communication technology	
11672	Peter Harle	Team inspector	Art	
3674	Grace Marriott	Team inspector	Religious education	
15198	Marcellina Cooney	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages (Turkish)	
8139	Barbara Johnstone	Team inspector	Music	
19295	Peter Wall	Team inspector	Physical education Business education in the sixth form	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to students?
4355	Frank Earle	Team inspector	History	
5408	Brian Wilkinson	Team inspector	Design and technology	
31863	Adrian Cornelius	Team inspector	Geography	
27058	Kathleen Cannon	Team inspector	Special educational needs Speech and Language Unit	

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
12003	Andrew Marfleet	Team inspector	Drama in the sixth form	
31685	Valerie Girling	Team inspector	Art in the sixth form	
12408	Andrew Frith	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages in the sixth form	
22540	Susan Jaine	Team inspector	English as an additional language	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Students' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
ANNEX: THE SIXTH FORM	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	15
The school's results and students' achievements	
Students' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE STUDENTS TAUGHT?	26
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO STUDENTS?	28
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS STUDENTS?	31
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	34
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	35
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	42
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	45
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4	50
PART E: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM	73

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Lea Valley High School is a mixed 11 – 18 comprehensive school. It is an increasingly popular school with 939 students currently on role – 134 in the sixth form. This number has increased since the last inspection. There is no clearly defined catchment area, the school drawing its students from a much wider socio-economic group than indicated in statistics supplied by the DfES. There are more boys than girls, with a significant imbalance in Year 8 and Year 11. There are more boys in the sixth form than girls. There are multiple and complex characteristics of the school's intake which includes high levels of students qualifying for free school meals (FSM), high levels of students with special educational needs (SEN) and a very high proportion of students for whom English is an additional language (EAL). The percentage of students eligible for free school meals (39.8%) is over twice the national average. The numbers coming from minority ethnic families and having English as an additional language (38.6%) are very high compared with schools nationally, many of whom are at early stages of language acquisition. Students identified as having special educational needs (33.2%) are above the national average as are those with statements of SEN. The school currently caters for 189 students from refugee families, the majority of whom are of Turkish origin. The school also has a designated SEN unit providing support for 11 statemented students with speech and language needs. There are high levels of mobility amongst the school population. The school has experienced excessively high levels of staff mobility since the last inspection. It is involved in the LEA Excellence in Cities (EiC) initiative.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

At the time of the last inspection standards required substantial improvement and some improvement was also required in aspects of provision. The serious weaknesses in provision identified in 2000 have been addressed satisfactorily. Students now receive a satisfactory education which has many good features. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with many examples of good teaching, especially in Years 10 and 11. Students' attitudes to school are positive and they generally behave well. There are good relationships throughout the school. Although standards at the age of 14, 16 and end of sixth form are well below national averages, they are well above average in comparison with similar schools at age 16. The school adds good value to students' achievement as they move through the key stages, especially through Years 10 and 11. Leadership and management are good and there are good financial and budgetary procedures in place. The provision of extra-curricular activities is good. The school is giving satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The principal and other key staff provide a clear educational direction for the development and continued improvement of the school.
- It provides a caring and supportive environment which positively affects students' attitudes and enthusiasm for school.
- It provides well for students' personal development.
- Relationships throughout the school are good.
- It provides well for students' with SEN.
- It provides good opportunities for students' moral, social and spiritual development.
- It adds value to students' achievements as they move through the school.

What could be improved

- Information and communication technology (ICT) provision and teaching in Years 7 to 9 and ICT provision across the curriculum.
- Students' attendance.
- The use by teachers of a wider range of teaching and learning styles to ensure all students' learning needs are fully met.
- More rigorous use of whole-school assessment data to inform departmental and teachers' planning.
- Sharper improvement planning at all levels with clearly defined measurable outcomes.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall the school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the identified weaknesses from the last inspection, in spite of the very challenging circumstances in which it found itself, due to very high levels of staff turnover. It has made good progress in addressing the considerable weaknesses identified in teaching in Years 7 to 11; currently nine out of ten lessons are at least satisfactory with much that is good. The proactive policies of the governing body and principal have ensured a good degree of teacher stability and the school is now fully staffed. There has been a clear reduction in the lateness of students to school and to lessons, a significant improvement this academic year. There has been satisfactory progress in developing arrangements for monitoring the work of the school and in providing better quality departmental development plans. There has been good progress in developing effective provision for SEN students and assessing their progress more thoroughly. With the exception of provision for ICT in Years 7 to 9, the school now meets all other National Curriculum requirements. Insufficient progress has been made in the use of students' assessment data by departments and teachers in reviewing and adjusting their schemes of work and lesson plans.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
GCSE examinations	E	E	E	C
A-levels/AS-levels	E	E	E	

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

Students' attainment on entry is well below the national average for all schools. Students make at least satisfactory progress in almost all subjects by the end of Year 9. SEN students often make good progress. Trends in students' attainment over time are improving. Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9 in 2001 were very low compared with the national average for all schools in English, mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools, using only the free schools meals' criterion, the school was below average for grades level 5+ in English, mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools at grades for level 6+ it was below average in English but broadly similar in mathematics and science. The average points scores in all core subjects compared with all schools were below average in English and science and well below average in mathematics. They were below average compared to similar schools.

The school's results are very low in comparison with the national average for 5+ A*-C grades. This figure for 2001 – 27% was a significant improvement on the previous year's results and an improvement on results as reported in the last inspection. In comparison with similar schools using free school meals criteria and in relation to students prior attainment in 1999, attainment at 5+ A*-C and 1+ A*- G grades was broadly similar. For 5+ A*-G, the school was above average. The average points score of 32 points per student was well above average in relation to both comparators. The trend over the last four years in the school's average points score has been above the national trend. GCSE results are improving in all subjects except ICT and there have been significant improvements in history and modern foreign languages. Students are attaining close to the national average in drama and PE/sports studies and well above average in Turkish. The trends over time in all subjects except ICT are rising. Almost all students make good progress by the age of 16, as indicated in the national comparison against prior attainment. Progress was satisfactory in almost all lessons seen during the inspection in Years 10 and 11, with half of the lessons recording good or very good progress and advances in students' learning across almost all subject areas.

The school has set very challenging targets, which have been agreed with the LEA for attainment at the end of Years 9 and 11 for 2002 and 2003.

STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most students are keen to come to school and show good interest and involvement in activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Movement around the building is orderly despite the narrow corridors and students behave well at break times and in communal areas. In lessons the majority of students work hard. Examples of misbehaviour do occur in a few classes but are dealt with effectively.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The relationships which staff have built with the students reflect their desire for them to succeed both academically and 'as people'.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Whilst unauthorised absence has been substantially reduced the actual attendance figures remain very low compared to the national average.

Students' attitudes and behaviour help to promote learning. Despite the varying backgrounds of students, good relationships have been developed amongst the whole school community; this ensures that the school functions effectively. The number of exclusions is high but the school has very good initiatives such as the learning support unit to help those who may be at risk of exclusion. There has been a downward trend in the number of exclusions since the last inspection. The attendance has remained well below expected levels over time and, whilst the school has worked hard to reduce levels of unauthorised absence and to encourage attendance, there has not yet been an increase in the overall attendance figures.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. In the lessons observed for Years 7-11, about nine out of ten were at least satisfactory, with almost half that were good or very good. Although teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, there are some positive strengths and notable areas for improvement. A major strength in all departments is the expert subject knowledge of the majority of teachers, which is used well to question and support students individually. However, teaching methods sometimes lack the pace and variety needed to focus students' attention and this does lead to some disruption in classes. Where teaching is good or very good, lessons are well planned, cater for the range of attainments and interest students such that their motivation and behaviour are good. Unsatisfactory lessons were characterised by poor match of task to needs of students, work that was lacking variety or practical activity and weak management of student behaviour.

Teaching is particularly strong in art and physical education where subject expertise is applied well and clear guidance is given to students on how to improve standards. Teaching is weaker in science where for students of all ages the level of challenge is rarely sufficient to ensure good progress of all students, and methodology lacks real stimulation of interest. The teaching of ICT in Years 7 to 9 is unsatisfactory.

The teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. In Years 7 to 9, literacy teaching is good in English, but in other subjects only briefly referenced. Most subjects contribute to literacy, through key word lists for example, but the extent is barely adequate. Numeracy skills are taught

satisfactorily in mathematics but in other areas of the curriculum the teaching of numeracy skills is limited.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum that meets most statutory requirements. The extra-curricular programme of activities, especially in sport and games, is very effective in providing for students' personal and social development.
Provision for students with special educational needs	Good. Provision for SEN students is good; provision in the Speech and Language Unit is very good.
Provision for students with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The support in mainstream subject lessons offered by members of the ethnic minority achievement team (EMAT) is very good. The effectiveness of support for learners of EAL by mainstream subject teachers is adversely affected by the serious shortage of specialist EAL staff within the school.
Provision for students' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Students' spiritual needs are satisfactorily addressed. Students' moral development is good. Most subject areas make a planned and deliberate contribution to ensuring that provision for social development is good. Overall the provision for students' cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its students	Satisfactory. Effective systems are in place to support all aspects of students' welfare and they are well cared for. Systems for monitoring students' progress are good but the use of this information in guiding curricular planning is not yet fully developed.

The school works well with parents. It keeps them in touch with developments, reports effectively on students' progress, alerts them to concerns and consults them on key issues.

The year leaders and tutors provide good support for the students and are well supported by others in the school, for example the good quality mentoring. The use of registration and tutor time is variable with some very good usage but often opportunities are not fully utilised.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the principal and other key staff	Good. The good leadership and management of the principal and other key staff provide a clear direction for the school. There is a very good commitment to a fully inclusive school. The good delegation of responsibilities is improving standards and provision at a time of significant changes in staffing.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body has very good knowledge of strengths and weaknesses, having an active role in shaping the school. They do not meet statutory requirements for ICT, RE in the sixth form and providing a daily act of collective worship.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Considerable monitoring of teaching and its evaluation is carried out as part of the school's policy. The impact on learning has yet to make itself known, as the turnover of staff inhibits the developmental stage of the process. The use of assessment information is unsatisfactory. Financial planning is monitored well.
The strategic use of	Satisfactory. Resources are used efficiently and effectively to support

resources	teaching, learning and students' progress.
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The quality of leadership and management is good, with some strong features. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory despite an excessively high turnover of staff. Clear policies are being put in place for further improvement through a recently enhanced and enthusiastic senior management team. A major strength of the school is the shared commitment by all the teaching and non-teaching staff and managers at all levels to continuing improvement through its fully inclusive policy and commitment to equal opportunities for all its students. Leadership ensures a good, clear direction for the development of the school. Delegation of management responsibilities is good but not yet fully linked to classroom practices. Curriculum leadership is good in the majority of cases. Managers within the school are keen to succeed. They and their staff are working well to bring this about. They have the capacity to improve standards further as arrangements for communication are becoming more effective in linking change to improvement. Financial planning is good. The whole school-level of financial planning is effective and monitored well. The governors have a clear picture of the financial situation. New technology is used well for administrative purposes, especially in terms of finance. The school applies most principles of best value in its budgetary decisions, and all spending plans are clearly aimed at the impact such decisions will have on the quality of students' learning and support for improved teaching.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school has high expectations • they are comfortable with questions or problems • children make good progress at school • school helps students to mature and be responsible • they are well informed about progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the amount of homework • range of activities outside lessons • behaviour • quality of teaching

The inspection team found that the school encourages students to have high expectations, especially in relation to their behaviour and conduct which have shown significant improvements since the last inspection. Communications to parents are very good and contain clear guidance on the appropriate points of contact within the management team to provide relevant information or to discuss concerns. The team agrees with the parents that the school is approachable and helpful to them and also that progress is at least satisfactory. A strength of the school is the success it has in helping students from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds to become mature and responsible.

The areas that parents would like to see improved are not all supported by the team. The main area of concern from parents is with homework – some think there is too much and some think there is too little. The team considers that the school has a satisfactory homework policy which, however, is not consistently applied by all teachers. The school is working well with parents and behaviour is clearly improving but further improvements are possible, for example by encouraging participation in the proposed parent teacher association and continuing to develop behaviour management systems. The team consider that the range of activities offered to students outside lessons is good.

There were a few individual comments made by parents, most of which were associated with the staffing difficulties and language difficulties in the classroom. The school has clearly found it difficult to recruit and retain staff but the team note that they have used a range of techniques to overcome the problems of recruiting and that they are providing appropriate classroom support for the new teachers. There were some concerns about discipline – too much in some lessons, for example group punishment for individual misbehaviour – but also some parents pointing out the improvement in behaviour. The team agrees that behaviour is improving and considers that the few concerns represent a minority of situations which will decrease as the policies become more established. Concerns were identified about being unable to talk directly to the principal about important issues and to subject teachers at parents' meetings. Whilst parents are initially directed to year leaders and tutors this is to ensure the best initial

contact; however, systems are now in place to allow required contact at other levels. One parent expressed a wish for more information about how to help children with project work – the recent management restructuring is ensuring that issues like this are addressed.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SIXTH FORM

There are 134 students in the sixth form, broadly in line with the national average. It has more than tripled in size over the last four years. Distinctive features include several very competent EAL students and a strong commitment to increase numbers entering higher education. Approximately half of Year 11 enter the sixth form. There are nearly a third more males than females. Approximately two fifths are eligible for free school meals, very much higher than average, and there are seven SEN students. Courses are provided at advanced, intermediate and foundation, and entry levels are modest. Approximately half of the students take advanced courses, below the national average. A third take vocational courses at intermediate level and the remainder do so at foundation level, both above the national average. A little less than half enter higher education and a third enter employment at age 18.

HOW GOOD THE SIXTH FORM IS

At the time of the last inspection standards required substantial improvement and some improvement was also required in aspects of provision. The serious weaknesses in provision, identified in 2000, have been addressed satisfactorily. It is too soon to evaluate fully the impact on performance but more solid foundations for further improvement are now in place. The management of provision is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with many good features. Many new policies and procedures have been introduced since last September that are designed to improve the match between provision and need. Retention rates are satisfactory. The students' attitudes to learning are generally good but to regular attendance they are unsatisfactory. The sixth form provides satisfactory value for money.

Strengths

- Biology, business education, drama and French add good value to students' achievements.
- Good leadership sets a well-charted direction for future development.
- Much improved management provides good support and guidance for less competent as well as SEN students.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge gives students confidence to succeed.
- The principles of best value are applied well in the management of provision.

What could be improved

- Students' attitudes towards attendance and punctuality.
- The range of courses to match fully the range of prior attainment at age 16.
- The monitoring and evaluation of achievement as part of improvement planning.
- Provision for religious education and for a daily act of collective worship.

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

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION IN INDIVIDUAL CURRICULUM AREAS

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

Curriculum area	Overall judgement about provision, with comment
Mathematics	Satisfactory. There were no A-level entries in 2001. Standards are well below average. The quality of teaching and students' achievement are satisfactory.
Biology	Good. Standards are below average but progress from GCSE has been good. Teaching is good because methods are well matched to students' particular needs.
Business Studies	Good. Students achieve well because teachers base their planning on a very good knowledge of students' individual needs. Results in 2001 were satisfactory.
Information And Communication Technology	Satisfactory. Results in 2001 were well below average. Learning and progress is satisfactory because students make good use of ICT and plan their work well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and teach confidently.
Art	Satisfactory. Standards are well below the national average in both GNVQ and AS groups. This represents satisfactory progress when taking into account prior attainment. Teaching is satisfactory.
Drama	Good. Standards are below average. Achievement is good. Students make good gains in personal and technical skills because teaching is good.
History	Satisfactory. Results have been below average. Standards at AS level are now average. Good teaching results in good gains in specialist knowledge. Achievement is satisfactory. Targets for improvement are in place.
English	Satisfactory. A -level results improved in 2001 but remain well below average. Achievement is satisfactory. A good feature of the satisfactory teaching is the guidance and support provided; as a result students are well motivated to do their best.
French	Good. Standards achieved recently have been high where students have prior knowledge of the language, but below average for other students. The high standards are due both to the high level of fluency possessed by all the teachers and good planning, including the integration into lessons of ICT, such as the Internet.

Lessons were sampled in design and technology, PE, key skills and physics. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some good features in PE and some unsatisfactory features in the teaching of key skills. Students are making good progress in PE and satisfactory progress in other areas except key skills.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Aspect	Comment
How well students are guided and supported	Satisfactory. Most value and appreciate the guidance and support they receive after they enter the sixth form. There are new arrangements to provide a better match between students' needs and the courses available and also to monitor progress and set targets. Their impact cannot yet be measured. Courses for students who are at any early stage of learning English as an additional language are unsatisfactory.
Effectiveness of the leadership and management of the sixth form	Good. The good application of the principles of best value now ensures viable group sizes. There is increasing rigour in the management of provision. This has had a good impact on students' attitudes but it is too early to measure its impact on examination performance. The promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The management of assessment information to inform curricular planning is unsatisfactory.

STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

What students like about the sixth form	What they feel could be improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Printed information about the sixth form The advice and support at the start of the sixth form The quality of teaching Staff are approachable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice about future options The range of activities and enrichments The school's responsiveness to their views

Approximately half the students completed the questionnaire. Discussions with students convey a more positive attitude. The large majority are well pleased with the care and encouragement they receive.

COMPARING PROVISION IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

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

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and students' achievements

- The word 'results' refers to how well the pupils are doing in national tests, GCSE and GCE examinations.
- The word 'standards' is used to define how well the pupils are doing when their work is compared with what pupils nationally are expected to know, understand and do at the ages of 11, 14, 16 and 18 years.
- The word 'Level' refers to a particular standard of work described in the National Curriculum.
- The word 'grade' refers to the public examination grading systems for GCSE and GCE.
- The word 'achievement' refers to how well the pupils are doing at the age of 14 compared with what they were able to do at the age of 11, similarly at the age of 16 compared with what they could do at the age of 14 and finally what they can do at the age of 18 compared with what they were able to do at the age of 16. It indicates how much progress the pupils are making.

Results and standards on entry to the school at the age of 11 years.

- Students' attainment on entry is well below the national average for all schools.
1. Results in the national tests at age 11 in the final term of primary school and CATS tests carried out by the school early in Year 7 clearly indicate that students' attainment on entry is well below the national average for all schools. In 2001 few students, for whom data was available, attained the standards that all students nationally are expected to reach – Level 4 – in English, mathematics or science. At age 11, barely a third are working at the level expected nationally. The writing skills of the large majority and their understanding of what they read are very low. Very few attained the higher levels – Levels 5 and 6 – in the tests. Due to high student mobility, high proportions of students enter the school part way through. Significant numbers of these students come from backgrounds where English is an additional language; they are in the very early stages of learning English and are new to the English educational system.

Results, standards and achievement at the age of 14 years.

Strengths

- Students make at least satisfactory progress in almost all subjects by the end of Year 9
- SEN students often make good progress
- Trends in students' attainment over time are improving

Areas for improvement

- Progress in ICT

2. Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9 in 2001 were very low compared with the national average for all schools in English, mathematics and science.

