

INSPECTION REPORT

WHITE HART LANE SCHOOL

Wood Green, London

LEA area: Haringey

Unique reference number: 102158

Headteacher: Mr David Daniels

Reporting inspector: Mr Graeme Clarke
1547

Dates of inspection: 22 – 26 April 2002

Inspection number: 223009

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 to 18 years

Gender of students: Mixed

School address: White Hart Lane
London

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Ms Monika Beutel

Date of previous inspection: March 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1547	Graeme Clarke	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Equal opportunities.	What sort of school is it? How high are the standards? The school's results and achievements. How well are the students taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
11041	Marvyn Moore	<i>Lay inspector</i>		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?
12844	Mick Saunders	<i>Team inspector</i>	English. Drama.	Literacy.
31100	Geoff Hunter	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics.	Numeracy.
19043	David Lewis	<i>Team inspector Sixth Form Co-ordinator</i>	Science.	
31685	Val Girling	<i>Team inspector</i>	Art and design.	
7084	Jack Haslam	<i>Team inspector</i>	Design and technology.	
20825	Brian Ogden	<i>Team inspector</i>	Geography.	
18447	Ron Cohen	<i>Team inspector</i>	History.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to students?
8052	Ken Mckenzie	<i>Team inspector</i>	Information and communications technology.	
15075	Bryan Stephens	<i>Team inspector</i>	Modern foreign languages.	
23499	Howard Seymour	<i>Team inspector</i>	Music.	
8329	Gillian Salter-Smith	<i>Team inspector</i>	Physical education.	
4372	Ralph Fordham	<i>Team inspector</i>	Religious education.	
16982	Peter Nathan	<i>Team inspector</i>	English as an additional language.	
7926	James Bowden	<i>Team inspector</i>	Special educational needs.	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is an above average size mixed comprehensive school which caters for 1142 students of ages 11 to 19, including 81 in the Sixth Form. It serves a number of wards in the Haringey area of London where there is significant social deprivation. The roll has fallen by about 100 over the past three years. Less than a fifth of students come from a white UK heritage, and the others have a very wide range of ethnic backgrounds, mainly from Europe, Asia Minor and Africa. Eighty three per cent are learning English as an additional language and speak mainly Turkish, Kurdish, Somali, Bengali or Albanian. Sixty six per cent have free school meals. Thirty seven per cent are on the register of special educational needs. These are well above average figures. The proportion of students with statements of special educational needs, 2.7 per cent, is about average. Students' levels of attainment when they join the school are very low in comparison with the national average. Many students come from refugee or asylum-seeker families and have had a disrupted education beforehand. Students with English as an additional language and special educational needs are additionally supported through the school's involvement in the Excellence in Cities initiative and from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant. Severe difficulties in recruiting staff have been resolved by employing registered overseas teachers and graduate trainees.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

White Hart Lane is an improving school that is providing a satisfactory education for its students. Although standards of attainment in national tests and examinations are well below average, students are now progressing and achieving satisfactorily as a result of teaching which is good overall. The school is inclusive and harmonious, with good behaviour, relationships and respect for others. Punctuality and attendance, which is improving, are poor. The new headteacher, senior staff and governors give effective leadership and are managing the school well. Overall the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Promotes good relationships, and respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others through very good personal, social and health education;
- makes good use of the contribution of the community to students' learning;
- has very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour;
- makes very good provision in Turkish, drama, and catering for Years 10 and 11;
- has identified very appropriate priorities for development;
- leadership and governance offer very clear direction to the work of the school.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards of attainment, particularly in English, mathematics and science;
- the quality of the curriculum, the specialist teaching, and the support within subject teaching for students with English as an additional language or special educational needs;
- attendance and punctuality to lessons;
- the arrangements for monitoring and dealing with health and safety issues, and for maintaining up-to-date child protection procedures;
- the way students' attainments and progress are assessed and the clarity of this information in annual reports for parents;
- arrangements for meeting statutory obligations for daily acts of collective worship, physical education in Years 7 to 9, information in the special education needs policy, and for the performance management of teachers;
- the use of homework to reinforce learning in lessons.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 2000. Good improvement has been made and the school no longer has the serious weaknesses found at that time. New staff with management responsibilities have ensured literacy development is now good and numeracy satisfactory. Teaching of information and communications technology is well established, and used effectively in many subjects, but not all. More specialist teachers and graduate trainees have been appointed: teaching has improved, and is now good overall. However, the quality of support in specific lessons for students with English as an additional language and special educational needs has not been improved as much as it should. Arrangements to monitor and improve attendance are working – attendance has improved by four per cent – but it is still poor, and improvements to monitor attendance in lessons are needed. The leadership group have made significant improvements to standards of behaviour and have reduced exclusion levels impressively. Daily assemblies now make an important contribution to students' personal development. Spiritual development is satisfactorily developed in the curriculum, and plans are in place to increase the range of vocational courses in Years 10 and 11. A new leadership group is working effectively with governors to manage and evaluate the development of the school.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
GCSE examinations	E*	E*	E*	E
A Levels/AS Levels	E	E	N/A	N/A