3. Attainment in English continues to be well below the national average for Level 5+ and Level 6+ but both improved significantly from the previous year. There has been some improvement since the last inspection in average points scores. Attainment in mathematics, although still well below average, fell back in 2001 after three years of improvement; there has been little improvement since the last inspection. Attainment in science, although well below average, has fluctuated significantly over recent years and there has been some improvement since the last inspection.
4. Over the three years between 1999 and 2001 the performance of boys in English has improved steadily. The performance of girls has also risen; they do slightly better than the boys. Both boys' and girls' performances in mathematics in 2001 fell back from 2000. Boys performed slightly better than girls in maths in 2001. After a dip in 2000, both boys and girls improved their performances in science in 2001. Boys performed slightly better than the girls. Both boys' and girls' performances in all core subjects fell below the national average for their age group.
5. The trend in English shows improvement overall after a low point in 1999. Trends in mathematics fell back in 2001 after steady improvements over the previous three years. Science improved significantly after a dip in 2000. The improvement trend overall based on average points scores was broadly in line with the national trend.
6. It is difficult to make accurate comparisons with similar schools due to the multiple and complex characteristics of the schools intake, which includes high levels of FSM students, high levels of SEN students and a very high proportion of EAL students.
7. Compared with similar schools, using only the free schools meals criterion, the school was below average for grades Level 5+ in English, mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools at grades for Level 6+ it was below average in English but broadly similar in mathematics and science.
8. The average points scores in all core subjects compared with all schools was below average in English and science and well below average in mathematics. It was below average compared to similar schools.
9. There are no available comparisons with other schools nationally at age 14 in other subjects. The statutory teacher assessments in 2001 were well below average in all subjects except geography, modern foreign languages and PE, where pupils are attaining broadly in line with national expectations. Caution is required in the interpretation of these assessments because moderation arrangements are insufficient to confirm their validity.
10. Progress was satisfactory in nine out of ten lessons seen during the inspection in Years 7 to 9 with four in every ten lessons recording good or very good progress and advances in students' learning across all subject areas. Although standards at age 14 are well below those expected nationally, this represents satisfactory and in some cases good value being added to students' achievement, as they move through the three years.
11. In English those who attend regularly improve. Achievement at age 14 is satisfactory because well-planned teaching and good marking prepare the students thoroughly for tests and examinations. It also improves their attitudes, and particularly their confidence. The rate of improvement has started to increase. Results are better than in the students' other subjects but relative performance remains unsatisfactory, when compared with standards in other subjects nationally. Overall, improvement in

performance over time has, therefore, been satisfactory. Results in 2001 were below average for similar schools at age 14. They were well below average for all schools in both cases. These unfavourable comparisons do not indicate underachievement as the high proportion of SEN and EAL students have made significant progress since entering the school, contributing to satisfactory achievement overall.

12. Standards in speaking and listening and in reading are below those usually found nationally. They are well below in writing; only a minority write fluently and accurately at age 14. More competent writers make good progress because stimulating printed resources encourage them to extend the range of their writing. The handwriting of some, including EAL students, remains unsatisfactory. Standards in reading are also below those usually found nationally. They are improving at age 14 because a high priority has been placed on using the National Literacy Strategy [NLS] to improve knowledge about words and to plan the sequence of learning in lessons. At age 14 most read a simple text accurately but few read aloud with confidence and understanding.
13. In mathematics the proportion of students reaching the standard expected for their age in the 2001 national tests at the end of Year 9 was below the average for similar schools and well below the average for all schools. Results at the higher Level 6 were in line with the average for similar schools. Boys' performance was better than girls' in 2001. The trend in the last three years is below the national trend. Performance is similar to that of English and science. The standard of work seen in the inspection in Year 9 is an improvement on the results of 2001 but remains well below average. Students' achievement is as expected when compared with their standard on entry to the school, due to the satisfactory teaching they receive. High-attaining students can calculate the length of one side of a right-angled triangle given the length of the other two sides. They solve linear equations involving the use of brackets and are making appropriate learning gains in the use of negative numbers. Average-attaining students solve simple linear equations accurately and calculate the perimeters of a variety of shapes, including circles. Their understanding of the formulae they use is less secure. Low-attaining students continue to learn to cope with basic levels of numeracy. They achieve satisfactorily as their attainment on entry to the school was very low. Multiplication tables are not well known.
14. Standards in science at age 14 were well below the national average in 2001. Based on available data students' attainment on entry to Year 7 was well below average and achievement from age 11 to 14 has been satisfactory. In the work seen in lessons, and from the analysis of students' notebooks, the standards at age 14 reflect the test results of the past few years, and are, on the whole, well below expectation. However, there is an indication of improved standards in work in some classes. This is observed mainly in knowledge and understanding in life and living processes, and other written work, but there has been insufficient evidence of the acquisition and development of practical skills. Progress in developing knowledge and understanding over the time from age 11 to 14 is satisfactory. SEN students make satisfactory progress in lessons where good additional support assistance is provided. Some EAL students make good progress when support is available.
15. In art the proportion of students attaining expected levels at the end of Year 9 is below the national average, reflecting student abilities. Attainment in work seen is at the national average at all levels. SEN and EAL students attain at least as well as their peers, and significant numbers attain very well. Progress by all students is good and almost all students achieve well. The practical nature of art has a positive effect on

student attitudes. The starting point for directly observed drawing is low but standards improve as students move through the school.

16. In design and technology students' attainment on entry to Year 7 is below average and remains so through to Year 9. Despite the relatively low attainment, however, students make satisfactory progress, achieving slowly from Year 7 to 9. By Year 9, a growing proportion of students demonstrate broadly satisfactory knowledge and skills in designing and making in a range of resistant materials such as wood and plastic, and compliant materials, such as textiles. They produce interesting individual solutions to design projects. They undertake product evaluations and research, communicating their ideas in a variety of written and sketch forms as well as by using ICT. Students with SEN progress well due to the good quality in-class support.
17. In geography achievement overall across Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory. Students' work in their books demonstrates good progression.
18. The standard attained by students in history by age 14 is below average and the proportion reaching the national level of expectation is much lower than the national figure. The performance of boys is significantly poorer than girls. Higher-attaining students have sound subject knowledge, can describe some key features of the period studied and speak confidently. Most, however, have insecure subject knowledge, poor grasp of chronology and need a great deal of help in analysing sources. The achievement of the majority, including students with EAL, is satisfactory. The achievement of students with SEN is good, due to good learning aids and well-targeted classroom support.
19. Standards in ICT by the majority of students by the end of Year 9 are below average and progress is unsatisfactory for a significant number of students.
20. By the age of 14 students' standards in both French and Spanish vary from satisfactory to very good, with a small minority unsatisfactory in Spanish. While the register is taken they are tested orally in every lesson and most respond very well to the quick-fire question and answer session with the teacher.
21. By the age of 14 standards in music are below national expectations. By Year 9 students show a limited musical knowledge. Their keyboard performances often lack fluency and accuracy. They show an insecure understanding of basic chord structures and make infrequent reference to musical vocabulary. They are able to use repetition to improvise a short phrase which they combine with an Indian melody. Students make satisfactory progress in performing skills and in developing their knowledge of music from other countries. SEN and EAL students and the more musically able make satisfactory progress in lessons.
22. In physical education, standards by the end of Year 9 are in line with national averages and in terms of personal fitness and some games skills they are higher. This represents good achievement from Year 7 to 9 with significant added value. Progress in individual lessons is often good. For example, sequences of movement in dance were improved by greater attention being given to body tension by the students, especially the girls. SEN and EAL students do particularly well in the early years.
23. In religious education, students' knowledge is below expectations when they join the school in Year 7. Standards are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. However, students are achieving at a broadly satisfactory level compared with their starting point. They learn about the main beliefs and practices of Christianity and other

world religions such as Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam and begin to understand why many people think that religious belief is important. By Year 9 students are able to sensitively discuss issues of belief in God which had arisen from their study of The Holocaust and Judaism. They discuss their ideas sensibly, though their vocabulary is often limited and they need a lot of encouragement to develop ideas in depth. Their writing is below expectations and many students find it difficult to write at any length.

24. The attainment of the majority of students with SEN is well below average on their admission to the school. However, within their ability levels they make good and sometimes very good gains in their education as they progress through the school. By the age of 14, they improve their reading and spelling ages, in some cases by as much as one year in a few months. Their written work indicates improved comprehension skills as they answer questions based on texts or express themselves in short essays. Their numeracy skills improve. They apply their efforts to a computer mathematics program and are delighted with their success. They eagerly match their attainment against the National Curriculum target levels and discuss with pleasure how much they have improved over time.
25. The school has identified its gifted and talented students and makes satisfactory provision for them by encouraging them towards early examination entries. For example, one student achieved an A-level in Turkish in Year 9 and another student gained an A-Level in mathematics before going into the sixth form. The school is using the government's EIC funding to develop this provision, which is still at an early stage.
26. Those students with EAL generally make satisfactory progress, irrespective of where they start their school lives. Their most notable progress early on is in languages and subjects with a significant practical element, for example art, drama and physical education. The students for whom Turkish is their native language make very good progress in Turkish.

Results, standards and progress at the age of 16 years

Strengths

- Improvements in almost all subjects since the last inspection
- Good progress in many subjects
- Very high standards of attainment in Turkish
- Good value added based on prior attainment

Areas for development

- Attainment and progress in ICT

27. The school's results are very low in comparison with the national average for 5+ A*-C grades. This figure for 2001 – 27% was a significant improvement on the previous year's results and an improvement on results as reported in the last inspection, although was very low in comparison with the national averages. Results have fluctuated significantly since 1997. For 5+ A*-G grades, the school's results are low in comparison with the national averages and for 1+ A*-G it is below the national average. The trend in the school's average total GCSE points score was above the national trend. Girls' performance was better than the boys' although they fell further below the averages for girls than did the boys on a similar comparison.

28. It is difficult to make accurate comparisons with similar schools due to the multiple and complex characteristics of the school's intake which includes high levels of students qualifying for free school meals, high levels of students with special educational needs and high proportions of students for whom English is an additional language. For example, in Year 11 in 2001 only 96 of the 148 students started at the school in Year 7 and many of the remainder joined the school during Years 10 and 11. A high proportion of the students attending the school from Year 7 to 11 achieved significantly higher outcomes than the school's overall average for 5 A*- C, 5 A* - G and average points scores.
29. In comparison with similar schools and in relation to these students' results at the end of Year 9 in 1999, attainment at 5+ A*-C and 1+ A*-G grades was broadly the same. For 5+ A*-G grades, the school was above average. The average points score of 32 was well above that achieved by similar schools and also in relation to these students' previous results. Over the last four years the improvement in the school's average points score has been above the national trend.
30. GCSE results are improving in all subjects except ICT and there have been significant improvements in history (5 per cent A*-C at the last inspection to 25 per cent in 2001) and modern foreign languages (23 per cent A*-C to 36 per cent in French and 5 per cent in Spanish to 24 per cent). Students are attaining close to the national average in drama and PE/sports studies and well above average in Turkish. The trends over time in all subjects except ICT are rising.
31. Standards of work seen during the inspection were well above those expected nationally in Turkish; they were above those expected nationally in art and broadly similar in geography, PE and RE. They were below expectations in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, history, ICT and modern foreign languages.
32. Almost all students make good progress by the age of 16 when compared to their attainment at age 14. Progress was never less than satisfactory in all but one of the 52 lessons seen during the inspection in Years 10 and 11, with half of the lessons recording good or very good progress and advances in students' learning across almost all subject areas. Students are making good progress in art, drama, design and technology, modern foreign languages, PE and RE and satisfactory progress in English, mathematics, science, geography and history. Progress in ICT is unsatisfactory.
33. Within their ability levels students with SEN make good and sometimes very good gains in their education, as they move through Years 10 and 11.
34. The progress of more able and gifted and talented students is satisfactory; they attain at expected levels; for example, early entry students in English and mathematics attained expected outcomes in the examinations in the autumn of 2001. More able students make good progress and attain well above average in Turkish; for example, in Year 10 they take GCSE and examination results are well above average. In Year 11 they go on to study for A-level GCE.
35. EAL students make good progress as they move through Years 10 and 11 in mathematics, science, art, modern languages and PE and satisfactory progress in English, history and RE. Their progress is slower in design and technology and ICT.

LITERACY AND NUMERACY IN OTHER SUBJECTS OF THE CURRICULUM IN YEARS 7 TO 11.

36. Literacy standards are well below average overall at age 16 and remain a major barrier to improving performance. Standards are well below those usually found nationally. Writing skills are poor in many subjects at age 14 and well below average at age 16. Those in speaking and reading are somewhat better but still well below average at age 16. Critical listening is poor.
37. Oral work is satisfactory in science. In mathematics there are far too few opportunities for students to speak about methods and calculations. As a result, knowledge is greater than understanding. This is also a feature of lessons in history.
38. Writing skills are well taught in history. Good attention is paid to the organisation of ideas as well as to technical accuracy. This is also a good feature in the teaching of design and technology. As a result, the recording of the design process improves, particularly in the work of SEN and EAL students. The good matching of printed materials to students' level of competence results in improved basic writing skills in both subjects.
39. Reading skills are well below average at age 16 because only the more competent students have the necessary research and thinking skills to interpret and evaluate what they read. Many students lack the perseverance to read at length. Consequently, their work lacks the depth required to gain the highest GCSE grades.
40. The common framework for the planning of lessons requires the identification of key words for each lesson. A useful booklet provides a record of these for all students. In lessons seen, not enough time was taken to confirm their understanding, particularly in groups of less competent students. Few subjects make planned use of the very good library facilities and fail to build on the popularity of this provision at other times. For example, a higher proportion of boys than girls use the library, many to read non-fiction material, but the library is not identified in the planning by departments as a resource to raise standards.
41. The NLS is starting to impact on standards because the use of key words is a feature of good practice in several subjects. However, the drive to improve literacy standards in individual subject departments is inconsistent. It is unsatisfactory in science, for example, but good in design and technology and history.
42. Standards in numeracy are below average in the majority of subjects. Standards are average in geography and in ICT. The use of number in science is significantly less than is usually the case in schools; simple calculations and the use of substitution of a number into a simple formula were the extent of numeracy seen in the inspection. In design and technology standards vary considerably within the teaching groups, particularly in calculations. Measurement by most students is accurate. Not all students understand the significance of data and how to interpret graphs in history and geography. Emphasis on world music shows students how rhythmic patterns combine.
43. The school has yet to establish an effective whole-school numeracy policy. Design and technology, ICT, geography and music have satisfactory strategies for teaching numeracy within their curriculum areas. The teaching of basic skills in mathematics is satisfactory. Strategies for teaching numeracy in history and science are unsatisfactory. Spatial awareness is well developed in art. Relief work and free-

standing three-dimensional work shows clear awareness of the effectiveness of placing elements of a composition appropriately. Spatial awareness also develops well in design and technology through the use of computers in design work. Plans are in place for the development of whole-school strategies.

Sixth form

Strengths

- Standards in French and Turkish
- Good progress in business education, biology, drama, Turkish and French

Areas for improvement

- Standards of key skills

44. Entries to GCE A-level courses in 2001 were very small in all subjects and make comparison with national statistics insecure. Overall A-level results in 2001 for students attaining grades A–E were well below the national average. Students attained the higher A/B grades in English literature, Turkish and Spanish.
45. On the evidence of previous years' examinations and work seen during the inspection standards are well below average in English, mathematics, art and ICT. They are below average in biology, drama, and history A-level but average in AS level history. Attainment in Turkish and French is above average for the small number of students on the courses.
46. Currently the school does not apply a rigorous entry level to study in the sixth form; therefore many students entering AS and A-level courses do so from a very low GCSE base or in some cases no previous experience or expertise. Most students, therefore, make good progress in business education, biology, drama, Turkish and French and satisfactory progress in English, mathematics, ICT, art and history as they move through the sixth form.
47. In English literature some students can draw inferences, are aware of connotations of meaning and appreciate the power of metaphor when analysing short extracts from *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*. However, they struggle to interpret vocabulary that lies beyond their immediate experience, for example 'lurid visage...furrowed...pigmy intellect.' Rarely do they rise from the analysis of textual detail to draw a generalised critical conclusion about a whole text. This feature was also evident in their files of previously completed work; for example, no student in the study of some of Shakespeare's sonnets identified the links between image and form in order to identify tone and viewpoint.
48. The standard of work seen in mathematics during the inspection was below average in Year 13. It is average in pure mathematics and below average in applied mathematics and statistics. Basic algebraic skills are secure in pure mathematics and students solve simple problems accurately. Students studying the application of number in the key skills course are able to calculate VAT and know how to calculate compound interest, making satisfactory progress overall.
49. Students show a basic understanding of the principles of scientific investigation, research the topic thoroughly and predict outcomes well before embarking on the individual task. Practical skills in handling equipment such as delicate syringes and biological samples are good. Their theoretical understanding is more uncertain, for example on the efficiency of gas exchange systems.

50. The sixth form design and technology students enjoy the challenges of the course and the increase in the number of Year 12 students, compared with previous years, has generated a positive environment for learning together. Progress in the AS and A-level courses is generally satisfactory and students have amassed large project folders which are mostly of good quality.
51. In business education students understand and are able to discuss in some depth the proposed 'Traffic Congestion Tax' in Central London. They are able to develop their personal ICT skills and knowledge well through use of on-line resources and set practical tasks. Good examples of database design and hardware and software uses were observed in lessons and in work sampled.
52. Students studying drama take a pride in their work; written work is presented well, although some of the ideas expressed lack depth. They evaluate their own work and come to a good understanding of contemporary drama, notably the plays of Willy Russell. Students also develop personal skills through working together in groups.
53. Higher-attaining students in the GNVQ art group use brush strokes expressively to imitate the lively style of Van Gogh. However, all students rely heavily on copying and tracing with little evidence of students' own ideas being developed. Higher-attaining students studying the AS course draw well in pencil studies of eyes as preparation for a lively and effective composition of a peacock in oil pastel. Mid-and lower-attaining students use charcoal to show light and shade in a still life group and in pencil exploring figures observed in seated poses.
54. Students have a good knowledge of the historical themes they are studying and are able to communicate their ideas clearly in written form. Whilst lower-attaining students' written work is largely factual and narrates the course of historical events, that of higher-attaining students is more reflective and shows that they can approach the study of history with critical awareness. The best written work of these students is an effective blend of factually correct description and well-balanced evaluation. They are able to make clear judgements based on evidence and present their conclusions concisely, using good supporting evidence. Lower-attaining students have less well developed skills of historical enquiry and their written work lacks critical and analytical examination of the themes they are studying. All students are weaker at expressing themselves orally and answers to questions in class tend to be brief and undeveloped. The very small number of more competent A-level students reach average standards in lessons.
55. In French, native speakers and those with extensive experience in countries where French is spoken attain very high standards. However, other students are not reaching satisfactory levels of attainment in comparison with sixth form standards nationally. In some cases, this is because their standards on entry were insufficient for advanced level study. For example, a student who had gained grade D at GCSE was not comfortable with certain common verb forms and some elementary vocabulary.
56. Students' attainment in key skills is below expectations overall. They make unsatisfactory progress in developing oral skills, but make satisfactory progress in the application of number.

Students' attitudes, values and personal development

Strengths

- Good opportunities for responsibility – school council, class friends
- Improved attendance since last inspection. Lateness & unauthorised absence reducing as year progresses
- Excellent attitudes and behaviour during 'class friends' work in Year 7
- Some good opportunities for students to show initiative

Areas for improvement

- In a minority of classes a small number of boys were persistently disruptive
- Attendance figures very low compared to the national average
- Unauthorised absence above the national average

57. Most students who attend school have positive attitudes. They arrive at school in an orderly manner and are keen to come to school. Students are well mannered and show courtesy to staff, visitors and to each other when moving around the school. Their attitudes in lessons are generally good; most concentrate well and usually work hard. In a small minority of lessons, mainly in Years 7 to 9, the poor attitudes of a few students, largely boys, affect the learning in the lesson. Students are eager to learn in many lessons such as in Year 9 design and technology, but their ability to work in groups is good in some lessons where they often demonstrate good listening skills but in a few lessons such as a Year 10 English lesson was unsatisfactory.
58. Attendance levels are very low compared to the national average figures. This situation has existed for several years and, whilst the school has been successful in reducing the levels of unauthorised absence, there has been no increase in the actual attendance figures. At the time of the last inspection 45 per cent of students attended for less than 90 per cent of the school year. Through encouraging both students and their parents to improve attendance supported by a rewards system and the celebrating of 100 per cent attendance, of students, the figure for the completed terms so far this year has been reduced to 34 per cent.
59. There is a high exclusion rate of students and the reasons are carefully monitored. The school has very good initiatives such as the learning support unit to help those who may be at risk of exclusion. The school has a policy of being inclusive and the governors contribute to this by holding interview panels to encourage attendance and to help avoid exclusion. At the time of the last report the number of exclusions had been reduced and this downward trend has continued.
60. A major concern at the time of the last inspection was the record of poor punctuality. The school now effectively monitors lateness to both school and lessons and always imposes a detention on latecomers. The effectiveness of these measures is clearly apparent as at the start of this year the average number of 'lates' was 60 per day which was reduced to 30 within two weeks – the figure now is about 20. Some lessons do start late, as all students have to move a significant distance around the school. However, there appears to be a culture within the school that the lesson plan will be completed and it is common for lessons to over-run into break periods to compensate for a delayed start. Punctuality has improved significantly since the last inspection and continued use of the existing policies should result in further improvement.