Key	
<i>Well above average</i>	A
<i>Above average</i>	B
<i>Average</i>	C
<i>Below average</i>	D
<i>Well below average</i>	E

Results in the statutory Year 9 National Curriculum tests in 2001 for English, mathematics and science were in the bottom five per cent nationally, but improvement year on year was broadly in line with the national trend. GCSE results in 2001 were lower than in 2000. The average points score was also in the bottom five per cent nationally. The proportion gaining one or more A* - G grades is about average compared with similar schools. The improvement trend has followed the national pattern, with girls improving faster than boys. A higher proportion of girls obtained better English results than boys, but boys did better in mathematics, and particularly in science. Performance in art, and particularly in Turkish was above average. Seventy-six students with English as an additional language entered for the Certificate of Achievement in English in 2001, and 20 achieved the highest grade. The school did not reach its 2001 targets for GCSE attainment, and to achieve the targets for 2002 represents a clear challenge.

In lessons and work seen, the achievement and progress of both boys and girls in English are satisfactory as a result of implementing the National Literacy Strategy. Writing showed particularly good improvement. Achievement in reading is in line with expectations, but standards of speaking are less well developed. Mathematics work, although improved, is well below average, but the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is beginning to raise standards. Achievement in science is broadly as expected, though still below the national expectations. Information and communication technology standards are improving rapidly. Students achieve well in art, drama and Turkish. In other subjects, students make steady progress and achieve satisfactorily or well from low beginnings. Many students with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in most subjects, but attain very low standards because of their low levels of literacy in English. Students new to English in induction groups made satisfactory progress in Years 7 to 9, but not in Years 10 and 11 where provision is unsatisfactory. Students with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in developing and improving literacy skills in specific lessons when withdrawn from the mainstream lessons.

STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Punctuality generally is poor and too many lessons do not start on time. Students enjoy school, listen attentively, readily answer questions and are keen to be involved. Many with English as an additional language and special educational needs value support, and want to make progress.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in response to high expectations and support from teachers and mentors. Exclusions are very rare. Students treat property with care and respect. There is very little graffiti or litter. Bullying is rare and is dealt with very effectively.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout are very good as a result of good personal development. Students are successfully integrated without any incidence of racism. They have good opportunities to take responsibility and show initiative.
Attendance	Attendance has improved as a result of new arrangements but remains unsatisfactory.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Students in Years 7 to 9 made good or very good progress in a clear majority of their lessons where the teaching was good, very good or excellent. In Years 10 and 11, students also made good or very good progress in a clear majority of lessons where teaching was good or better. However, teaching in a significant minority of lessons in Years 10 and 11 were unsatisfactory. In English, teaching is good overall, with some very good quality in Years 7 to 9 and never less than satisfactory quality in Years 10 and 11. This leads to satisfactory learning overall. Mathematics teaching is satisfactory overall with no lessons in which the learning was less than satisfactory. Science teaching in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory, but in Years 10 and 11 variable quality ranged from excellent work to half that was unsatisfactory.

Many features contribute to the most effective teaching. These include well-planned and structured lessons, well-chosen tasks and activities, good use of subject knowledge, use of questioning to promote understanding, managing behaviour and building good relationships, and effective use of resources. There are aspects of teaching that require improvement, particularly establishing the importance of punctuality, structuring lessons to suit the nature of the class, and ensuring that all students are involved. Setting homework and marking of students' work are too inconsistent, but there is some exemplary practice. The beneficial impact of the National Literacy Strategy on planning and the conduct of English lessons is clear throughout. The National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive effect in mathematics teaching, but has not yet influenced the teaching of numeracy skills in a co-ordinated way elsewhere. Teaching is helping students develop information and communication technology skills in their timetabled lessons, but there is limited use of information and communication technology in students' work in other lessons.

For students with English as an additional language, teaching is mostly satisfactory in induction classes in Years 7 to 9 where they develop English speaking and literacy skills. In comparison, the induction teaching in Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory, mainly because the course is not well structured. Students with special educational needs in Years 7 to 9 learn well and make good progress in withdrawal lessons where teaching is of good quality, and they are well supported in GCSE work in Years 10 and 11. Gifted and talented students are not sufficiently challenged with suitable work in several subjects, but elsewhere extended tasks and opportunities allow them to excel.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall, except that physical education in Years 7 to 9 does not meet requirements and there is no daily act of collective worship. Enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities. Careers education and guidance are of good quality. Links with the community are used effectively to enhance learning.
Provision for students with special educational needs	Unsatisfactory. However, the decline in the quality of provision after the last inspection has been halted. Recently implemented procedures, together with the commitment of those responsible, show that the school and special needs department have the capacity to greatly improve provision.
Provision for students with English as an additional language	Unsatisfactory overall. The new induction course in Years 7 to 9 supports language learning well, but teaching in Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory and the subject knowledge of some English as an additional language teachers is weak. New approaches to literacy and English as an additional language have improved teaching in most subjects. In class support teaching is unsatisfactory because it is poorly planned and badly administered.
Provision for students' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Personal social and health education is very good. Teaching for all students is always good, mostly very good and occasionally excellent, making a very good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. Provision for moral and social development is very good, cultural development is good, and that for spiritual is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its students	Arrangements for child protection and monitoring health and safety matters are poor. By contrast, a very well developed pastoral system cares well for students with differing cultures and faiths. Procedures for assessing attainment and progress, and for tracking progress by individuals and groups are now satisfactory.

The school works hard and well to support and respond to parents. Arrangements for informing parents of their children's progress in meetings are good but information is not clear enough in annual written reports. The quality of information in newsletters and the prospectus is good, and helpfully is given in four languages. Active *share groups* work well with the school to discuss and resolve items of common and community concern.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The new headteacher has a clear vision, and gives purposeful leadership focused on raising achievement and on promoting the ethos of an inclusive school. The new leadership group is equally dedicated and diligent in promoting the aims and values of the school. Pastoral management is developing well. Subject department management ranges from satisfactory to very good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Unsatisfactory because statutory obligations not met at present are: teachers' performance management, specific information in the special educational needs policy, the physical education curriculum in Years 7 to 9, daily collective worship, and Sixth Form religious education. Governors fulfilled an important obligation in addressing the serious weaknesses in the previous inspection and, with the headteacher, now give the school direction for the future. Involvement in review meetings gives a good grasp of strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. A review of the school's situation, at the beginning of this year, has focused very appropriately on key aspects of students' behaviour, attendance and teaching quality to improve conditions for learning. A programme of self-evaluation to improve teaching has begun in English and mathematics.
The strategic use of resources	Financial procedures ensure sound administrative control. 'Excellence in Cities' funds successful learning mentor support in a range of settings. The value of the ethnic minorities achievement grant is not being realised. Best value principles are rigorously applied to spending. Performance information is used to make comparisons and set improvement targets. The school has challenged itself by carrying out a survey of the views of students, parents and staff on important issues.

Sufficient suitably qualified and experienced teachers ensure the curriculum is taught at least satisfactorily in most subjects but there are not sufficient learning support staff for special educational needs. Much of the accommodation is dilapidated but all is being replaced or refurbished. Resource levels are unsatisfactory, especially up-to-date computers and books.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their child is making good progress.• The teaching is good.• They are kept well informed about how their child is getting on.• They are comfortable about approaching the school.• The school is well led and managed.• Their child is becoming mature and responsible.• There is an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Behaviour.• The right amount of work to do at home.• Working closely with parents.

Inspectors agree that homework is not given regularly enough, but find annual written reports on progress should be clearer, behaviour has improved markedly, (parents at the meeting commented favourably upon it), and that the school works closely with parents.