61. Registration is carried out effectively at the start of each day and at the start of each lesson. The records are compared and absence of any student at a lesson is followed up. Afternoon registration is taken at the end of the day to ensure that any truancy is identified. The current methods of registration involve manual completion of registers but the school is investigating more sophisticated systems to improve efficiency and speedy identification of any concerns.
62. The overall level of behaviour is satisfactory. Both around the school, including breaks and lunchtime, and in most lessons the behaviour is at least satisfactory and often good. There are exceptions, however, in a few classes, such as a Year 8 class where there was a group of very assertive boys whose behaviour is very challenging. The school has effective methods including the very effective presence of senior members of staff to support these students and the teacher in these classes. No bullying or other oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection.
63. Students form good relationships with one another and with their tutors, resulting in a good working ethos in lessons. There is no evidence of sexism or racism in the school which is working as a harmonious community. The school has a good system to make students aware of what to do if bullying occurs.
64. Opportunities for students to show initiative and take responsibility occur quite often. Outside lessons the school has an effective school council which meets regularly and gives students the opportunity to learn about decision-making and to express their views. Other responsibilities available include helping in the library where there is so much support available from the students that a rota has to be used. There are many opportunities for students to participate in specific initiatives. An example is the 'class friends' initiative where students provide excellent support for those with limitations of the English language.

Sixth form

Strengths

- Very good attitudes in many lessons
- Growing maturity in terms of career development and educational goals

Areas for improvement

- Unsatisfactory attitudes towards attendance

65. Students' attitudes to the sixth form are satisfactory. Those who attend regularly enjoy being in the sixth form and, in general, support what it sets out to do and how it does it. The students have a wide range of abilities and interests but most show an interest in school life and the majority are well motivated. In some classes, such as a Year 12 drama lesson, attitudes and relationships are very good with students working purposefully and sensibly, whilst in others such as in GNVQ art, self-motivation is weak.
66. Students contribute well to the main school, where they are fully involved in many sporting activities providing direct support with such things as helping in the library by overseeing book sales and with other special events. They make good use of the facilities offered by the school but many feel that extra-curricular activities are limited and would welcome improved social/leisure facilities within the sixth form area.

67. Some students have unsatisfactory attitudes to attendance. For example, in a Year 12 tutor group overall attendance was about 70 per cent. In an art lesson six out of seven students were up to 20 minutes late.
68. Whilst behaviour overall is satisfactory, there are areas of the sixth form where some less well-motivated students demonstrate poor behaviour resulting in distraction and poor progress – an example being during a key skills lesson.

HOW WELL ARE STUDENTS TAUGHT?

Overall, teaching and learning are **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Good subject knowledge and expertise
- Teachers are very aware of students' needs
- Students are well supported individually and managed effectively

Areas for improvement

- Planning does not always provide tasks that are sufficiently challenging
- Teaching method can be inappropriate and lead to students' poor behaviour
- Insufficient use is made of ICT
- Teaching of basic skills

69. Although teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, there are some positive strengths as well as notable areas for improvement. A major strength in all departments is the expert subject knowledge of the majority of teachers, which is used well to question and support students individually. However, teaching method sometimes lacks the pace and variety needed to focus students' attention; this does lead to disruption in some classes.
70. In the lessons observed for Years 7 to 11, over nine out of ten were at least satisfactory, with almost half that were good or very good. These lessons were well planned, catered for the wide range of attainment and interested students to such an extent that their motivation and behaviour were good. Unsatisfactory lessons were characterised by poor match of task to needs of students, work that was lacking variety or practical activity, and weak management of student behaviour. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection, where teaching was unsatisfactory in two out of ten lessons observed overall and unsatisfactory in a quarter of lessons in Years 7 to 9. At this inspection teaching was satisfactory or better in nine out of ten lessons in Years 7 to 9.
71. Teaching is particularly strong in art in Years 7 to 9, where skilful teachers are enthusiastic and provide very good reinforcement of learning through effective feedback. It is also strong in physical education where subject expertise is applied well and clear guidance is given to students on how to improve standards. Teaching is weaker in science where for students of all ages the level of challenge is rarely sufficient to ensure good progress of all students, and methodology lacks real stimulation of interest. The teaching of ICT in Years 7 to 9 is unsatisfactory. Planning is unclear and in several departments little use is made of ICT to enhance learning of the subject or develop basic skills. In discrete lessons of ICT the pace of learning is too slow. In Years 10 and 11 the teaching of ICT is improved to become satisfactory but it relies heavily on students working independently using on-line teaching resources.

72. The teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. In Years 7 to 9, literacy teaching is good in English, but in other subjects is only briefly referenced. Most subjects contribute to literacy, through key word lists, for example, but the extent is barely adequate. Numeracy skills are taught satisfactorily in mathematics, but again the implementation of number work in other areas of the curriculum is limited. As a result the acquisition of skills has been slow.
73. Most teachers plan their lessons adequately and this aspect is very good in art and physical education. It is good in mathematics, geography and religious education. In some subjects the planning does not take account of the varied needs of students and in particular those for whom English is an additional language. The inclusion of a focus on the rich multicultural nature of the school is lost in many instances. Expectations of high achievement are good in English, music, art and physical education but not well considered or expressed in science or ICT.
74. Teachers develop good relationships with students, a notable strength. Methodology that uses well-focussed questions to encourage full participation results in a brisk pace and students' interest as is found in art, physical education and English for students aged 14 to 16. With the exception of ICT, resources are used adequately, although insufficient practical work is undertaken in science. Here and in other subjects such as history and mathematics, excessive use of textbook questions and notes creates disaffection.
75. Marking in most subjects is adequate, although the best examples, where clear targets are set and advice given to students on how to improve, are rather rare. Feedback is given regularly through tests and written assessments; this practice is well developed in design and technology and geography where assessment makes a strong contribution to students' progress.
76. Homework is satisfactory in most subjects and is good in history and religious education, with some challenging tasks being set.
77. The teaching and support provided for SEN students are good. In the best lessons, good quality support teaching strongly promotes the students' social, cultural and moral development. Supporting teachers and classroom assistants have a very good knowledge of their students and relationships are very good. Where the subject teacher makes good provision for EAL students, it is often difficult to identify them because they are totally included within the lesson. For example, EAL students follow the same work as their peers in mathematics with discreet yet supportive intervention of a specialist teacher working alongside them in class. However, in some subject areas, there is insufficient classroom support. Most teachers combat this with good planning and resources, matched to the students' individual needs. Additionally, the very good links with the SEN department ensure that the majority of students make good progress in most subject areas.

Sixth form

78. Teaching in the sixth form is satisfactory overall with many good features. In particular, the level of knowledge and understanding at advanced level is strong and ensures that the level of challenge and depth of detail are appropriate. Students are managed very well with the good relationships contributing to the positive motivation in most cases. Planning is good except for weaknesses in ICT. Methodology varies between subjects but where the teaching is good students are expected to take responsibility for their learning and fully evaluate their own work, as happens notably in drama.

79. Provision for key skills development is incorporated within the teaching, especially through the development of independent learning and research. Good opportunities are taken for active discussion and debate in most subjects. Collaborative work in subjects such as science develops the team skills. In English the teaching of key skills is unsatisfactory, behaviour is not managed well and lessons are not planned with engaging activities.

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

Strengths

- The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum that meets most statutory requirements.
- The extra-curricular programme of activities, especially in sport and games, is very effective in providing for students' personal and social development.
- Provision for SEN students is good; provision in the Speech and Language Unit is very good.

Areas for Improvement

- Implement proposed changes to ensure that statutory requirements are met fully for ICT in Years 7 to 9 and for ICT across the curriculum in all other subjects.
- Provide a daily act of collective worship.

80. The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced and fulfils statutory requirements with the exception of ICT in Years 7 to 9 and its implementation across other subjects in the school. The absence of this feature has proved particularly difficult for the school since the last inspection, though planned changes in the timetabling arrangements for the next school year should resolve the matter. Currently the length of the teaching week is above the 25 hours' national recommendation, incorporating a broad range of learning opportunities.
81. The curriculum for Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory with some good features. For example, the school has devoted much time and effort to integrate the NLS in Year 7 in order to address the low levels of students' literacy on entry. This is already beginning to influence and improve the teaching of basic skills. Elements of the NLS can also be seen in other subjects. Weaknesses in numeracy are not yet being tackled in accordance with the National Numeracy Strategy. However, the school intends to rectify this later this year.
82. The curriculum for Years 10 and 11 is satisfactorily broad and balanced. All students follow a core curriculum which includes English, mathematics, science, RE, design technology, one modern foreign language and PE; students opt for two other subjects from art, drama, business studies, ICT, history, geography, GCSE PE and sociology. ICT skills are taught across the curriculum. Turkish is offered as an additional language for those pupils who opt. All students are taught discrete RE in Years 10 and 11. More able pupils are encouraged to enter early for GCSE in English and mathematics. A GNVQ ICT course is available. Business studies and sociology are also available within the programme.

83. All students in Years 7 to 9 have timetabled provision for the life skills programme, designed to promote their personal and social development. This course is well documented and appropriate to the students' needs and includes sex education, drugs and health education. This provision is good, though some of the lessons are taught by inexperienced teachers or non-specialists. In Year 7 the 'class friends' initiative is very successfully meeting the needs of those students who enter the school with little or no knowledge of spoken English. They are making good progress in acquiring, with considerable support from their 'class friends', a working knowledge of key learning words as well as finding their way around the school. The 'class friend' volunteers are themselves deriving considerable benefits to their own personal and social development and speak with justifiable pride about their contribution.
84. In Years 10 and 11 the school chooses to meet the personal and social development needs of its students somewhat differently. Discrete opportunities are made for intensive work on a range of relevant issues by spending time off-timetable. This work includes careers education and guidance, which is satisfactory, and preparations for the two weeks work experience, undertaken by all students in Year 10. However, this method of provision for students' personal and social development does not meet the needs of all students on an ongoing weekly basis, nor does it afford sufficient time.
85. It is the aim of the school to provide students with equal opportunities for personal growth within an inclusive culture throughout the school. The school has a clear, comprehensive equal opportunities policy. Current practice within the school is satisfactory overall, with many good features. Departments such as art, ICT, music, physical education and religious education have good practices. The curriculum is planned to ensure equality of entitlement, and students are treated equally, regardless of race, gender or ability. Outcomes are usually analysed by gender and ethnicity. Overall support for students at an early stage in their learning in English is not always sufficient in lessons, an area for development in the school.
86. The provision for students with SEN is good; some features are very good. The main strategies employed by the school are within the specialist Learning Support Unit and the Speech and Language Unit. There are small numbers of students disapplied from the National Curriculum in some subjects in order to devote more time to improving standards in basic skills and to gain better access to most subjects higher up the school. In Years 10 and 11 students with SEN work towards GCSE in their chosen subjects. The provision of the Certificate of Achievement in English ensures that they leave school with at least one certificate. There is particularly good provision for SEN students in other subjects, notably in practical subjects like art and PE.
87. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities, especially in sports, games and musical/drama productions. The school enjoys a good relationship with local sports clubs and with the local Sports Community Leader. The provision is extensive considering the range of sports and games available and it is popular amongst the large numbers who are regularly involved. Lunchtime clubs are a key feature of the school day and special events like the 'Pentathlon' and inter-form competitions ensure that many students from all years participate in physical activity outside normal lesson time. The school considers this to be an important feature in developing a positive school culture and one that counters disaffection, combats poor attendance and makes a significant contribution to students' personal and social development. There are other planned activities, for example the Science Club, a Reading Club, visits in history to Battle Abbey and the World War 1 battlefields, language trips to France and Spain, Easter revision sessions, summer literacy schools, peripatetic music lessons that are successful in improving basic skills and

providing a 'fun' experience. In music and drama, activity is focused on a major production, most recently and successfully 'Grease', and in preparation 'Joseph and the Technicolour Dream Coat'. Other activities available to students include involvement in mock trials as part of the citizenship programme. Two students from the school council are members of the Enfield Youth Parliament. The school was successfully involved in the Barclays New Futures Award for community work.

88. Overall provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Although the school does not fulfil the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship, other planned experiences ensure that students' spiritual needs are satisfactorily addressed. The RE programme in Years 7 to 11 makes a valuable contribution by providing opportunities for well-structured discussion of issues in the light of religious beliefs, for example the Holocaust and why Jews could still believe in God. Considerable thought and planning are given to improving the self-esteem of all students, especially those with SEN. For example, in art and PE lessons they are helped to taste success and achievement and the associated feelings of well-being and delight in successfully completing practical tasks. The regular whole-school assembly provides an important opportunity to meet together and, in so doing, to reflect on and contrast the lives and troubles of other groups in the world with the opportunities available in our free society.
89. The provision for students' moral development is good. Most understand clearly the distinction between right and wrong in following the school rules and behave well, showing respect for property and individual beliefs. Discussions of 'good' and 'evil' are well managed in religious education and EAL students spend time looking at the same rules in a variety of other languages.
90. Most subject areas make a planned and deliberate contribution to ensuring that provision for social development is good. Many encourage students to become actively involved in partner or group work to solve problems, make decisions or share views. In dance lessons in PE, for example, boys and girls work together in small groups to plan sequences of movement and subsequently to report back on 'what could be improved'. Students in most years show a willingness to take responsibility, for example by representing others on year or school councils. Sixth-form students support the work of younger students by listening to them read.
91. The cultural diversity of the school's population is well reflected in many curriculum areas. EAL students become very well engaged in multi-language work to produce newspapers, pictures and examples of handwriting from other cultures. There is clear provision in elements of textiles work in design and technology, where students draw on a range of backgrounds to produce emblems, designs and garment styles. In religious education the multi-faith approach helps students to develop their understanding and tolerance of other cultures as well as tolerance of other viewpoints. The work of the school in this area is well supported by the provision of learning resources in the library. There is a good range of items, mainly books, especially relating to the work of the English department. During the inspection students in all years were encouraged to take part in the schools' "Commonwealth Day Quiz" – another example of a deliberate and planned activity designed to raise the awareness of all to the richness and diversity of other cultures around the world. Overall the provision for students' cultural development is good.

Sixth form

Strengths

- The curriculum opportunities offered in the sixth form are very broad; the whole programme is educationally inclusive

Areas for improvement

- The arrangements made for the teaching of key skills
- The match of appropriate courses to meet the academic needs and profile of the students
- Provide for RE and a daily act of collective worship

92. The curriculum opportunities offered in the sixth form are very broad, although there is no provision for RE or a daily act of collective worship. The whole programme is clearly educationally inclusive. This feature is a strength and many students value the openness of this access to such a wide range of courses.
93. Many students follow a combination of subjects at a variety of levels, ranging from GCSE 'resits' through additional GCSE subjects and vocational courses to traditional AS and A-levels. Although a high number of students stay on to the school's sixth form, not all are sufficiently well equipped or prepared through their prior attainment or experience to tackle the higher-level courses. Furthermore, the results achieved in examinations are below average. These courses might match 'learner aspirations' but, although some entry requirements are in place and others are planned, too many students do not have the potential to succeed in their chosen areas of study. This feature is unsatisfactory.
94. The arrangements made for the teaching of key skills are also unsatisfactory for two main reasons. Firstly, because the topic is dealt with differently within the courses studied, and secondly, because the students' key skills needs are very different across a very wide range. For example, the Cambridge Certificate in English course meets the needs of only a few of those students who are required to follow it.
95. Students also value the opportunities for the enrichment of their programme. Currently, most activities are of a sporting nature, though within those there is a chance to gain accreditation, for example, in the Community Sports Leader Award. Other non-sporting activities available to the students include a project which gives sixth formers the opportunity to sample college taster courses, support for completing university application forms, mentoring links with a local university, leadership training through the Industrial Society and participation in the local Youth Action Volunteers scheme. The school is eager to extend the range and nature of this programme. Overall the curriculum provided in the sixth form is satisfactory.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS STUDENTS?

Strengths

- The staff receive good training in child protection issues and are well aware of what to do if issues arise
- The welfare of the students is underpinned by an effective pastoral system which ensures close tutor/student relationships
- The close teamwork of the pastoral team which is well led by the enthusiastic year leaders who share all their ideas so that benefits are passed on to all students
- Good use is made of assessment information in curriculum planning for SEN students

Areas for improvement

- That assessment information is used in curriculum planning
- Ensure the life skills programme is delivered by teachers with appropriate knowledge and understanding of the topics
- Reinstate the dedicated medical room

96. The school provides good care for its students and has sound procedures in place for child protection. The child protection officer is well trained and is named in procedures. All staff receive good training in child protection issues and are well aware of what to do if issues arise. The school has a sound approach to health and safety and provides adequate supervision for activities. There is a whole-school policy on health and safety, supported by departmental procedures. Risk assessments are carried out for activities, including school trips. The school carries out fire drills but the formal planning, frequency and recording of these requires improvement. The school nurse visits as required and routine medical matters are dealt with by trained 'first-aid' staff who keep clear records of any treatments. Accident reports are completed and external agencies are involved as required. The school currently only has one named first aider during the day with an additional one at lunchtime; whilst this is adequate, the provision should be reviewed, as staffing permits, to ensure provision if the named person is absent. The school does not now have a dedicated medical room; this should be rectified as soon as possible to allow routine first aid matters to be dealt with satisfactorily. Routine health and safety inspections are carried out by the local education authority and on behalf of the insurers.
97. The welfare of the students is underpinned by an effective pastoral system which ensures close tutor/student relationships. A strength of the school is the close teamwork of the pastoral team which is well led by the enthusiastic year leaders who share all their ideas so that benefits are passed on to all students – this is facilitated by all the year leaders sharing a large office. Students transfer to the school from a large number of primary schools with a wide range of backgrounds and cultures and at various times during the school year. There is a good induction process for students which includes their spending time in school before they join, if possible. Many students who join the school have English as their second language and will have varying confidence in its use. The school treats this as a priority to ensure that students are able to settle in and learn. Various initiatives are in place, such as the class friends and extra literacy sessions, and the students soon benefit from the schools' positive approach to inclusion. Through the pastoral system students are given good guidance on dealing with school life.
98. The school monitors attendance very closely and has very good relationships with the educational welfare officer who provides good support. Students are rewarded for both good attendance and good behaviour through the various rewards available. Students who have poor attendance are monitored individually to determine reasons and provide encouragement to attend; good progress has been made in reducing the amount of unauthorised absence. The procedures for promoting good attendance are very good and the school is working hard to achieve improvements but, because of the relatively large student population movement, sustained improved attendance figures have not yet been achieved.
99. Both the behaviour and the anti-bullying policy are effective. The school's clear guidelines and expectations on behaviour are well known and adhered to. There is still some poor behaviour by small groups in some classes but the school monitors and understands where this occurs and provides appropriate support. Students who have behavioural difficulties receive good support through the varied school initiatives aimed

at ensuring inclusion. The 'time out' room provides short-term support, with the learning support unit providing very good support for those at risk of exclusion. The governors have a significant role in supporting the school with both improved attendance and improved behaviour.

100. The quality of careers guidance is satisfactory and is well supported by a work experience programme. Students' personal development is monitored, mainly through the direct contact of student and tutor. There are regular middle management meetings to ensure that any concerns and achievements are identified to the year leader. Students with learning needs are monitored closely through the special needs department. There is a daily registration/tutor period for all students to allow the development of close relationships and, in general, the student will keep the same tutor throughout the school. On days when there is an assembly the tutor will only have direct contact for the short registration period but many tutors were seen to make maximum benefit of this time. Through the assemblies – whole-school or year group – the students' personal development was still addressed by the year leaders and the senior learning team. Whilst many tutors provided good guidance during the tutor periods, some less experienced teachers had not fully developed their role. Support for personal development is also provided by the school's life skills programme. The school at present only operates a record of achievement scheme for Year 11 but plans to extend it in the near future.
101. The school has recently revised management responsibilities to improve the effectiveness of the assessment procedures. Within the subjects the assessment procedures vary with most being at least satisfactory but weak in some areas such as English. The tutors and year leaders in general receive good assessment data to enable them to support and guide the students. Whilst the overall assessment existing in the school is good, the procedures are not applied as a whole-school policy. Although information is available for staff, it is not at present always easy to interpret. There is little evidence that assessment information is used in curriculum planning except for SEN students where there is good use made. The introduction and use of 'Assessment Manager' is being treated with enthusiasm by staff who are receiving the appropriate training but there has been insufficient time for it to be effective. The position regarding assessment is very similar to that seen at the last inspection, except that management systems are now in place and enthusiasm amongst the staff should promote development and progress.

Sixth form

102. Procedures for encouraging attendance are clearly unsatisfactory, with low attendance and lateness very common throughout much of the sixth form. An unusual feature of the school is that procedures for promoting good behaviour are not fully effective.

Assessment

103. The use of assessment data in the sixth form to guide curricular planning is unsatisfactory. Examples were seen where methods are not well linked to assessment criteria of the syllabus. The target setting and monitoring of progress require further development.

Advice, support and guidance

104. Sixth form advice and guidance is good through good relationships with the staff and good resources such as the career library. Students are well known to the staff.

Students are generally supportive of the systems within the school, although the low profile of the key skills provision reduces personal development opportunities.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

Strengths

- The partnership between parents and the school is good.
- The use of the planner is good throughout the school, with staff making full use of it and checking its completeness.
- Communication with parents is a strength of the school.
- The PE department produces a very good regular magazine promoting the department and the school and identifying with praise the success of individual students and teams.
- The school makes every effort to provide opportunities for parents to discuss progress.

Areas for improvement

- There is not at present a parent teacher association.

105. The partnership between parents and the school is good. A home/school agreement is in place and students use a planner which has to be signed by parents and teachers on a regular basis. The planner contains most of the information that students and parents need to know about the day-to-day requirements of school as well as a record of work to be done. The use of the planner is good throughout the school, with staff making full use of it and checking its completeness. The methods students use in the planners varies and some students treat them with pride whilst others are clearly less careful with them. Parents' views of the school expressed through the questionnaires and the parents' meeting are very supportive. Whilst only about 20 per cent of questionnaires were returned, parents did not register any consistent areas of concern. There is general satisfaction amongst parents and students with the sixth form and the provision it offers – the views of students interviewed during the inspection were more supportive than some responses to the questionnaires implied.
106. The most pleasing aspects for parents are the high expectations within the school and the good progress made by the students as a result of the good teaching. Other strong features are the development of maturity of the students and the approachability of the school for parents. Individual comments from parents were all considered and the inspection team consider that these are all answered within the earlier sections of the report or are currently being addressed adequately by the school.
107. Communication with parents is a strength of the school. The school produces regular newsletters which are well presented and informative. In addition there are letters and leaflets on specific matters of interest to groups of parents as well as an informative school brochure. The PE department produces a very good regular magazine promoting the department and the school and identifying with praise the success of individual students and teams. The school sends out regular questionnaires to determine parents' views on the school. The annual reports on students' progress are very good, containing the statutory information and being comprehensive in their content of useful and informative information. The reports are only written in English but the school does provide interpreters at the meeting with parents to discuss the report. The annual review reports for SEN students are good but contain some 'jargon' which parents may not understand. The governors' annual report to parents is comprehensive and meets legal requirements.
108. There is not at present a parent teacher association but parents at the meeting had expressed their desire for one and the school, within its revised management

responsibilities, has provided for the introduction of one which is hoped to be fully operational by next year. Parents support their children's education by completing the planners on a regular basis and by attending parents' meetings. Students come from a wide area and this makes it difficult for parents to be involved within the school. Those who do, however, for example to support their child within language initiatives or in special units within the school, are very supportive of the school and do make a significant impact on their children's education. The school makes every effort to provide opportunities for parents to discuss progress – for example, the parents' meetings take place from late morning until mid-evening with both parent and student attending together.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

Leadership and Management

Strengths

- The good leadership and management of the principal and other key staff.
- The very good commitment to a fully inclusive school.
- The very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school by the governors, and their good role in shaping the school.
- The good delegation of responsibilities, improving standards at a time of significant changes in staffing.

Areas for improvement

- Statutory obligations in ICT and acts of collective worship.
- The use of new technology in curriculum areas to improve the impact of assessment on standards and attendance.
- More clearly defined measurable outcomes in development plans.

109. The quality of leadership and management is good, with some strong features. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory, despite a significant turnover of staff. Clear policies are being put in place for further improvement through a recently enhanced and enthusiastic senior management team.
110. The considerable areas of weakness identified in the previous inspection have been a focus of the school and most of them have been addressed successfully. Fresh priorities need to be established to improve the current satisfactory progress through more rigorously defined outcomes.
111. A major strength of the school is the shared commitment by all the teaching and non-teaching staff and managers at all levels to continuing improvement through its fully inclusive policy and commitment to equal opportunities for all its students.
112. Leadership ensures a good, clear direction for the development of the school. Delegation of management responsibilities is good but is not yet fully linked to classroom practices. On the other hand, the inclusive nature of the school is clearly seen to be having good outcomes through the 'class friends' policy in practice in Year 7, providing a warm welcome to students new to the school. There remains a concern over insufficient provision of classroom support for those students at an early stage of learning in English. The leadership of most curriculum areas is good and is nowhere unsatisfactory.

113. Governors do not fulfil their statutory responsibilities concerning ICT or the provision of a daily act of collective worship. They do have a very good knowledge of strengths and weaknesses, playing an active role in shaping the future of the school. They operate through appropriate sub-committees and are offered appropriate training, the take-up of which is somewhat patchy. Governors have a sharper focus of financial matters, now that the new bursar is in post. They recognise that the school development plan is weak on measurable outcomes.
114. Considerable monitoring of teaching and its evaluation are carried out as part of the school's policy. The impact on learning has yet to make itself known as the turnover of staff inhibits the developmental stage of the process. The performance management policy is good and is fully in place. This includes new teaching staff appropriately and is one factor used to good effect in the improvement within the school, with new curriculum leaders, for example. The school's development priorities need a sharper focus and a greater rigour in the monitoring and evaluation procedures if the school is to improve further.
115. The good development plans from curriculum team leaders fit in appropriately with the school's development plan. In modern foreign languages, geography and history, for example, there are clear targets for development with a focus on raising attainment in Years 10 and 11.
116. Managers within the school are keen to succeed. They and their staff are working well to bring this about. They have the capacity to improve standards further as arrangements for communication are becoming more effective in linking change to improvement. Newly appointed staff are warmly welcomed and supported appropriately with the reasonable expectation of a reduction in staff turnover. One notable feature within the school is the good support for teachers from overseas.
117. Financial planning is good. The whole school level of financial planning is effective and monitored well by the bursar. Consequently, governors have a clear picture of the financial situation within the school. New technology is used well for administrative purposes, especially in terms of finance. The support for teaching and learning through the use of assessment information in particular is unsatisfactory in every curriculum area, as its impact has not yet filtered through to improved classroom practice. Greater use could be made of the new technology in the monitoring of attendance.
118. Grants are clearly identified in the accounts and their use is good. It is clear that the standards fund is used for the correct purpose, based on the school's priorities. EIC money is also correctly identified and spent.
119. The school, through the newly appointed bursar, applies most principles of best value in its budgetary decisions. All spending plans are clearly aimed at the impact such decisions will have on the quality of students' learning and support for improved teaching. Consultation takes place within the school community and involves governors and teachers. The school adheres to competitive tendering regulations.
120. Overall the current accommodation is satisfactory with well-advanced developments to improve facilities for music. There is good quality accommodation for English, mathematics, geography, history, PE, modern foreign languages and SEN. Music, drama and art facilities are currently unsatisfactory. There are well-advanced plans with the LEA to redevelop much of the school through a private finance initiative (PFI) project.

121. The school has satisfactory resources overall. The ratio of computers to students is above the national average. Resources for English, drama and PE are good. Resources are used efficiently and effectively to support teaching, learning and students' progress. Expenditure on learning resources is in line with national norms.
122. The staffing provision is satisfactory overall, although the budget for teaching staff is below the national average for a school of this size. Staffing in history, PE, art and drama is good but is unsatisfactory in science. There has been very considerable staffing instability since the last inspection. The school management has made very positive and courageous decisions regarding the recruitment of good quality teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum. This has led to successful active recruitment methods and the school currently has only one vacancy. The school has actively recruited teachers from overseas who are qualified in their country but classified as unqualified by the DfES. These teachers are well supported in classes and are being actively helped by the school to gain recognised qualified teacher status. Staffing has stabilised, which is having a very beneficial effect on students' learning.
123. There are good programmes for the professional development of staff which focus on the overall school needs and the needs of individuals. The effectiveness of these programmes has been adversely affected by the excessive turnover of teachers in the last two years. Procedures for the induction of newly qualified teachers and other staff are good and there are good arrangements with initial teacher training (ITT) establishments for the training of teachers.
124. The school has made a positive investment in education and technical support staff since the last inspection. Their deployment is good and they have a positive effect on supporting teachers.

Sixth Form

Strengths

- The quality of leadership is good
- There has been good improvement in the management of provision since the last inspection
- The size of teaching groups is much more cost-effective

Areas for improvement

- The management of assessment information to inform curriculum planning
- Monitoring links between the sixth form and the governing body have not been formalised
- Better management of the erratic attendance of some students

125. The quality of leadership is good. The overall quality of management is satisfactory. There has been good improvement in the management of provision since the last inspection. It is too early yet to measure the impact on performance over time.
126. The good leadership is illustrated in a precise set of aims, developed in close conjunction with the senior management team, that defines well the medium-term direction and development. This is linked to a satisfactory development plan that describes carefully the strategy for improvement, defines priorities but does not yet provide specific and measurable targets for improvement. The governing body provides support for the sixth form through a very good level of expertise and experience in further education. As yet, monitoring links between the sixth form and the governing body have not been formalised.

127. The good improvement in the management of provision owes much to the determined leadership, newly in place since September 2001. In conjunction with the senior leadership team, it has brought greater rigour to decision making about the quality and range of courses on offer. As a result, the size of teaching groups is much more cost-effective, save in modern foreign languages. Overall expenditure is in line with budget. Best value principles are applied very well in setting minimum group sizes but not yet in evaluating the effectiveness of courses, measured against performance.
128. The monitoring of performance is satisfactory. There are now good arrangements, valued by most students, to monitor the use of private study time. New procedures are planned to manage better the erratic attendance of some students. It is currently unsatisfactory.
129. A statistical framework is in place to monitor students' progress against agreed targets. Overall, this is starting to result in more rigorous management, whilst at the same time retaining care and respect for the individuality of students in the sixth form. However, the management of assessment information to inform curricular planning is unsatisfactory.
130. Resources are satisfactory. New accommodation is to open shortly. Courses are taught by well-qualified specialist teachers. Their deployment is satisfactory. The quality and number of book resources and computers are satisfactory. Most students rely on public library provision for their wider reading and research.
131. Consequently, overall improvement, measured in terms of performance as well as provision, has been satisfactory since the last inspection.

The provision for and standards achieved by students with English as an additional language.

The overall quality of provision for students with EAL is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- The school shows high levels of concern for the language, learning and social needs of newly arrived non-English-speaking students, a high proportion of whom are refugees and asylum-seekers.
- The support in mainstream subject lessons offered by members of ethnic minority achievement team (EMAT) is good or very good.
- Students who use or are learning EAL, including those who have had little or no experience of education prior to coming to the UK, are well integrated in the school at all levels.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are positive.

Areas for improvement

- The extent to which in-class support can be offered is severely limited by lack of EMAT staff.
- EMAT teachers bring commitment and interest to work on the induction programme, but they lack qualifications and expertise in teaching EAL.
- The content of some induction lessons is inappropriate and students' progress is slower than expected.

132. The school has seen a steady rise in its bilingual population, from about 31 per cent in 1997 to 52 per cent at present. More than 60 per cent of students in the sixth form use

EAL. Many of the EAL users in the school are beginners or near-beginners, and some of these have had little or no experience of education before coming to the UK. Forty-nine languages are spoken in the school. Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant [EMAG] provides funding for two full-time teachers; this funding has decreased substantially over recent years. The school does not itself fund any EAL specialist staff. Thus, at present the school has available the equivalent of 1.75 full-time specialist teachers to carry out a wide range of tasks to support the language and learning needs of more than 500 EAL students. The school's EAL students could do much better if the inadequate staffing levels for EAL in the school were addressed.

133. Stages of competence in using English as an additional language are assessed annually in line with LEA guidance, and subject teachers are given information on the students in their classes. Assessments are accurate in most cases. A register of bilingual learners is maintained and kept up to date.
134. The school shows high levels of concern for the language, learning and social needs of newly-arrived non-English-speaking students, a high proportion of whom are refugees and asylum-seekers. Direct teaching of EAL is provided through induction sessions in Years 7 to 11, and via a course intended to prepare students for taking the Cambridge First Certificate examination in the sixth form. The amount of time given to these inputs is appropriate, and the selection and grouping of students to be included [beginner and post-beginner learners of EAL] are suitable. EMAT teachers bring commitment and interest to work on the induction programme, but they lack qualifications and expertise in teaching EAL. Activities are sometimes not sufficiently focused so learning time is not spent profitably. The choice of examination for sixth form learners is inappropriate for many students.
135. The support in mainstream subject lessons offered by members of EMAT is good overall with some very good features. In a Key Stage 3 science lesson, the inputs offered were particularly effective in clarifying concepts and providing examples of language use, thus making it possible for all EAL students, including those at a very early stage of EAL competence, to take part and indeed in some instances to perform better than their monolingual classmates. These high standards are achieved through a good match between the subject expertise of EMAT teachers and the areas in which they offer support, and because of their clear understanding of their role and of appropriate strategies. However, the extent to which in-class support can be offered is severely limited by lack of EMAT staff, who are able to work in partnership with mainstream colleagues in 14 lessons per week in English, science and RE in Years 7 to 11.
136. The introduction of a common lesson planning format which notes EAL students and their stages of competence, and directs all teachers' attention to the need for tasks and teaching strategies which will support these students' learning, has been helpful. In some subject lessons in all years, for example in mathematics, music, PE, geography, RE, English and science in Years 7 to 11, teachers were aware of the competence and needs of EAL students and of their responsibility for helping them. They used a range of techniques to promote these students' achievement, including use of home languages and activities which valued and reinforced the students' own cultural identity. However, in some cases, for example in a design and technology lesson and a geography lesson, subject teachers are not sufficiently able to analyse the language and learning demands of National Curriculum tasks in relation to the specific needs of EAL students, nor are they aware of strategies for presenting information appropriately to fully encourage learning, so that support for EAL learners is often limited to explanations of vocabulary.

137. Although EMAT teachers contribute to the school's in-service training programme for new teachers, they do not have enough time to work in curriculum areas or with individual teachers in depth, in order to increase their expertise.
138. Students who use or are learning EAL, including those who have had little or no experience of education prior to coming to the UK, are fully included in the school at all levels. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are positive. The fact that they are made to feel at ease in a harmonious environment makes a contribution to their readiness to learn. The school's establishment last September of a well-supported 'Class Friends' project in Year 7 has given a lead here. The school has good links with the Turkish and Somali communities, and is able to provide interpreting and translation of school documents as needed.
139. Overall the school has made satisfactory improvements in the provision for students with EAL since the last inspection. The common planning format that requires teachers to identify and plan for the needs of EAL students has been generally positive. Most teachers are better informed about the students' needs than at the last inspection. In-class support is now of a better quality where it is deployed but a shortage of appropriately qualified EAL staff limits the overall effectiveness. The school is now much more positive and successful in its integration of EAL students in the life of the school.

The speech and language unit

The unit for speech and language development is **very good**.

Strengths

- The management and organisation of the speech and language unit are very good.
- The good quality of teaching is reflected in the good progress made by students.
- Parents and students have confidence in the work of the unit.
- The quality of individual target setting is good.

Areas for improvement

- Increasing the range of computer software within the unit.

140. The school's provision of a speech and language unit, funded by the local education authority, is very good. Students meet in small mixed year group lessons and work together with staff to address their communication difficulties. Much of their work is oral which promotes the students' speaking and listening skills, while giving them confidence in coping with a range of situations. For example, they understand that body language is as important as the spoken word in communicating their feelings. In a typical session, they participate well in discussions and show very good support and encouragement to each other. For example, they appreciate the nervousness of a Year 11 student giving a presentation to the group on his life skills work with comments such as "Go for it", or "You can do it". They ask his permission to take notes and ask questions at the end. They accept without fuss that their discussions are videoed and, in reviewing these, they enthusiastically evaluate their success or highlight how they need to improve, which indicates their good progress.
141. The quality of teaching is good. The highly skilled teacher, who is also a qualified speech therapist, is ably supported by an efficient team of classroom assistants. Staff have a very good knowledge of their students and relationships are very good. There is no inappropriate behaviour. The effective use of good quality individual education plans

ensures that lesson content and resources are matched to the needs of the students' who are encouraged to match their progress against their personal targets. Their written and verbal evaluations of these express genuine delight at their success with words such as "It feels great" or "excellent" or "relief" to have met the target, which strongly promotes their self-esteem and supports their spiritual and personal development. This is further supported by lunchtime social clubs, where students of all ages meet to chat or play board games.

142. The management of the unit is very good and there is a strong element of teamwork and co-operation between all staff with good links between other areas of additional educational needs, year heads and subject leaders, which ensures that the students' needs are well understood in other lessons. The admission criteria are strictly adhered to and depend upon a full local authority and school assessment of the students' needs before a place is offered. Departmental documentation is good and very well managed, with specific booklets prepared by support staff on literacy and communication. The quality of individual education plans is good and targets are discussed and negotiated with parents and students during academic reviews and during the unit's regular parents' coffee afternoons. The latter are generally well attended, with input from the attached educational psychologist. Parents strongly support the aims of the unit and speak highly of the progress made by their children. For example, parents who did not initially wish to have their child referred to the unit, preferring them to go to the same school as their siblings, now feel that the level of support their children have received and the progress they have made in their communication skills and increased self-esteem have significantly promoted their personal and academic development.
143. The previous inspection report judged the speech and language unit to be good. The continuing success and progress of the students in participating in mainstream classes, together with the improved quality and evaluation of individual targets, make this provision very good.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards further, the principal, governors and staff of the school should:

1. Improve the teaching and provision of ICT in Years 7 to 9 and ICT provision across the curriculum by:
 - Ensuring that sufficient regular teaching time is made available to enable full coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study;
 - Reviewing the ICT resources to ensure students receive direct teaching from teachers as well as the on-line self-directed programs;
 - Reviewing and monitoring the current ICT provision across all subjects and clearly identifying appropriate opportunities within subjects to contribute to coverage of the ICT programs of study;
 - Providing adequate training to enable all teachers to be competent and confident to contribute to the teaching of ICT in all subjects.
(Paragraphs: 19, 31, 32, 35, 71, 74, 80, 113, 159, 166,168, 175, 185, 198, 204, 206-216, 226, 228, 242)
2. Improve students' attendance by:
 - Continuing with the processes and procedures already adopted but also use the newly analysed cohort data comparing attendance and examination outcomes with both students and parents to further encourage and improve attendance;
 - Introducing the use of new technology to ensure more effective monitoring of students' attendance;
(Paragraphs: 58, 98)
3. Ensure the use by teachers of a wider range of teaching and learning styles to ensure all students' learning needs are fully met by:
 - Identifying the existing good practice in the school and analysing why and how it is effective in supporting students' learning and progress;
 - Ensuring that all teachers adopt the National Literacy Strategy type lesson structure, so that all lessons have good beginnings, middles and ends and students are fully informed about learning objectives and outcomes;
 - Ensuring that teachers provide sufficient opportunities for students to engage in individual research, group work and whole-class sessions;
 - Ensuring that teachers have access to, and skills in the use of, as wide a range of resources and new technology as is appropriate to create variety and interest for all students.
(Paragraphs: 158, 159, 168, 176, 190, 23, 210)
4. Ensure more rigorous use of whole school assessment data to inform departmental and teachers' planning by:
 - Providing the wide range of analysed and evaluated data the school already has, at individual student, class and cohort levels, in formats that departments and teachers can readily use to inform planning in lessons;
 - Monitoring that departments and teachers use the available data to inform their planning, set student targets and review schemes of work to more closely match student profiles.

(Paragraphs: 101, 161, 177, 203, 211, 248)

5. Ensure greater rigour in improvement planning at all levels with clearly defined measurable outcomes by:

- Reviewing all development and improvement plans at whole-school and departmental levels to ensure the good quality strategies already identified in these plans are translated into realistic and measurable outcomes;
- Setting clearly identified time limits and rigorous monitoring and evaluation methods to measure the effectiveness of the identified plans and strategies on students' achievement and progress.