The overwhelming majority of parents are fully supportive of the school's work and are pleased with teaching, behaviour and the high level of care and support students receive.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SIXTH FORM

The Sixth Form has 81 students on roll, most of whom are continuing from Year 11. The proportion of students from minority ethnic heritages broadly mirrors that in the main school. The school offers a small range of GCE courses, extended through a consortium arrangement with a local college. The courses are carefully chosen to meet students' needs. NVQs in catering and GNVQs in information technology and business studies are also available. Some students are entered for GCSE examinations in the Sixth Form, mainly in English and mathematics: these are often students for whom English is an additional language. The school has a sympathetic entry policy to cater for the individual needs of students. Students' attainment on entry into the Sixth Form is well below average overall.

HOW GOOD THE SIXTH FORM IS

The school Sixth Form provides an education which caters for the needs of most of its students, many of whom benefit considerably from the security of the school environment. There are particular strengths in AS and A Level biology and art, and in NVQ catering courses. Although pass rates in A Level examinations have been well below average, these generally reflect students' lower GCSE results. However, the small group sizes, the relatively high proportion of GCE students who fail to gain a pass grade at the end of the course, and the special arrangements needed for many students mean that the Sixth Form as a whole is expensive. It is not cost effective and therefore gives unsatisfactory value for money.

STRENGTHS

- The Sixth Form curriculum is carefully planned to meet the needs of the students.
- The quality of provision in NVQ catering and in AS and A Level biology.
- The opportunities available for students in art.
- The strong pastoral and academic support given by teaching staff.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Attainment in mathematics and English.
- The development of independent learning skills, especially where group sizes are small.
- The profile of the Sixth Form and the number of students choosing to stay on.
- Attendance in classes in GCSE mathematics.

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. Good subject knowledge and satisfactory teaching help students to produce work in line with expectations, though examination results have been below average for the last few years. Assessment and monitoring are under-developed.
Biology	Very good. Teaching is very good, and development of literacy skills is a strength. Results in GCE examinations in the last few years have been poor but standards of work seen in lessons are rising.
English	Satisfactory. AS and A Level results are better than expected, based on students' GCSE grades. Teaching is good, work is very well marked, and relationships are very good.
Art	Good. Teachers have good subject knowledge. There is a high level of support for all students, including those for whom English is an additional language. Relationships are good and there are opportunities to visit places of interest.
Catering	Very good. Students have a sound grasp of concepts, and apply them well in the kitchen. They are achieving well in response to good teaching.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Aspect	Comment
How well students are guided and supported	Satisfactory. Advice and careers guidance are good, but procedures for assessing students' work are inconsistent between subjects and there is no school-wide approach to monitoring of progress.
Effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Sixth Form	Satisfactory. The Sixth Form manager shares the vision of the headteacher for a successful Sixth Form and communicates his vision successfully to his colleagues. Small teaching groups and poor examination results mean that value for money 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"> • The quality of support and advice they receive. • The range of courses available. • The community project. • The much-improved ethos across the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school environment. • Their opportunities for decision making across the school.

The inspectors agree to a large extent with the students' views of the Sixth Form, though they judge that the level of support and guidance they receive could be improved further, especially in relation to academic progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and students' achievements