(Paragraphs: 113, 114, 161, 215)

When drawing up the action plan it is recommended that attention also be given to:

- Ensuring that adequate staffing for EAL; (Paragraphs: 132, 134)
- Addressing the need to provide a daily act of collective worship for all students; (Paragraphs: 88, 113)
- Ensuring the life skills programme is delivered by teachers with appropriate knowledge and understanding of the topics; (Paragraph: 83)
- Re-instating the dedicated medical room. (Paragraph 96)

Sixth form

In order to raise standards in the sixth form further, the principal, governors and staff of the school should:

1. Improve students' attitudes towards attendance and punctuality by:

- Monitoring attendance in lessons and taking prompt action as necessary;
- Ensuring students and parents are made fully aware of the links between good attendance and high achievement.

(Paragraphs: 65, 67, 102, 128)

2. Ensure the range of courses available match fully the range of prior attainment at age 16 by:

- Being fully aware of the profile of the range of abilities and competencies of all students before they enter the sixth form;
- Investigating the available examination and vocational syllabi and tailoring the courses to the needs of the students;
- Mentoring students and parents to ensure their aspirations and wishes are realistic and can be fully met;
- Setting and adhering to appropriate entry levels for the chosen range of courses being offered.

(Paragraphs: 93, 258, 275, 298)

3. Improve the monitoring and evaluation of achievement as part of improvement planning by:
 - Ensuring that assessment and achievement data are rigorously analysed and evaluated and presented in a usable format and the outcomes form the basis for improvement planning for the sixth form as a whole and by subject departments and teachers;
 - Ensuring that the outcomes of data analysis are used to set realistic and challenging targets for all students;
(Paragraphs: 102, 103, 126)
4. Provide for religious education and for a daily act of collective worship.
(Paragraphs: 92, 113)

When drawing up the action plan it is recommended that attention also be given to:

- The arrangements made for the teaching of the key skills of oracy and communications, numeracy and ICT.
(Paragraphs: 56, 79, 94, 287)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	Years 7 – 11	131
	Sixth form	41
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and students		35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Years 7 – 11							
Number	2	15	41	64	7	2	0
Percentage	1.5	12	31	49	5	1.5	0
Sixth form							
Number	1	5	12	13	4	0	0
Percentage	2	12	32	44	10	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting the percentages for the sixth form as each lesson represents more than 3 percentage points.

Information about the school's students

Students on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of students on the school's roll	805	134
Number of full-time students known to be eligible for free school meals	389	

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of students with statements of special educational needs	37	0
Number of students on the school's special educational needs register	197	2

English as an additional language	No of students
Number of students with English as an additional language	150

Student mobility in the last school year	No of students
Students who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	80
Students who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	57

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.7
National comparative data	8.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.2
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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered students in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	2001	84	75	159

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of students at NC level 5 and above	Boys	24	38	35
	Girls	33	26	22
	Total	57	64	57
Percentage of students at NC level 5 or above	School	36 (22)	41 (43)	35 (25)
	National	64 (63)	66 (65)	66 (59)
Percentage of students at NC level 6 or above	School	9 (1)	20 (23)	12 (6)
	National	31 (28)	43 (42)	34 (30)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of students at NC level 5 and above	Boys	14	37	35
	Girls	18	23	21
	Total	32	60	56
Percentage of students at NC level 5 or above	School	20 (15)	38 (33)	35 (25)
	National	65 (64)	68 (66)	64 (62)
Percentage of students at NC level 6 or above	School	4 (2)	17 (13)	13 (7)
	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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered students in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	2001	68	80	148

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of students achieving the standard specified	Boys	20	60	71
	Girls	20	71	77
	Total	40	131	148
Percentage of students achieving the standard specified	School	27(17)	84(90)	95(99)
	National	48 (47)	91(91)	96(96)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per student	School	32.0 (28.3)
	National	39.0 (38.4)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 on roll in January of the latest reporting year who were entered for GCE A-level or AS-level examinations	2001	10	15	25

Average A/AS points score per candidate	For candidates entered for 2 or more A-levels or equivalent			For candidates entered for fewer than 2 A-levels or equivalent		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
School	4.7	8.8	7.6	N/a	N/a	N/a
National	16.9	18	17.5	N/a	N/a	N/a

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

Vocational qualifications		Number	% success rate
Number in their final year of studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those students who achieved all those they studied	School	11	82
	National		

Ethnic background of students

	No of students
Black – Caribbean heritage	25
Black – African heritage	28
Black – other	102
Indian	4
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	5
Chinese	2
White	591
Any other minority ethnic group	181

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	14	3
Black – African heritage	32	2
Black – other	4	1
Indian	1	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	114	5
Other minority ethnic groups	7	1

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	59.1
Number of students per qualified teacher	15.9 : 1

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	329

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	64.2
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 3	30
Key Stage 4	26.1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
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	£
Total income	3771982
Total expenditure	3732776
Expenditure per student	3441
Balance brought forward from previous year	36895
Balance carried forward to next year	76101

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	55.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	49.0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.5
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	10

Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

939

Number of questionnaires returned

167

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	35	46	14	4	1
My child is making good progress in school.	36	49	13	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	44	13	5	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	46	21	13	2
The teaching is good.	30	49	15	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	46	13	5	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	46	44	5	2	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	38	5	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	34	41	20	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	32	48	12	3	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	47	12	2	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	42	11	3	10

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents, both at the pre-inspection meeting and through the questionnaires, clearly felt that the school has high expectations of students' achievement and behaviour. They are comfortable that the school is approachable and that staff deal well with questions or problems that arise. Most felt that their children make good progress as they move through the school. They are happy that the school helps students to mature and become responsible young adults. They are well informed about their children's progress and communication between school and home is regular and informative. There were very different views of the amount of homework set being too much or inadequate, and some parents were concerned about the overall consistency of the quality of teaching. Concerns were expressed about the recent staffing

turbulence. Views differed about their relationship with the school, with most feeling that the school is working closely with parents. Issues were raised about the perceived poor behaviour of some students in some lessons; again views were mixed on this issue.

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

ENGLISH

Overall, the quality of provision is **satisfactory**

Strengths

- Good improvement in results in 2001 at ages 14 and 16.
- Good use of the National Literacy Strategy to teach reading skills.
- The well-planned curriculum and careful marking of work result in good attitudes to learning.
- A good impact on students' personal development, particularly their social skills.
- Good leadership shows enduring commitment to the values of the school.

Areas for improvement

- Standards of writing, particularly at length, at ages 14 and 16.
- Provision for ICT, to meet fully statutory requirements.
- The links between marking, assessment and target setting to improve rates of progress.
- The evaluation of strategies within the departmental improvement plan.

144. Standards on entry are well below average. At age 11, barely a third are working at the level expected nationally. The writing skills of the large majority and their understanding of what they read are very low.
145. Those who attend regularly improve. Achievement at ages 14 and 16 is satisfactory because well-planned teaching and good marking prepare the students thoroughly for tests and examinations. It also improves their attitudes, and particularly their confidence. The rate of improvement has started to increase.
146. Trends in results over time have been steady at age 14 but rising at age 16 because all students are well supported in their examination course work and 'early entry' for the more competent has increased the levels of challenge and expectation. Over time, the girls do better than the boys but their results are further behind those of other girls nationally.
147. Results are better than in the students' other subjects but relative performance remains unsatisfactory when compared with standards in other subjects nationally. Overall, improvement in performance over time has, therefore, been satisfactory.
148. Results in 2001 were below average for similar schools at age 14 but above at age 16. They were well below average for all schools in both cases. These unfavourable comparisons do not indicate underachievement. The high proportion of SEN and EAL students is more significant. These students make satisfactory progress at age 14 and 16, contributing to satisfactory achievement overall.

149. Thirty-six per cent reached the level expected nationally at age 14 in 2001. Forty-five per cent did so in similar schools and 64 per cent in all schools nationally. At age 16, 34 per cent obtained A*-C grades at GCSE, a marked improvement on the previous year. This compares with 61 per cent for all schools and 30 per cent for similar schools nationally. Nearly all obtained a grade in the range A*-G. These results indicate a high degree of social inclusion despite unsatisfactory attendance.
150. Approximately half, including the more competent, also took GCSE English literature, a proportion well below the national average. Forty-four per cent gained grades A*-C, well below the national average of 56 per cent. About one tenth also took GCSE drama. These were the best results with 65 per cent obtaining grades A*-C, broadly in line with the national average.
151. Standards are well below those expected nationally at age 14 and below at age 16. They remain well below at age 14 because improvements in speaking and listening and in reading are not matched by a similar rise in standards of writing.
152. Standards in speaking, listening and in reading are below those usually found nationally. They are well below in writing.
153. Standards in speaking and listening improve at age 16 because the boys do better. Many prefer to express themselves orally rather than in writing. Sometimes they exclude the girls during oral work. Very occasionally they call out and lack self-discipline. The girls talk confidently to a partner but many are reluctant to speak out in lessons. The planned improvement of these skills in teaching methods is satisfactory. Consequently, the confident use of standard English is satisfactory overall.
154. Standards in reading are also below those usually found nationally. They are improving at age 14 because a high priority has been placed on using the National Literacy Strategy [NLS] to improve knowledge about words and to plan the sequence of learning in lessons. Good use is made of the library and those in Year 7 are well motivated by the 'reading challenge'. At age 14 most read a simple text accurately but few read aloud with confidence and understanding. At age 16 most know what a text says, some can say what it means but few are confidently alert to style. Improvements are not greater because the NLS is not yet impacting strongly on students' reading for meaning in their study of test and examination texts.
155. Standards in writing remain well below those usually found nationally. Only a minority write fluently and accurately at age 14; many still struggle to write at length at age 16. Improvement is slower because some do not respond to the good marking of their work. The more competent make good progress because stimulating printed resources encourage them to extend the range of their writing. Standards do not rise more sharply because the range of audiences for whom to write and the availability of ICT and audio resources are unsatisfactory.
156. The handwriting of some students, including those who speak English as an additional language, remains unsatisfactory. They continue to print their letters because there is no planned improvement of these skills.
157. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It was never less than satisfactory in the lessons seen. Occasionally it was good. The proportion of good teaching was smaller than at the time of the last inspection. This does not indicate a decline in quality. Teaching is now evaluated more rigorously in terms of the impact on learning.

158. Where learning is good, the distinguishing features of the good teaching include:

- Very good subject knowledge and creativity in the provision of interesting assignments. Consequently, more competent students produce some very good course work at age 16 and competent students achieve well at age 14 to produce a good range of imaginative responses, both spoken and in writing.
- The methods of the NLS are well understood and skilfully applied in lesson planning to provide a good framework for learning. Consequently, many students make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of words because they know what they will learn as well as what they will do;
- High expectations and good knowledge of individual needs result in good levels of concentration and a good amount of work being completed in lessons because time limits for tasks are set. Consequently, learning proceeds at a brisk pace.
- Good marking records clearly what is good, what needs to be better and how this might be achieved. Much of the marking shows a strong personal touch that encourages the student to do even better.

159. All these features were evident in the best lesson seen when small groups of Year 8 students planned an imaginary space trip in a series of tasks that linked very well the need to speak, listen to each other, read and write, showing an awareness of such different types of writing as job descriptions and fax messages.

Where learning is satisfactory, some features of teaching are unsatisfactory. These may include:

- Little use of well-sequenced questions to develop understanding in many lessons;
- Little reference to assessment criteria in the objectives of individual lessons;
- Time is lost when expectations of behaviour are inconsistent;
- No use of ICT and audio resources to extend the range and quality of learning;
- The match of tasks to the needs of a minority who are at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language.

160. These unsatisfactory features were evident when less competent Year 11 students completed an analysis of a text about a fairground ride. Consequently, only a minority produced a sufficient amount of work and their imaginative response to the task was narrow.

161. Leadership and management are good. Very good leadership provides enduring commitment to the values of the school, continuity of expectations and a well-defined strategy for improvement during a period of frequent changes of staff. It is no mean achievement to have started to raise standards and to implement NLS in such circumstances. Satisfactory management, including well-defined links with the senior management team, results in satisfactory monitoring of standards. The evaluation of improvement is unsatisfactory because the criteria to measure it are not sharp enough in the departmental plan and the interpretation of performance data is not rigorous enough.

Consequently, improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

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

Strengths

- The subject expertise of the teachers is good, responsible for the satisfactory achievement of the students.
- The curriculum leader is providing a good and clear direction for improvement.
- The provision for students with special educational needs is good, responsible for their satisfactory achievement.

Areas for improvement

- Teaching methods and the use of time in lessons.
- The number of students completing homework.
- The use of ICT in the teaching of mathematics.

162. The proportion of students reaching the standard expected for their age in the 2001 national tests at the end of Year 9 was below the average for similar schools and well below the average for all schools. Results at the higher Level 6 were in line with the average for similar schools. Boys' performance was better than girls' in 2001. The trend in the last three years is below the national trend. Performance is similar to that of English and science.

163. In 2001 the proportion of students gaining a GCSE grade A*-C, and for a GCSE grade A*-G, was well below the national average for all schools. There was no difference between the performance of boys and girls at the end of Year 11. Assessment information indicates satisfactory achievement for this group of students following their results at the end of Year 9. Performance is not significantly different from other subjects in the school. The current trend is above the national trend.

164. The standard of work seen in the inspection in Year 9 is an improvement on the results of 2001 but remains well below average. Students' achievement is as expected when compared with their attainment on entry to the school, due to the satisfactory teaching they receive. High-attaining students can calculate one side of a right-angled triangle given the other two. They solve linear equations involving the use of brackets and are making appropriate learning gains in the use of negative numbers. Average-attaining students solve simple linear equations accurately and calculate the perimeters of a variety of shapes, including circles. Their understanding of the formulae they use is less secure. Low-attaining students continue to learn to cope with basic levels of numeracy. They achieve satisfactorily as their attainment on entry to the school was very low. Multiplication tables are not well known.

165. The standard of work seen in the inspection at the end of Year 11 is also an improvement on the results of 2001, but still well below average. Students' achievement is as expected when compared to their standard at the end of Year 9, the result of the satisfactory teaching. High-attaining students achieved a GCSE grade C or above at the intermediate level of entry last term, and are now studying higher level GCSE mathematics. They solve quadratic equations accurately using the formula and cope well with basic algebra. Their course work is above average, containing extended writing and detailed analysis involving the use of algebra. Average-attaining students on the intermediate level course use their knowledge of scales appropriately in problems involving similar shapes. Ruler and compass drawings are particularly neat and accurate. Low-attaining students have low levels of numeracy. They do not handle

percentages with confidence but can solve simple problems involving speed, distance and time.

166. The provision for SEN students is good throughout the school. The teaching arrangements ensure that support is appropriately targeted on their needs. Good progress from a low base is made when they are withdrawn from lessons for individual support and this enables them to rejoin classes with increased confidence. Overall satisfactory progress is made in lessons. Teaching support for students at an early stage of learning in English and for refugees is good, but not always sufficient in lessons. That said, these students are helpful to each other and make satisfactory progress overall, as do the gifted and talented students. The integration of the many different groups within the school is good. Standards in literacy, numeracy and ICT are below average.
167. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory. There is a small proportion of good teaching and a majority of satisfactory teaching. There is a small element of unsatisfactory teaching. Overall the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection, the reason for the rise in the standards seen in the inspection compared with the 2001 results.
168. The strength of the teaching is in the good subject expertise of the teachers. This is why there are sufficient direct questions in the clear, formal presentations that ensure that students know what they have to do. The lack of oral contributions by students in class stems from the lack of open-ended questions in the teaching and this adversely affects understanding. Computers need to be used more in the teaching of mathematics to improve visual learning. Other resources such as overhead projectors are used appropriately, helpful in the presentations. The teaching of basic skills is satisfactory, using techniques from the National Numeracy Strategy. Such techniques require further development to be really effective in raising standards further. The management of students is satisfactory, no better as some time is lost in lessons while students settle down to their work. Marking is generally satisfactory, with some good examples of written comments by teachers in students' exercise books, which aid learning. Not all students do the homework set at the end of lessons, adversely affecting consolidation of new learning. The unsatisfactory teaching seen in the inspection followed the lack of successful direct methods to engage students in learning throughout the lesson. The use of time was unsatisfactory. The support from senior staff who visit lessons on a regular basis is good because of its calming effect on the students and its lack of intrusion into the teaching.
169. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory overall, maintaining standards under significant staffing difficulties. The rapid change of curriculum leaders in mathematics has been particularly difficult for the school's management team. The appointment of a new curriculum leader from January this year is already providing the good, clear leadership required. The curriculum satisfies the National Curriculum. Priorities are being established and there is already a good team spirit among the teachers who have the capacity to improve. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Good subject knowledge of teachers
- Marking of work effective in giving feedback
- Department is well resourced

Areas for improvement

- Teaching methodology to ensure interesting and challenging work
- Expectations of higher-attaining students, especially at age 16
- Monitoring and support for teachers whose management of student behaviour is insecure
- Adaptation of schemes of work to suit needs of students, including tasks to match attainment and use of ICT
- Teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy

170. Attainment in the National Tests at age 14 was well below the national average in 2001. The average point score and the percentages of students gaining Level 5, or greater, were both well below the national average, but were just below average in schools with a similar contextual background, i.e. those admitting a similar proportion of students eligible for free school meals. The percentage of students gaining the higher Level 6, or greater, was also below the national average, but in line with the average for similar schools. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. The results had improved slightly from 1998 to 1999, fell in 2000, but improved again in 2001. Based on available data for National Tests at age 11, and cognitive abilities test mean scores, students' attainment on entry to Year 7 was well below average and achievement from age 11 to 14 has been satisfactory.
171. At the age of 16, students' results in GCSE double award combined science in 2001 were well below the national average. The percentage gaining grades A*-C, as well as the point score per student, were both well below average. The attainment of boys and girls was fairly similar, with boys performing slightly better than girls. In comparison with the schools with a similar free school meal background, the percentage of students gaining A*-C was close to the average. In comparison with other schools, where the level of prior attainment at age 14 is within a similar range, the overall percentage of A*-C grades was also close to average and indicates that achievement from age 14 to 16 was satisfactory. The GCSE results were deteriorating from 1998 to 2000, but in 2001 they improved.
172. In the work seen in lessons, and from the analysis of students' notebooks, the standards at age 14 reflect the test results of the past few years, and are, on the whole, well below expectation. However, there is an indication of improved standards in work in some classes. This is observed mainly in knowledge and understanding in life and living processes, other attainment targets in written work, but there has been insufficient evidence of the acquisition and development of practical skills. Progress in developing knowledge and understanding over the time from age 11 to 14 is satisfactory.
173. At age 16, the standards seen in lessons and written work are well below average overall. The basic ideas are clearly understood, but there is lack of depth and little application to problem solving. The lack of investigative work is clearly not helpful – none was seen in the lessons observed, and there was little evidence of it in the

student notebooks scrutinised. Boys and girls work equally well together, but where a minority of students are disruptive, the impact is significant and affects girls' progress more than boys'.

174. SEN students make satisfactory progress in lessons where good support assistance is provided. Some EAL students make good progress with support, but, where noise levels are high, the technical terms are not always clear. Within the group, the more capable students do not make the progress expected if there is insufficient match of tasks to students' capabilities.
175. Standards of literacy in science are satisfactory. Diagrams and tables are drawn with adequate care, but explanations of concepts are often brief, lacking relevant detail. Numeracy is not very explicitly promoted so skills of simple calculation and use of equations are relatively weak and below expectation for a given age group. Opportunities for using ICT in science are very limited and make very little contribution, if any, to overall standards.
176. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. During the inspection four fifths of lessons seen were at least satisfactory, and one fifth unsatisfactory. The unsatisfactory teaching was largely attributed to the different style and expectations of new teachers from overseas. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of their subject, and the skilful teachers manage student behaviour very well. However, in the case of a significant minority of teachers, the teaching method does not inspire interest or challenge, resulting in unsatisfactory learning on occasions. The level of practical work has been too low in every year group.
177. Marking of work by some teachers is good in giving feedback, although this practice is not consistently adopted throughout the department. In particular, there is not enough formative guidance to students on how they can improve their level of work. Assessment data is only used for reference and not for rigorous analysis of achievement. Expectations are satisfactory overall, but inadequate for higher-attaining students. Insufficient provision is made of work that matches the capabilities of higher-attaining students.
178. Leadership and management of the department are satisfactory. There is a satisfactory improvement plan with strategies for raising attainment. There is a clear desire to raise standards, and the department's priorities reflect those of the school. Departmental resources are well developed. Schemes of work, though, are not well adapted to the specific needs of the school. There is nothing beyond limited annotation of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) schemes, and no attempt to celebrate the multicultural nature of the school through the teaching. Use of assessment data in planning and monitoring of the progress of students is unsatisfactory. Monitoring of teachers' work is developing but it is not yet rigorous enough, especially through classroom observation, to clearly identify strengths and weaknesses and take effective action. Accommodation is satisfactory and is used well with good display. Resources are adequate. Leadership is developing but rigorous evaluation of raising attainment strategies remains as an area for further improvement.
179. Since the last inspection in 2000 some improvement has been made but significant areas remain with little progress made. Results have remained well below national average at age 14 and slipped slightly compared to similar schools. However, they show signs of improvement at age 16. Previously, poor management of behaviour was an issue. Attitudes continue to be dependent on the particular teacher, but where teaching is good the behaviour and concentration are generally very good. There

remains insufficient development of the teaching of the basic skills in literacy and numeracy, and virtually none in ICT. Weaknesses in teaching, especially low expectations and poor management of behaviour, are identified through improved monitoring, but appropriate action remains to be implemented.

ART AND DESIGN

Overall, the quality of provision in art and design is **good**.

Strengths

- Teaching and learning in art
- Celebration of success for students in this practical subject
- Display to celebrate and inspire, including the mural in a local housing development and pictures on display in the conference rooms at a local hotel
- The art aspect of textiles, especially the way in which motifs from students' own cultures are used

Areas for improvement

- Accommodation for art

180. The proportion of students attaining national expectations by the end of Year 9 is below the national average, and reflects student abilities. The numbers taking GCSE art have increased significantly over the last four years, and now reflect the full ability range of the school. Results have been close to the national average for grades A*- G, but below the national average points score.
181. Attainment in work seen is at the national average at all levels. Students with special educational needs and students with English as an additional language attain at least as well as their peers, and significant numbers attain very well. For example, a boy in a Year 10 group was working on a pointillist work inspired by aboriginal Australian art and was producing a very high quality painting using the technique to reinforce the curved lines of the composition, linked to very good use of colour – and demonstrating high levels of motor skills. Progress by all students is good, and almost all students achieve well. A firm foundation has been laid for the pursuit of excellence as a norm in the department. The practical nature of the subject has a positive effect on student attitudes. The starting point for directly observed drawing is low, but standards are very high by the time the sixth form is reached – the still-life drawings are excellent. Good work was seen in all years from 7 to 11. Display in the department and around the school both celebrates and inspires, and work from the school is to be found in a mural on a local housing development and in the conference rooms at a local hotel.
182. Student response is good at all levels. Attitudes are open and positive, and students are very keen to succeed. Classes are often bubbly and lower school students tend to chatter; however, they normally remain on task. There is a strong sense of purpose and commitment in lessons, and students use the teacher as a learning resource. Good self-management was seen in a potentially difficult and overcrowded environment. In a Year 10 textiles lesson, students were able to discuss their own work fluently and astutely. In some classes in Years 10 and 11 poor attendance and punctuality impede progress and continuity significantly.

183. Teaching and learning are good at all levels. Teaching is characterised by good planning and preparation which includes very clear target setting which is shared with students. These targets are refined into individual targets through good teacher feedback. Consequently, students know where they are going and how they are to get there. Relationships are good – often excellent, and students’ strengths and weaknesses are very well known. This maximises individual development and supports effective learning. Organisation and management are also good, giving good access to resources, and allowing students to learn effectively by doing and then refining their work. All staff of the department communicate their skills and enthusiasm effectively, and students respond with equal commitment and vitality. In the Year 11 textiles lesson, excellent use was made of motifs and styles from students’ own ethnic origins in their work. In all art work a wide range of world and historical influences are used to great effect.
184. The curriculum is broad and balanced, with strengths in three-dimensional work. Multicultural content is good, having been totally developed over the last two years, and is still under further refinement. ICT is not easily accessible within the curriculum. Work from the age of 15 is external examination based, and is not always fully appropriate. There is no programme of gallery visits to extend the curriculum and to broaden student horizons. Assessment is good. The curriculum leader has only been in post for two years and is making very good progress as a manager. Working relationships within the department are very good. Teaching and learning are monitored through both the faculty and school management performance systems.
185. Significant progress has been made since the last inspection. Understanding and technical development in art are now good, and spatial awareness is now appropriate. Basic drawing and painting are built into the core of the curriculum, and some excellent work is seen at all levels. ICT provision is still limited. Teaching is now good.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Overall the quality of provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- The leadership and management
- Improvement since the last inspection
- The quality of in-class support for teachers
- The use of ICT in lessons and coursework
- The quality of assessment of students’ work and progress

Areas for improvement

- An increased focus on raising standards of achievement including the gifted and talented
- Further development of basic literacy and numeracy skills
- More rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning

186. Students’ attainment on entry to Year 7 is below average and remains so through to Year 9. At the end of Year 9 in 2001, four out of ten students achieved national expectation; this is below the national average. In the GCSE examinations in 2001, three out of ten students gained grades A*-C, which is below the national average. The proportion of grades A*-G was also below average, with just over eight out of ten students achieving a grade. Although results over the last four years have shown variation, they are rising slightly. There were significantly more boys who failed to achieve a pass grade than was the case for boys nationally. Few students were

entered at A-level and the results in 2001 were below the national average and well below the school's average points score.

187. Despite the relatively low attainment, however, students make satisfactory progress, achieving slowly from Year 7 to 9, yet more briskly in the GCSE courses. By Year 9, a growing proportion of students demonstrate broadly satisfactory knowledge and skills in designing and making in a range of resistant materials such as wood and plastic, and compliant materials, such as textiles. They undertake product evaluations and communicate their ideas in a variety of written and sketch forms as well as by using ICT. Students' speaking and listening skills are less well developed and there are insufficient opportunities for them to improve. Some numeracy skill development arises from opportunities given to measure, calculate and record numeric data resulting from student surveys and questionnaires, and students frequently produce simple graphs and charts, using ICT where appropriate. Students with SEN progress well due to the good quality in-class support. The significant proportion of students who are refugees or have EAL, generally make slower progress, particularly when much learning is dependent on listening to the teacher rather than by other means.
188. By Year 11, students have a wider range of practical skills, enabling them successfully to make prototype and coursework products in resistant materials and textiles. In the graphics course, students are developing appropriate drawing and model making skills. Many students are satisfactorily developing their knowledge and skills as designers of products in contexts such as electronics, product evaluation and design, and industrial manufacturing techniques. Many use a very advanced ICT program to develop the form and appearance of their designs before embarking on the manufacturing stage. However, progress with coursework tends to be slow and in several Year 11 classes at the time of the inspection students were trying hard to complete their projects.
189. Students' attitudes to learning are satisfactory; they are interested in the topics studied and most students maintain sound concentration levels during the single period lessons, persevering with the tasks set and responding well to tuition and guidance from their teachers, classroom assistants and technicians. This is particularly so in the case of students with SEN. Behaviour is satisfactory. A small number of younger boys, mostly Year 8, show little respect for the feelings and values of adults and other students. Students' personal development is a positive feature within many lessons. The SEN students are very co-operative with their teachers and support assistants, as are those with developing language skills. There is a general willingness by most students to exercise some personal responsibility when sharing out equipment, resources, putting their work away and tidying up.
190. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some strengths. Teachers plan and teach lessons to a satisfactory degree of consistency. The balance of teachers' experience is good and their range of knowledge and understanding is appropriate for the curriculum. Teachers share learning objectives with students and set high expectations for behaviour and safety. Although teachers know the learning needs of the students in their care, the lesson planning usually does not adequately reflect this. In the best lessons students can proceed at an appropriate pace with regular individual support from the teacher. There was little unsatisfactory teaching, but in the lesson where it occurred, skills and techniques were taught solely by the teacher, with few supporting resources. The teaching method relied heavily on students' listening ability and the task was very difficult for EAL students in the class.
191. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. The scheme of work and associated lesson and departmental planning is systematic, well documented and contributes to

consistency and quality. The curriculum is planned effectively within the constraints of two terms of the carousel course arrangements in Years 7 to 9 where ICT is covered in the third term. The systems employed for assessing students' attainment, targets and progress are good and assessment is used well to inform students about their current progress and what they need to do to improve. However, the purpose and use of homework is undeveloped.

192. The department is well led and effectively managed, with a clear educational purpose. At the last inspection curriculum access, quality of teaching and accommodation were among several areas of identified weakness. Access in Years 10 and 11 meets statutory requirements. Computer-aided design and manufacture resources contribute significantly to the curriculum. Use of ICT within the subject has also improved. Textiles teaching has become a strength and students' achievement is improving. The quality of teaching overall is very much better. Health and safety training needs for staff are currently being reviewed and are due to be addressed through provision to be arranged by the LEA. The accommodation now is satisfactory, ranging from good in resistant materials and graphics to adequate, though cramped, in textiles. However, the limited departmental lesson and performance monitoring currently underway to evaluate teaching and learning needs further development. Overall there has been significant improvement since the last inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

Overall, the quality of provision in geography is **satisfactory**, with some elements being **good**.

Strengths

- An enthusiastic and appropriately qualified team of teachers
- A well-structured planning and preparation programme
- A comprehensive marking and assessment scheme with level descriptors (Year 7 to Year 9) and grade descriptors (Year 10 and Year 11) provided for students and their parents
- A well-structured development plan

Areas for Improvement

- Inappropriate whole-class teaching strategies with some mixed ability classes
- Staffing: a need for continuity in the deployment of human resources
- Continuity: a need to address issues relating to loss of momentum in classroom progress and the incidence of incomplete work caused by irregular attendance
- General resourcing, with particular reference to ICT

193. Standards overall across Years 7 to 11 are satisfactory, with standards in Years 10 and 11 being slightly higher than those in Years 7 to 9. The least satisfactory standards and elements of underachievement are found in the more challenging Year 9 classes.

194. The department has made satisfactory progress in addressing the weaknesses identified at the last inspection.

195. GCSE examination results in 2001 were below national averages: School: 29 per cent A*-C grades (national 56), 95 per cent A*-G (national - 97), with overall results in geography significantly below levels in other subjects in the school. The subject entry was also below national figures. The number of students entered for A-level is still very small; thus comparisons with national statistics is difficult. In 2001 two candidates

failed to reach grade requirements. Current standards at AS level are below national expectations.

196. The quality of learning is now satisfactory, with most students exhibiting clear understanding, approaching their work with enthusiasm and commitment. Class relationships are reasonably normal, with a very small element of disruptive students displaying antisocial behaviour that adversely impacts on lesson progress. Where the pace of lessons is not appropriate to the whole ability range, some students are passive, failing to engage with lesson objectives. This was particularly the case in some Year 7 to Year 9 mixed ability classes, where the lesson introduction did not address the specific needs of all students. There is a need to revisit some aspects of the planning to ensure that students with language and/or learning difficulties are not disadvantaged at the start of a lesson. Levels of achievement in all years are now more closely aligned with national expectations. Students' work in their books demonstrates a good progression over the past six months, although there is an urgent need to address issues relating to the loss of momentum in classroom progress and the incidence of incomplete work caused by irregular attendance. A major feature of most classes is the degree of inclusiveness; all students had their part to play, some contributing to the learning process in a profound way. This feature was especially noticeable with older students of central and eastern European origins, who were supportive and collaborative in their eagerness to learn. Year 10 students were very focussed on task, with very sound presentational skills and an ability to apply knowledge to specific case studies.
197. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with a few examples of good teaching observed. This is in pleasing contrast to the judgements made at the last inspection, when the quality of teaching was judged to be inconsistent and poor overall. The teaching staff are enthusiastic and knowledgeable, with good planning and preparation skills exhibited, including the sharing of learning objectives with their students. Class relationships are at least satisfactory, with examples of good student-teacher collaboration seen particularly in Years 10 and 11. The majority of students responded well to the well-structured lessons, working hard, gaining in terms of understanding, application and achievement. Books were well marked, with suitable supportive statements appended to work. The inclusion of descriptors relating to key stage grades and levels is a useful link between the classroom and home. A minority, largely boys, were not always fully engaged in ongoing tasks; this led to boredom and somewhat disruptive attitudes developing. Staff took appropriate action regarding such behaviour, with back-up available from the curriculum leader and visiting senior staff.
198. Leadership and management of the department are positively evolving and are currently satisfactory. Under the new department head, the department has moved to a 'strategy of recovery' with an implicit objective of raising standards. The department development plan is well structured, with clear strategies for the future outlined with well-defined costings and key priorities identified. There is, however, a need for the success criteria to be more transparent and definitive to allow appropriate monitoring and evaluation to be effective. Geography has made satisfactory progress; with the addition of appropriate resources, especially ICT resources, such progress will be more rapid.

HISTORY

Overall, the quality of provision in history is **satisfactory**

Strengths

- Improved examination results at GCSE in 2001
- Teachers' good subject knowledge and student management skills
- A clear sense of purpose, plans to raise attainment and teachers' commitment to students

Areas for improvement

- The attainment of students overall and especially the attainment of boys
- The range and variety of learning activities in lessons
- The ability of students to evaluate sources critically and independently
- The speaking skills of students
- The chronological understanding of students
- The use of ICT to aid learning

199. Results at GCSE in the most recent examination were well below the national average for A*-C grades, but close to the national average overall. Girls' performance was better than boys'. There was a significant improvement at the higher grades compared to recent years. At the time of the last inspection only 5 per cent of students had been awarded an A*-C grade. In 2001 more than quarter of all students entered gained an A*-C grade. Able students can do well in history, as the results in 2001 indicate, when three students attained A grades. Overall, however, students do less well in history than in their other subjects.
200. The standard attained by the majority of students aged 16 is below average. They have a basic knowledge of some of the main events of the period they are studying, and can, with help, construct a chronological narrative of events, but lack independence in gathering and presenting information. They are weak at using sources critically and weak literacy skills depress attainment. Higher-attaining students are attaining standards close to the national average. The achievement of students aged 14 to 16 is satisfactory. The majority are making satisfactory progress in the development of subject knowledge and there is some improvement in the quality and presentation of written work, especially coursework.
201. The standard attained by students aged 14 is below average and the proportion reaching the national level of expectation is much lower than the national figure. The performance of boys is significantly poorer than girls. Higher-attaining students have sound subject knowledge, can describe some key features of the period studied and speak confidently. Most, however, have insecure subject knowledge, a poor grasp of chronology and need a great deal of help in analysing sources. The poor vocabulary of many hinders understanding. Attainment on entry by the majority of students is well below average. The achievement of the majority, including students with English as an additional language, is satisfactory. The achievement of students with special educational needs is good, due to good learning aids and well-targeted classroom support.
202. Most students have a positive attitude to history and are prepared to work in lessons. Many activities help them to develop skills in collaboration and working with others. In a lesson on castles in Year 7 and on 19th century policing in Year 10 the very positive involvement of students was an important factor in the quality of learning taking place.

203. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with some good and, on occasion, very good teaching. Teachers are well qualified and have good student management skills, enabling students to learn in a purposeful and orderly atmosphere. Good and very good teaching is carefully planned to meet the wide range of needs in the group. Teachers use appropriate methods, including adapted learning materials, to help students with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs to make progress. Good relationships and well-managed activities ensure learning in these lessons is effective. Satisfactory teaching has some weaknesses. Planning intentions in the scheme of work to provide for the full range of ability in the group are not always effectively implemented in the classroom. Students who lose concentration are not always brought back to task quickly. Teachers sometimes assume that students understand key words or complicated ideas when this is not the case. Opportunities to develop students' speaking skills are not always well planned. Assessment of students' work is done regularly with grades and helpful comments, though students are not always clear about what they must do to improve.
204. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Targets for improvement have a clear focus on raising standards. There are plans to enhance the classroom experience of students by visits to sites of historical interest. Further work is needed on using performance data to set targets, ensuring that the planning intentions in the scheme of work are expressed in appropriate teaching methods in the classroom and that staff training needs are clearly identified and met. Resources overall are adequate, supplemented by materials produced by teachers. Currently there are not enough suitable textbooks for students in the GCSE examination groups. Provision for ICT is poor.
205. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in the attainment of students at GCSE, in discipline and the management of students, and in the provision for SEN and EAL students.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Overall the quality of provision in ICT is **satisfactory** in Years 10 and 11 but **unsatisfactory** in Years 7 to 9.

Strengths

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and basic ICT skills
- Students in Years 10 and 11 are encouraged to manage their learning independently
- More students have opted for ICT courses in Year 10
- GNVQ courses have been introduced
- New curriculum leader is developing strategies for improving teaching and learning

Areas for Improvement

- Provision of ICT across the school to meet statutory requirements and national expectations and improve continuity of learning
- Make better use of computer resources to promote learning
- The range and variety of learning activities in lessons
- The use of ICT resources to support teaching

206. Since the last inspection there has not been any improvement in the attainment of students by the end of Year 9 or Year 11. GCSE examination results were showing improvement in 1999. In 2000 and 2001 they worsened and have remained well below the national average. Only one student of four entered gained a grade A*-C. However,

students entered for GNVQ in 2001 achieved good results, 75 per cent of them achieving merit or distinction grades. However, a larger number of students have opted for ICT courses in the current Year 10 and results are likely to improve, given the measures being put into place by the curriculum leader.

207. Provision of ICT in Years 7 to 9 barely meets statutory requirements. There are insufficient opportunities for students to develop their knowledge and skills in line with national expectations. Students in Years 10 and 11 who do not opt for ICT courses still do not have adequate access to ICT lessons. Although it is written into the current curriculum handbook that ICT will be taught throughout the curriculum, there is little evidence of this happening. However, it is noted that plans are now in place to rectify both of these issues from September 2002.
208. The standard of attainment by the majority of students by the end of Years 9 and 11 is below average. Most students are making satisfactory progress in Years 10 and 11, but progress is unsatisfactory for a significant number of students in Years 7 to 9. Overall behaviour and attitudes of students in lessons, including those with EAL and SEN, are satisfactory.
209. In Years 10 and 11 the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge of ICT and support students well in the acquisition of basic skills. Lesson planning is satisfactory, relying mainly on students working independently through the use of on-line teaching resources to acquire knowledge and develop ICT skills. Most students show interest in their work and make satisfactory progress. Students' work is marked regularly and helpful feedback is given. Homework is set regularly and is loosely based on progression of class work but needs to be more tightly defined to ensure that all students make sufficient progress.
210. In Years 7 to 9 the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Although teachers' subject knowledge and basic skills are good, lesson planning is weak. Lesson time is not always used effectively to develop and progress learning. Not enough use is made of the starter and plenary sessions and insufficient use is made of the computer technology to enhance learning. Too much reliance is placed on the use of computer programs to deliver lesson content. Some students make good use of the on-line learning resources but others are making little progress because they are either unable to work independently or need greater challenge than that offered by the resources.
211. Management of the subject is satisfactory and is likely to improve under new leadership. Plans to improve teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9 are in place, schemes of work are currently being revised and courses have been changed to meet the needs of all students in Years 10 and 11. Further work is needed on using performance data to set targets and ensure progression of learning.

ICT across the Curriculum

Overall the quality of provision is **unsatisfactory**

Strengths

- Most departments now include the use of ICT in their schemes of work
- Some departments are now using ICT to support and enhance learning
- New opportunities funding (NOF) training is beginning to support development of staff ICT capability

Areas for Improvement

- Planning for the development and implementation of ICT across the curriculum in all subjects
- Use of ICT to support teaching and learning
- Teaching of ICT in subject areas to support delivery of ICT capability

212. There is a computer to student ratio of 1:7 in the school. However, computers are only used regularly in the four computer network rooms, the school library and in design and technology. Teachers in a number of subject areas report the lack of access to computer resources as the reason for not using ICT in their teaching.

213. Most subjects now have ICT written into their schemes of work and there is evidence of some good use of ICT to support learning in some subject areas. For example, students with SEN use an appropriate computer program to improve their English and mathematics. In RE, students in all year groups use computers to carry out research on the Internet and in the presentation of their coursework. In design AND technology students use data-handling software to show the results of their surveys AND designer packages in Year 9 for graphics work.

214. However, there is no evidence of ICT being taught to support development of ICT capability in Years 10 and 11, although it is written into the school's current curriculum handbook.

215. The whole-school development plan has recently been put in place to support the improvement of ICT across the curriculum, for training of staff and the allocation of ICT resources. There is no universally adopted policy of how ICT should be used to support the development of ICT capability in all subjects or be used to enhance learning.

216. Teachers are currently involved in a programme of training. While this will undoubtedly improve staff confidence to use computers as an aid to teaching, the lack of access to resources is likely to be a deterrent to fulfilling the requirements of the training programme and then implementing ICT as set out in their schemes of work.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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

Strengths

- Standards have significantly improved
- The target language is used effectively throughout most lessons
- There are examples of very good teaching

Areas for improvement

- A limited range of activities is used in many lessons
- The needs of all students are not being met in mixed ability classes
- A more rigorous approach to homework needs to be adopted

217. Since the last inspection GCSE examination results in both French and Spanish have significantly improved: French from 22 per cent to 36 per cent and Spanish from 5 per cent to 24 per cent. Though these results are still below the national averages, there is evidence that they will continue to improve. In Years 10 and 11 attainment in French is mainly satisfactory with a minority that is unsatisfactory; in Spanish it is satisfactory. Students are now getting work booklets to take home so that they will have resources

for revision, but a more rigorous approach to homework needs to be adopted so that the work done in class will be reinforced and extended.

218. In Years 7 to 9 in both French and Spanish attainment varies from satisfactory to very good, with a small minority unsatisfactory in Spanish. In classes where attainment is very good, written work is marked regularly and students are given clear indications on how to improve their work. While the register is taken they are tested orally in every lesson and respond very well to the quick-fire question and answer session with the teacher. In one Year 8 French class, students had reached Level 4 in all the attainment targets and some were approaching Level 5. Students have a very good understanding of the levels of attainment and know what they need to do in order to progress.
219. In Years 10 and 11 students have the opportunity to study Turkish. In Year 10 they take GCSE and examination results are well above average. In Year 11 they go on to study for A-level GCE. Students are highly motivated and they feel confident that they will get very good examination results. The majority of students speak in Turkish throughout the lesson and respond well to the teacher's high expectations.
220. The quality of teaching in both French and Spanish in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory with a minority that is good. In Years 7 to 9 it varies from satisfactory to very good. When teaching is at its best the teachers come across as excellent role models. The target language is used very effectively throughout the lessons and the students' response is magnificent; they enjoy rising to the challenge. The key skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are integrated in an imaginative way so that, while the same content is being reinforced, students' attention is held by the variety of activities. Good use is made of flashcards and audio tape recordings. ICT is used well to support and enhance students' learning, for example to redraft work to ensure accuracy, and students in Year 9 have established e-mail links with a school in France.
221. In all classes the majority of students are well behaved. Relationships between students and with the teachers are good. Overall, they are well motivated and respond well to good teaching. SEN and EAL students make at least satisfactory progress, with some EAL students achieving very well.
222. The leadership and management of the department are good. There is a very good development plan and the head of department has clearly defined goals for raising the profile of modern foreign languages in the school.

MUSIC

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

Strengths

- There is secure class management and organisation.
- Positive relationships are established with students.
- Good emphasis is placed on developing students' understanding of music from different cultures.

Areas for improvement

- Raise the standard of students' attainment in Years 7 to 9.
- Ensure that there is provision for ICT in Years 7 to 9.
- The school is aware of the need to develop the provision for extra-curricular activities and instrumental lessons.

223. Of the 11 students who took the GCSE examination in 2001, none gained a grade above D. It is difficult to make accurate comparisons with the national average, due to the small number of students following a GCSE course. Fewer students took the examination in 2000. Of these, two students gained C grades, with the others gaining lower grades. No students in the current Years 10 and 11 are taking the GCSE course. The 2001 teacher assessment results for Year 9 students were very low in comparison to the national average. No teacher assessment results are available for 2000.
224. By the end of Year 9 attainment is below national expectations, a similar position so that at the last inspection. Students in Year 9 show a limited musical knowledge. Their keyboard performances often lack fluency and accuracy. They show an insecure understanding of basic chord structures and make infrequent reference to musical vocabulary. Students in Year 7 listen to music played by a gamelan orchestra. They talk about the different sounds produced and write down their own ideas about the music. They begin to understand how different musical styles can be compared. In Year 8 students learn a short keyboard melody. They read from simple notation and locate the notes well. They understand the need to practise in order to improve their performance. Year 9 students use repetition to improvise a short phrase which they combine with an Indian melody. They add an ostinato pattern on percussion instruments to make their performance more effective. The outcomes of their work, however, often show a limited development of both melodic and rhythmic patterns. There are a few students, however, who show better skills during performing and composing tasks. In the last inspection students were found to have unsatisfactory attitudes and behaviour. Both are now good. As a result, students' achievement is satisfactory. Students make satisfactory progress in performing skills and in developing their knowledge of music from other countries. Students with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and the more musically able make satisfactory progress in lessons.
225. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 7 to 9. In the last inspection teaching was found to be unsatisfactory. Lessons now have clear learning objectives. Class management is secure and positive relationships are established with students. These have a positive impact on students' learning. Good provision is in place for developing students' understanding of music from other countries. For example, in a Year 9 lesson, students listened to two short extracts of music and made comparisons between them. They talked about the different instruments, rhythms and accompaniments used and suggested the countries that the music came from. However, occasionally, insufficient explanation is given to aid students' learning during listening and appraising tasks. The provision for homework and for developing students' literacy skills is satisfactory.
226. There is good management by the curriculum leader for expressive arts. There have been some staff changes since the last inspection, but staffing is now stable. There is satisfactory monitoring of teaching and planning. The last inspection found that there was no systematic assessment of students' work. This is now in place. Over 20 students receive instrumental lessons from peripatetic staff. Students have taken part in Christmas concerts, talent shows and school productions. There has been a performance of the musical "Grease", and a performance of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" is planned. The present accommodation is unsatisfactory. However, a new expressive arts building will be ready for use next term. Although the resources are adequate overall, there are no computers for students' use.
227. The subject makes a good contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

228. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. The school has been successful in addressing many of the weaknesses highlighted in the last report. There is planned provision for ICT in the new expressive arts accommodation. However, students' attainment in Years 7 to 9 still remains below national expectations.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

Strengths

- All teachers have very good specialist knowledge of the subject and a keen understanding of the individual needs of students.
- The attitude to the subject of most students is positive.
- The department is well managed.
- The curricular and extra-curricular programmes are very good, making a significant contribution to the students' personal development.

Areas for Improvement

- Make more use of the information gathered in assessment procedures to support students' progress, measure the effectiveness of teaching and further develop the nature of the PE programme.
- Establish more control over the maintenance of the department's specialist outdoor facilities.

229. GCSE results in 2001 were very close to the national average for A*-C grades. Girls performed a little better than boys overall and the level of attainment in PE was above most other subjects in the school. Over the last three years the general trend had been upwards and these latest results are the highest ever achieved, with many students recording their highest subject grade in physical education.

230. Attainment on entry is below average and reflects the limited experience in the subject of many new arrivals. Work seen in Year 7 confirms this with a lack of co-ordination and overall physical fitness still below average expected levels.

231. By the end of Year 9 overall standards are in line with national averages and in terms of personal fitness and some games skills they are higher. This represents good achievement from Year 7 to Year 9; added value is clear. This level of constant achievement comes as a result of good teaching and positive student attitudes. Progress in individual lessons is often good. For example, in year 8 dance, sequences of movement were improved by greater attention being given to body tension by the students, especially by the girls. Progress over time was seen clearly in Year 7 football where ball control skills have been improved noticeably by most boys. Those students with SEN and those with EAL do particularly well in the early years. This is a direct consequence of the attention given paid to their needs by the teachers and the teaching programmes. Success in physical activity greatly boosts their self-confidence and this promotes further improvement. By the end of Year 11 standards overall are well sustained and matching expected levels at this age. Personal fitness standards are good and the level of skill displayed by some boys in soccer and in particular in basketball is very high.

232. In the sixth form results in examinations in 2001 were below the national average. In the current AS-level class achievement is good and particularly so in theory work. Many students have produced work for assignments which is well written, accurate and

shows clearly a good standard of technical knowledge related to physical fitness factors and a confident use of specialist terminology.

233. In all years, higher attainers in a wide range of sports and games, both as individuals and in teams, compete regularly and successfully at local and regional level.
234. Throughout the school most students display a most positive approach to their work in the lessons and in the extensive and popular extra-curricular programme. Almost all behave well and have a clear understanding of what their teachers expect of them in terms of behaviour as well as performance. Most are eager to do well and demonstrate through sound standards of personal kit, attendance and participation their keen interest in the subject.
235. Overall the quality of teaching is consistently good. There is some very good teaching and much of the good teaching contains very good features. The greatest strength of the teachers is their well-developed specialist knowledge. This enables them to devise, most skilfully, activities and practices designed to promote improvement. Objectives are clearly set at the beginning of most lessons and consequently students know well what to do in order to improve. The teachers have very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of all students, including those with SEN and EAL. This ensures that their needs are met by the way in which explanations and demonstrations are provided to guide their learning and subsequently in the boost in self-confidence that comes with achievement in practical activities.
236. The requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met by a broad and balanced programme of activities. The extra-curricular activities provided by the department are a central and popular feature of the school day and have a significant effect on the students' personal and social development.
237. The PE department's contribution to the sixth form 'enrichment programme' is highly valued by the students, including those who will consequently be able to seek additional accreditation through the Community Sports Leader Award. The assessment programme is particularly well developed in respect of its responding to and utilising the National Curriculum level descriptions. The information gathered by these arrangements should in time enable the department to track student progress and measure the effectiveness of teaching and the PE programme.
238. The provision of specialist facilities is good but poor management has led to the condition of outside areas becoming damaged or rundown. Changes in this area are planned and the school should secure a better level of control over the maintenance of these important facilities.
239. The curriculum leader is new to the post; indeed, most of the PE teachers are relatively new to the school. What has been achieved in a short time is remarkable. The department is very well organised, teamwork is strong and documentation is in very good order. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement. GCSE results have improved, the standards of attainment at the end of Year 9 are much more consistent with national expectations across more activities, and attitudes have become much more positive. Teaching standards are higher amongst a new specialist staff. This area of the curriculum is now well placed in having the capacity and commitment to make further improvement.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of provision in religious education is **satisfactory with some strengths**.

Strengths

- RE contributes well to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- GCSE results are average and better than students' results in other subjects
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and are enthusiastic
- Oral work and discussion in lessons help to develop literacy skills as well as students' knowledge and understanding of RE

Areas for improvement

- Improving the scheme of work for Years 7 to 9 to give teachers more specific guidance on teaching methods and raising standards
- Ensuring more consistency in teachers' expectations of written work
- Improving the structure of written work to give students more guidance and support
- Making more use of ICT

240. Students' knowledge is below expectations when they join the school and in Years 7 to 9 standards are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. However, students are achieving at a broadly satisfactory level compared with their starting point. They learn about the main beliefs and practices of Christianity and other world religions such as Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam and begin to understand why many people think that religious belief is important. In Year 7, for example, the students were learning about the importance of pilgrimages in many faiths and could talk confidently about the main features of the Hajj (Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca). Students learn to consider spiritual and moral ideas in relation to historical and contemporary events and their own lives. In Year 9 students were sensitively discussing issues of belief in God which had arisen from their study of The Holocaust and Judaism. They discuss their ideas sensibly, though their vocabulary is often limited and they need a lot of encouragement to develop ideas in depth. Their writing is below expectations and many students find it difficult to write at any length.

241. GCSE results have improved considerably in recent years with about half the year group achieving an A* - C grade in the short course. Girls are doing better than boys which reflects the differences in the quality of their written work. Standards in Year 11 are also close to the national average and students are achieving well. In Years 10 and 11 the work is closely matched to examination requirements. Students learn the required topics thoroughly and improve their skills in answering written questions. Many could discuss issues sensibly, as, for example, when Year 11 students considered Christian attitudes to moral issues and why churches might have different teaching. They generally listened well to what others had to say but most had to be prompted to think in any depth.

242. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some aspects of the work which are very good. Students are not naturally strongly motivated towards academic work and teachers have to work hard to engage their attention. In general they manage students well, though occasionally minor disciplinary issues were not dealt with effectively enough. In lessons emphasis on helping students to develop their literacy skills is good. Teachers make sure that students understand key words, and the promotion of oral skills, through reading aloud and discussion, is working well. This enables all students, including those with SEN and those at an early stage of learning English, to make at least satisfactory progress overall. Teachers question students skilfully, as, for example, in a very good lesson in Year 10 which helped students to develop their understanding of how religious beliefs could affect attitudes towards

political systems and authority. The development of written skills is less consistently effective. The use of writing frames is helping students to express their ideas and develop a good written style but this is not done consistently. The use of ICT in religious education is limited, though students use the Internet for research and word processing for presenting their work. Learning support teachers are effectively deployed to support students and in one case a language support teacher with specialist knowledge was able to make a very valuable contribution to a lesson. Teachers mark exercise books regularly but expectations for the quality and quantity of work are not always consistent.

243. The management of religious education is satisfactory. The subject is organised by a knowledgeable subject specialist. The scheme of work for Years 7 to 9 covers the content of the agreed syllabus but does not give as much guidance as it could on teaching approaches designed to raise standards. Lesson planning for RE is generally good and includes specific activities designed to support students' literacy skills. Worksheets and other resources are of good quality and are carefully chosen to extend understanding. Teachers have also developed some imaginative resources for themselves. Religious education provides students with good opportunities for developing spiritual, moral and social awareness and for learning about the faith and cultures of a variety of communities and ethnic groups.
244. The improvement in provision for religious education has been satisfactory. The arrangements to cover the vacancy which affects five classes are satisfactory in the short term as the subject leader has taken on responsibility for planning and provides detailed lesson plans to assist supply teachers. The school meets statutory requirements for religious education in Years 7 to 11 but still does not provide religious education in the sixth form, which is a requirement.

BUSINESS EDUCATION

Overall the quality of provision is **satisfactory**

Strengths

- Teachers' good subject knowledge and classroom management skills.
- Effective teaching methods.
- Regular marking of student work with helpful feedback.

Areas for Improvement

- The overall attainment of students in examination.
- Enable all students to access the language requirements of the course.

245. Since the last inspection there has not been any significant improvement in GCSE examination results and no students were entered for examination in 2001. Currently there are three groups of students following a GCSE business studies course.
246. The standard attained by the majority of students is in line with national expectations. They have a basic knowledge of most aspects of the course, such as types of business and concepts of advertising. Students show good attitudes and display good behaviour at all times. They are able to develop their personal knowledge and skills through a variety of activities including class discussion and work assignments. Satisfactory progress is made by EAL and SEN students.
247. The quality of teaching and learning is, overall, satisfactory with some good teaching seen. Teachers are well qualified and have good classroom management skills. Teaching methods are effective and overall planning is satisfactory. Students' work is regularly marked and helpful comments are provided to reinforce and develop learning.

Students are developing knowledge and skills satisfactorily, commensurate with their levels of ability on entry. However, access to key words for some students is restricted by the level of their language skills on entry to the course.

248. Management of the subject is satisfactory. However, further work is needed on using performance data to set targets for improving examination results and ensuring that courses offered are appropriate.

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

In the inspection, 9 subjects and courses were inspected and are reported on in detail. Work in other subjects and courses was sampled and contributed to the overall picture of teaching and learning in the school.

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

GCE AS level courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-B		% gaining grades A-E		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Geography	2	0	6	0	74	0	1.18
Mathematics	2	0	15	0	62	0	1.51

GCE A level and AVCE courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-B		% gaining grades A-E		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art and Design	5	0	46	60	96	2.40	6.57
Biology	2	0	34	50	88	1.00	5.25
Communication Studies	3	0	31	33	93	1.33	5.53
Computer Studies	8	0	23	50	86	1.25	4.62
English Literature	8	38	37	75	95	4.50	5.91
French	1	0	38	100	89	2.00	5.59
Full Design and Technology	3	0	30	33	91	1.33	5.38
History	4	0	35	100	88	3.50	5.45
Other Languages	5	60	56	80	93	7.20	6.84
Religious Education	1	0	38	100	92	2.00	5.84
Sociology	3	0	35	0	86	0	5.32
Spanish	1	100	39	100	89	8.00	5.70
Spots/PE Studies	3	0	25	100	92	4.67	5.09

SUBJECTS AND COURSES GROUPED IN CURRICULUM AREAS

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCES

MATHEMATICS

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

Strengths

- The curriculum offers a broad range of courses, responding well to local circumstances.
- The subject expertise of the teachers and their planning of lessons are good, responsible for the satisfactory achievement of the students.
- Individual support for the students is good and they have good attitudes to their work.

Areas for improvement

- The suitability of some students for their proposed course of study on enrolment.
- Teaching methods.
- Attendance of students on the one-year courses in Year 12.

249. In recent years the number of students completing the GCE A-level course has been too small for national comparison. No students completed the course in 2001. Of the 11 students who studied AS level in Year 12, results were well below the national average. Three of them continued into Year 13, one of whom earned the higher A/B grades, the other two well below average.

250. The standard of work seen in the inspection is below average in Year 13. It is average in pure mathematics and below average in decision mathematics and statistics. Basic algebraic skills are secure in pure mathematics and students solve simple problems accurately. Two of the students began their course from standards well below that normally seen on an A-level course and achieve as expected. The underlying concepts of decision mathematics and statistics are not fully understood so they depend on rote learning to solve problems, not always with success. The one student who began the course from a standard above that normally seen on an A-level course has no such problem, interpreting problems with understanding and so solving them successfully. The achievement of all three students is satisfactory.

251. Only four students studying the application of number key skills course attended the lesson inspected. They calculate VAT and know how to calculate compound interest, making satisfactory progress overall. Attendance on the resit GCSE course was also below that expected. Attainment on entry for this course was well below that usually seen for students expecting a GCSE grade C at the end of the course, so it is not surprising that they find learning difficult. Unsatisfactory use of private study time is resulting in a lack of progress and learning, in transformation geometry, for example.

252. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Subject expertise is good and lessons are planned well, ensuring smooth progress through the scheme of work and providing the motivation for students to work well. Assessment is immediate and helpful to students but is not sufficiently extensive to promote better understanding. Teaching methods are satisfactory but there is a lack of open-ended questions which inhibits students' oral contributions in class, limiting their understanding. Direct methods need further development if basic knowledge is to be consolidated well. Students' attitude to their work is good overall. A few students studying AS level in Year 12 have not

developed sufficient study skills to complete the course successfully, spending too short a time in private study, for example.

253. The teaching and learning on the application of number course are satisfactory but lacking rigour in some aspects of the teaching of basic skills. The teaching and learning in the resit GCSE course are satisfactory but are not yet making inroads into students' unsatisfactory attitudes, resulting from staffing difficulties within the department last term. Achievement since the start of the course is unsatisfactory.
254. The new curriculum leader has a good clear educational vision for the improvements required within mathematics. Priorities are in place. The teachers are keen and have the capacity to carry them out. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory as the teaching has improved.

SCIENCES

255. The focus was on biology but physics and chemistry were also sampled. There were no entries at GCE A level for the sampled subjects in 2001. In 2000, GCE A-level results in chemistry were close to average and half of the ten candidates entered achieved grades A or B. Only one candidate was unsuccessful. There were no entries for physics in 2000. In 1999, the one candidate gained a pass grade in physics. The results represent satisfactory achievement from modest individual attainment at GCSE.
256. No lessons or work in chemistry were seen. One lesson of physics was observed in Year 12 and students' work examined. Standards are below average, with the majority working at grade D/E of the GCE AS examination criteria. Students have a basic knowledge, for example of the operation of a current balance, but as yet lack the depth needed for higher grades. Teaching is good with good planning. Students learn at a good pace but detailed understanding is not better developed, due to a certain lack of confidence shown by students in raising difficulties.

BIOLOGY

Overall provision for biology is **good**.

Strengths

- Good, well-organised teaching
- Individual tuition, support and attention
- Appropriate level of work to match capability of students
- Good planning of course and resources

Areas for improvement

- Standards of attainment
- Participation of all students, ensuring opportunities for discussion and greater sharing of ideas
- Use of ICT

257. Standards fluctuate from year to year and the number of candidates entered for A level or AS level is generally small. In 2001, there were two candidates for A level, one of whom gained grade E. In 2000, the number of candidates was higher and the majority gained grades A*-C. No results are recorded at AS level.

258. In the work seen and lessons observed in Year 13 standards are below average. The three students show a basic understanding of the principles of scientific investigation, research the topic thoroughly and predict outcomes well before embarking on the individual task. Practical skills in handling equipment such as delicate syringes and biological samples are good. Their theoretical understanding is more uncertain, for example on the efficiency of gas exchange systems. The students have achieved well. After having gained modest grades at GCSE they are expected to achieve A level grades well above the pass minimum. In Year 12 standards of the six candidates vary but overall are below average. Observations made in the one lesson seen, which was practical investigation, showed good standards of independent learning, practical skill but weakness in depth of understanding of the biological detail.
259. Teaching is good. The course is well planned and currently provides good individual tuition to the students. The teacher has a clear knowledge of the needs of the students and presents challenges that are very well focused on individual capability. Good opportunities are given for independent research. Expectations are high and reflected in the work covered. Assessments are clear and feedback to students has been good. Some students who do not seek to extend their own understanding, through questions, for example, are not persuaded well enough to participate in discussion. Marking of work is good.
260. The subject is adequately managed as part of the science department provision. Regular assessment is carried out and results compared to targets set from prior attainment. Use of assessment data remains unexploited. Resources are well maintained.

ENGINEERING, DESIGN AND MANUFACTURING

261. The focus of the inspection was business education but the school also offers design and technology within this area which was lightly sampled. Few students were entered at A level and the results in 2001 were below the national average and well below the school's average points score. The sixth form students enjoy the challenges of the course and the increase in the number of Year 12 students, compared with previous years, has generated a positive environment for learning together. Progress in the AS and A-level courses is generally satisfactory and students have amassed large project folders which are mostly of good quality.

BUSINESS

Overall, the quality of provision in Business education is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Good levels of student achievement, especially in comparison to other subjects.
- Some very good teaching, wherein individual student needs are known, understood and attended to.

Areas for improvement

- Introduce courses which more closely reflect the needs and potential, indicated by the broad range in students' prior attainment and/or experience.
- Establish closer relations with the local community in order to provide improved background knowledge of the business world and better material for case studies.

262. Overall standards are at present satisfactory. In GCE A level in 2001 almost all students achieved a pass grade A–E, though there were no higher grades. When

measured against their results in other subjects, this represents good achievement. In the previous year at A level overall results were similar; however, in Advanced GNVQ business all students achieved at least 'Pass' grades, over half achieved 'Merit' grades and there were two 'Distinctions'. When set against the very well-detailed students' background, achievement overall in the subject area was good and there was a clear indication of better performance in vocational type courses. This is supported by observations made, especially in the current Year 13 AVCE course. The work seen in lessons and in written assignments is at least average for most students, for some it is above average. Again, the background, including performance in GCSE examinations, and the varied social and cultural experience of the group is well documented and the needs identified therein are currently very well met by the nature of the course and the inclusive nature of the teaching. The progress made by many of the students is remarkable; for example, a student who arrived to become resident in this country just over a year ago is predicted to achieve a grade C pass in the subject in the final examination this year.

263. Overall the quality of teaching is good, with some teaching very good. Teachers plan well and in great detail, ensuring that lessons or activities effectively increase knowledge and understanding and meet the needs of all students, including those with SEN and EAL. Some examples chosen to illustrate the issues in the course are well chosen to achieve this aim, for example the proposed 'Traffic Congestion Tax' in Central London. They are well understood by the students due to their geographical location. The department's work would benefit further from attempts to build closer links to the business community in the Enfield area. This would provide more and local examples of case studies to strengthen and deepen students' knowledge and understanding. In some classes the teachers' skill in posing questions sharpen the degree of challenge for improvement and raise students' awareness of their strengths and weaknesses. In all classes there are good relationships between the students and their teachers. In the second year AVCE group all students work in a most mature and positive manner; in the first year group student attitudes are more variable though most are eager, involved and contribute capably to classroom discussion. Most students value the teaching in business studies, though for different reasons. Older, more mature students appreciate the way in which their individual needs are met in a caring, committed and professional manner. There are some who place too great a reliance on their teacher and consequently take too little responsibility for their own learning.
264. Most teachers are relatively new to the school; indeed, the curriculum leader for ICT/business has not yet completed a full term. The department now has a good sense of direction and the commitment to improve. It is recognised that careful choices need to be made in deciding which courses are best suited to the needs of such a broad range of students. The staff work closely together and are well supported by senior management at this important stage in the development of the subject. Attention should be paid to viewing business education in the context of the 14 –19 curriculum when planning on a whole-school basis. At the time of the last inspection the work of a very different department was judged to be in line with expectations. It is in a similar position now but with clear plans for improvement and, with the strengths in leaders and teachers now available, is well placed to move forward.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall the quality of provision in ICT in the sixth form is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and teach confidently

- More students are opting for ICT courses from both personal interest and career needs
- Introduction of vocational courses to address issue of weak examination grades
- The use of on-line teaching resources to promote independent learning

Areas for Improvement

- The attainment of students in A-level and AS level and GNVQ examinations
- Ensure that all students fully understand concepts derived from on-line resourced learning.

265. In 2001, examination results were well below average. Only one student was entered for and passed GNVQ intermediate ICT. Eight students were entered for A-level ICT with a 50 per cent pass rate. No student gained a higher grade. There were no entries to examinations prior to 2001. Value added data was not available to check the appropriateness of entry to courses taken.

266. Current students are studying a range of vocational examinations. They show good attitudes to their chosen subject and display good behaviour at all times. They are able to develop their personal ICT skills and knowledge well through use of on-line resources and practical tasks. Good examples of database design, hardware and software uses were observed in lessons and in work sampled. Progress made by EAL and SEN students is satisfactory.

267. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The teachers have good command of their subject and of the required ICT key skills. Planning is generally satisfactory and where lesson planning is good students make better progress. Teacher expectations are satisfactory overall.

268. Management of the subject is satisfactory and likely to improve with the appointment of a new curriculum leader. Steps have already been taken to change the A-level and AS level courses to vocational AVCE and ASVCE courses. Satisfactory use is beginning to be made of regular assessment and the related data to predict examination grades. Plans are also in place to improve standards of teaching and student learning and have yet to take effect as learning outcomes. Resources are adequate. Textbooks are available to support learning and computers are used on a one-to-one basis. Students also have access to computers for private study and support from teachers during extra-curricular teaching time.

HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

269. PE/sports studies is offered in this area and was lightly sampled. In the sixth form results in examinations in 2001 were below the national average. In the current AS-level class achievement is good and particularly so in theory work. Many students have produced work for assignments which is well written, accurate and shows clearly a good standard of technical knowledge related to physical fitness factors and a confident use of specialist terminology. The quality of teaching of PE/sports studies is good.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

No subjects were sampled in this area.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

The school offers only drama and art in this area, both of which were focus subjects for the inspection.

DRAMA

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

Strengths

- The subject has been successfully re-established in the sixth form
- There is good teaching
- Students have positive attitudes to the subject
- There is good subject leadership from a young new specialist teacher

Areas for improvement

- Standards as yet are still below the national average
- Resources and accommodation are adequate, but will be much better provided for, once new facilities become available

270. Drama ceased to function effectively in the sixth form after very poor examination results in 1999. There were no candidates for A level in 2000 or 2001, but the arrival of a new subject specialist in 2000 allowed an AS course to be started. The four students who completed this course all secured a pass grade, one at grade B. Three of them have gone on to do the A-level course, and 13 more students are now taking AS drama.
271. Although standards are still below the national average, drama students achieve well in relation to their prior attainment in GCSE examinations; some of them have had relatively little experience of drama as an academic subject, but are enabled to make good progress by the good teaching they receive. They take a pride in their work; written work is presented well, although some of the ideas expressed lack depth. To achieve higher grades, students will need to have a better grasp of theatrical concepts.
272. The AS and A-level students are taught together in one group by two drama teachers who each bring a distinctive approach to the subject. This is very much appreciated by the students. Teachers are fully involved in the lessons and have a good relationship with their students, who clearly enjoy the subject. They are helped to evaluate their own work and come to a good understanding of contemporary drama, notably the plays of Willy Russell. Teachers were observed showing students how to achieve better tone in their performances and how to use body language more effectively. The good subject knowledge and understanding of the teachers clearly enables students to develop technical skills such as these effectively. Students also develop personal skills through working together in groups. They receive good help from the teachers, who are also competent in assessing students' work appropriately.
273. The head of drama, although relatively new to teaching, has already made his mark on the department, which operates within the expressive arts faculty. The other sixth form drama teacher is a senior teacher with good classroom experience. They have a vision for the subject, and are exploring the possibility of other courses that would be relevant to sixth formers here. The present accommodation is adequate, but will undoubtedly improve when new facilities become available soon. Similarly, the department will be able to build up its sound but limited resources. The subject has begun to flourish, and has the capacity to improve even further.

ART

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

Strengths

- Good relationships between teachers and students
- Strong teaching of basic skills
- Appropriate courses offered to suit the needs of students

Areas for Improvement

- Raise standards at AS level
- Develop the use of ICT
- Improve resources
- Appropriate deployment of technician

274. Standards at A level in 2001 were very low, which has been the case since the last inspection. Only five candidates took the exam, making national comparisons difficult, but students on the whole achieved as expected.
275. Standards seen during the inspection confirm that students in the sixth form are working at a standard well below the national average in both GNVQ and AS groups. This represents satisfactory progress when taking into account prior attainment. There are a number of students in both groups who have not taken art at GCSE level, due to a variety of valid reasons affecting standards at present. Higher-attaining students in the GNVQ group use brush strokes expressively to imitate the lively style of Van Gogh but miss the opportunity to improve their drawing skills by working from a sheet prepared by the teacher. All students rely heavily on copying and tracing with little evidence of students' own ideas being developed. Higher-attaining students studying the AS course draw well in pencil studies of eyes as preparation for a lively and effective composition of a peacock in oil pastel. Mid- and lower-attaining students use charcoal to show light and shade in a still life group and in pencil exploring figures observed in seated poses.
276. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching strengths are in the setting of appropriate work to cope with the considerable variation in ability of the students in both groups. There is good teaching of basic skills and students are encouraged to use subject specific vocabulary when answering questions and in discussion. Learning is inhibited by lack of prior knowledge. Higher-attaining students take care with presentation but much work could be better presented. In the work seen research lacks variety, breadth and depth, reflecting to some degree the inadequacy of suitable resource facilities and materials in the art department. Productivity is very low in general. Students' attitudes are satisfactory with punctual students taking their work seriously and appreciating the help and support given by the teacher. Those who arrive late settle to work quickly. Procedures for assessing and monitoring student progress are good with plenty of constructive verbal feedback given to advise students on how to raise their standard of work.
277. The department is well led and managed. This is evident in the issues prioritised in the development plan and improvements to schemes of work. The GNVQ course has been introduced to serve the need of students who did not take art lower down the school or who have recently joined the school and who wish to study art. However, good teaching of basic skills and the establishment of sound routines have yet to make an impact on students in the sixth form but there is a commitment to raising standards and strategies in place to accomplish this. Progress since the last inspection is therefore satisfactory.

HUMANITIES

278. The focus for inspection was history. The school offers geography but no lessons were sampled during the inspection. The number of students entered for A-level geography is still very small, thus comparisons with national statistics are difficult. In 2001, two candidates failed to reach grade requirements. Current standards at AS level are below national expectations.

HISTORY

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

Strengths

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and teach with confidence
- Good teaching is helping students to make clear gains in their knowledge of history
- Students work hard in lessons and are evidently interested in their studies

Areas for improvement

- The attainment of students in AS and A-level examinations
- The retention of students from the AS to the A-level course
- The development of students' speaking and oral communication skills
- The provision for students' wider reading in the subject
- The targets set for improvement so that students have a clear idea of what they must do to improve

279. Relatively small numbers of students have been entered for the A level examination in recent years. Candidates are almost always girls; only one boy has been entered for the examination in the last three years. Results have been below average, both at the higher grades and overall. In 2001 all students entered for the A-level examination gained a pass grade. The average point per student, whilst still below the national figure, was higher than in any of the previous four years. There were no entries for the AS level examination in 2001. There is insufficient evidence to make meaningful comparisons between the performance of boys and girls.

280. The majority of students in the current AS level class are reaching average levels of attainment and higher-attaining students are reaching above average levels. All students gained at least a grade C in the GCSE examination and three students gained A grades. Students have a good knowledge of the themes they are studying and are able to communicate their ideas clearly in written form. Whilst lower-attaining students' written work is largely factual and narrates the course of historical events, that of higher-attaining students is more reflective and shows that they can approach the study of history with critical awareness. The best written work of these students is an effective blend of factually correct description and well-balanced evaluation. They are able to make clear judgements based on evidence and present their conclusions concisely, using good supporting evidence. Lower-attaining students have less well-developed skills of historical enquiry and their written work lacks critical and analytical examination of the themes they are studying. All students are weaker at expressing themselves orally and answers to questions in class tend to be brief and undeveloped. Few of them draw upon the work of professional historians in their essays and there is little evidence of wider reading in the subject. There are currently no students studying history at A- level.

281. All students are making good progress in extending their subject knowledge and satisfactory progress in the development of key study-skills. They can scan written source materials for relevant information, make detailed notes and organise the results of their work efficiently, though they are less confident in undertaking independent research. Evident progress is being made in knowledge and study-skills and the achievement of the majority of students is satisfactory.
282. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good command of their subject and are confident in their conduct of lessons. Good planning engages students in active learning, often providing them with experience of working collaboratively and in making presentations of their findings to the wider group. Opportunities to develop students' confidence in speaking and discussing, however, is a weaker aspect of lesson planning. There is also a tendency by teachers to over-explain issues to students rather than encouraging them to form and defend their own hypotheses. Teachers are sensitive to the wide range of ability in the group and in their planning and classroom organisation ensure that all students are fully included in activities. Students work hard in lessons, work quickly and with concentration on the tasks set. They are evidently interested in the subject. Good planning and well-organised group work on a lesson on the racial policies of the Third Reich prompted good levels of response from students. They applied themselves diligently to the work set and clearly related what they were studying to wider social and moral issues.
283. Assessment of students' work is done regularly and thoroughly. Comment is generally helpful but targets for improvement are often implicit rather than clearly set out. Consequently, students do not always have a clear view of what they must do to improve the standard of their work.
284. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The recently appointed assistant curriculum leader for the subject has identified appropriate targets for the attainment of the current cohort of students and is providing clear and committed leadership. Several initiatives are still in the process of implementation and planning does not, as yet, fully address the development of the full range of skills which students need to guarantee success. Resources are adequate. Much material used in the classroom is produced by teachers. There are too few textbooks, and much use is made of photocopied material. This is a further constraint on the range and type of literature available for students.
285. There has been improvement since the last inspection in results at A-level and in the standard attained by students in lessons.

ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

The focus of the inspection was English literature and French. The school also offers Spanish and Turkish to A-level, but no lessons were seen during the inspection. These students attain standards which are above the national average.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

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

Strengths

- Results in the AS and A-level courses improved in 2001 when the overall results of the school declined.
- Achievement at AS level is good.
- Nearly all complete the advanced courses because the support and guidance for less competent students are good.

Areas for improvement

- The use of assessment criteria when translating the syllabus into a scheme of work.
- The teaching of the key skills of communication.
- The match between the range of competencies at age 16 and the courses provided, particularly those for students at an early stage of language acquisition.

286. There is provision for approximately 40 students. Almost half study GCE AS and A-level courses in English literature. GCSE English is offered as a resit course for students and eight students who speak English as an additional language at an early stage of acquisition follow the Cambridge First Certificate course. The key skills communication course was also sampled.
287. It was not possible to observe the GCSE resit students in lessons and no sample of their work was available during the inspection. Sampling of the lessons for the Cambridge Certificate course evidenced satisfactory teaching but most students struggled because the course was too difficult for them. Standards were low in key skills communication because teaching methods did not address the very wide range of ages, attitudes and skills. The poor attitude of a small minority of male students was not dealt with satisfactorily.
288. Results in AS and A-level courses in 2001 were well below average but much better than in the previous year. Most start the sixth form with very modest GCSE grades and their performance represents satisfactory achievement at age 18. Retention rates are good because all students get plenty of help and support, both within lessons and at other times.
289. Standards in A-level are similar to the most recent results. Those at AS are higher and broadly in line with standards nationally. This represents good achievement and reflects the better results at GCSE before starting the course and the developing expertise of the teachers in planning the course.
290. The very small number of more competent A-level students reach average standards in lessons. They can draw inferences, are aware of connotations of meaning and appreciate the power of metaphor when analysing short extracts from *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*. They struggle to interpret vocabulary that lies beyond their immediate experience, for example 'lurid visage...furrowed...pigmy intellect.' Rarely do they rise from the analysis of textual detail to draw a generalised critical conclusion about a whole text. This feature was also evident in their files of previously completed work; for example, no student in the study of some of Shakespeare's sonnets identified the links between image and form in order to identify tone and viewpoint. Consequently, no student's work reached the highest levels of grade A/B.

291. The thorough, well-planned induction course helps many to bridge well the gap between GCSE and AS level work. As a result, the majority makes good progress in the first term of the AS course and are currently achieving well. Several essay assignments show an improving critical vocabulary, a widening critical awareness, including alternative Marxist schools of criticism, and the regular use of the Internet to research the historical and biographical backgrounds of their texts.
292. Attitudes are good. Discussion with a small number of students indicates good motivation and increasing confidence to succeed. They generally find the monitoring of private study time has helped them to manage their work better. An increasing number plan to continue their studies beyond age 18.
293. The quality of teaching and learning on the A-level English literature courses is satisfactory. It is good on the AS course.
294. Teaching methods and the planning of lessons are well geared to support the majority of less competent students. Sometimes on the A-level course this results in teaching and learning that is strongly directed, affording limited opportunity for leadership within discussion or the exercise of initiative in research. This was a feature of the students' work in lessons on *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*. The links to examination assessment criteria were not emphasised in the lesson and are not defined clearly in the various assignments that comprise the scheme of work. Consequently, students did not know how well they were doing in this type of work in the important, final phase of the course and learning objectives were not precisely defined.
295. The good teaching observed on the AS course had several strong features. Questions were well used in a lesson on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to confirm previous knowledge and understanding prior to probing differences between two very different productions of the play. The distinction between film and theatre as presentational media was not well drawn but most made good progress in defining similarities and differences between the two versions, at least in the representation of character. As a result, nearly all made good gains in knowledge and understanding and standards were similar to those expected nationally.
296. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The strengths include the provision of good individual support and guidance that is much valued by the students. The management of the larger than usual team of teachers on each course is satisfactory, with students valuing the links between a particular text and a specific teacher. The provision of enrichment opportunities, including visits to the theatre, are well managed. There remains an important need to provide a better match of courses, particularly those at intermediate and advanced levels, to the needs and realistic aspirations of students at age 16, many of whom have then gained only very modest GCSE grades.

FRENCH

Strengths

- Talented students gain high standards
- Teachers have high levels of fluency

Areas for improvement

- No common sixth form teaching methodology
- Results of weaker students are below average

297. The quality of provision for French in the sixth form is good. The teachers are well qualified and provide excellent role models for students. Resources available for learning are good and use is made of new technology, including video-conferencing and the Internet. Advanced courses include challenging topics, such as racism, and these are handled in a way which enables students from minority communities to feel included and strongly supported by the school.
298. Standards achieved by students in the sixth form language classes vary considerably. Skilled teachers enable native speakers, or those with extensive experience in countries where the target language is spoken, to achieve very high standards. However, other students observed are not reaching satisfactory levels of attainment in comparison with sixth form standards nationally. In some cases, this is because their standards on entry were insufficient for advanced level study. For example, a student who had gained grade D at GCSE was not comfortable with certain common verb forms and some elementary vocabulary.
299. Teaching which emphasised high standards, for example by using the target language constantly and penetrating the hidden meaning of a demanding text, was successful in promoting progress. Teaching was less successful at generating confidence and enabling students to move forward when essential stages in the learning process were omitted, such as the need to plan the provision of structured opportunities for students to practise structures before producing them.
300. The leadership and management of sixth form language courses are good. The department has been able to handle the high turnover of staff very successfully; provision is now stable and the requirements of pupils in all language classes are clear and can be sustained. The course documentation which has been developed so far is satisfactory and planning is thorough, with a focus on raising standards.
301. The two areas for development are as follows. Sixth form language courses are not currently cost-effective and the numbers of students who take them must be increased. There is no clear view in the department handbook on the methodology of language teaching in the sixth form and the integration of key skills within language lessons.