1. The well above average number of students who speak little English is counted into the calculations of the school's results. This is a most important factor that bears upon comparisons with national and other school average standards. It significantly lowers the proportion gaining higher grades compared with schools where the proportion of students with English as an additional language (EAL) is close to or below average. This is particularly so for English, mathematics and science examinations which are taken by nearly all students.
2. Only about half the students in the school took the statutory tests at the end of Year 6 in primary schools. When students join the school in Year 7, their attainment in English, mathematics and science is well below the averages for 11 year old students nationwide. The proportion of 14 year old students attaining the national expectation of Level 5 or higher in the tests at the end of Year 9 in 2001 was in the bottom five per cent nationally. Results were marginally lower in English and mathematics than in 2000, and marginally above for science. Results at the higher Levels 6 and 7 were also very low in all three subjects. In comparison with similar schools, the proportions of students reaching Level 5 in English and mathematics were well below average, and below in science. Results were above average at the higher levels in science. The pattern of improvement in English, mathematics and science has been broadly in line with the national trend.
3. GCSE results in 2001 declined from the previous year. The proportions of candidates with five or more A* - C grades fell from 15 per cent to 11 per cent because of poor attendance at the examinations by a significant minority. The proportion gaining five or more A* - G grades also fell. Each grade is allocated a points score: A* is highest. The school's average points score was in the bottom five per cent nationally. The pattern is different when compared to schools where students had similar levels of prior attainment at the end of Year 9 in 1999. The proportion gaining one or more A* - G grades is about the average for this group of schools, although it is below average for five or more A* - C grades and average points scores. The improvement trend has followed the national pattern since the last inspection. Girls' results improved more than those of boys over the same period.
4. Students' results in English language and English literature were far below national averages in GCSE in 2001. A higher proportion of girls obtained better English results than did boys, but more boys obtained the better results in mathematics, and in science particularly. There were differences in the average results obtained in other subjects compared to the national picture. Results in Turkish and art were better than average, but they were below average in design and technology, geography, history, French and Spanish.
5. About a third of students, more boys than girls, were not entered for GCSE English, mathematics and science. The proportion of girls gaining A* - C grades was noticeably higher than that of boys. Students with EAL achieve standards well below national expectations throughout Years 7 to 11 because a significant number have low levels of literacy in English. Some students have not had enough time to

learn sufficient English to be entered or to achieve higher grades, which has an adverse impact on the school's overall examination results. However, 76 students were entered for the Certificate of Achievement in English in 2001 and 20 achieved the highest grade.

6. The school fell well short of its target for achieving five or more A* - C grades and average points score in 2001. To achieve the 2002 targets of an average points score of 23, and 23 per cent gaining five or more A* - C grades is a significant challenge. These higher targets appear to be unrealistic. However, the school is confident of clear improvement in the next few years for two reasons. The targets are backed up by a recently improved analysis of students' attainments when they enter the school; and there are plans to implement a new policy to increase the number of students entering examinations this year compared to previous years.

Standards of work seen during the inspection

7. Levels of achievement in English observed during the inspection were better than examination results would suggest. Both boys' and girls' achievement and progress are good as a result of the generally high expectations and effective work of new staff. Writing improved particularly well in Year 7 and in other years too. Some high attaining students write fluently. Writing frames and drafting procedures encourage low attaining students. Well-judged teaching leads to achievement in reading at the ages of 14 and 16 that is at least in line with expectations. Standards of speaking are less well developed than those of reading and writing.

8. Mathematics work seen in Years 7 to 9 reflects recent test and examination results and, although improved, is still well below national standards. Mental arithmetic of most students is slow and their algebra is weak. Students create graphs accurately but struggle to interpret them. However, the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is beginning to raise standards. Standards in Years 10 and 11 are also well below expectations, and lower attainers have weak retention of number bonds. Most students can solve simple equations but they find difficulty in manipulating formulae in algebra. High attaining students can solve problems in arithmetic and geometry. Where students' attendance is poor it affects their continuity of learning, but where they attend regularly, their progress is satisfactory or better and they are achieving well in relation to their ability.

9. Students' achievement in science in Years 7 to 9 is broadly as expected and better than is suggested by their attainment in national tests. Many students who speak and understand English to a limited extent learn by observing their peers, and they make good progress in developing laboratory skills. In contrast, their attention often flags in more theoretical lessons and, as a result, their progress is not as good as it should be. In Years 10 and 11, some very good work was seen, for example on the production of hydrocarbons and their use as fuels; but elsewhere students think less critically about their work, reflecting incomplete understanding. Although standards of work have improved over the last year, there is still some way to go before students reach their predicted potential.

10. Information and communication technology (ICT) standards are improving rapidly in Years 8 and 9. They approach national expectations in some aspects of ICT, for example in spreadsheet work and the use of software to make presentations. However, overall standards are below expectations because keyboard and data handling skills are not so well developed. Students' skills and knowledge are improving but most do not yet match national expectations.

11. Language development in other subject areas leads to impressive progress and achievement, for example in art, modern foreign languages and science. In contrast, students display well below average numerical skills in their work in many subjects. In general, however, there is no evidence that students fail to access the curriculum because of poor numerical skills. For example, attention to numeracy and literacy issues is a feature of many ICT lessons, and students learn to calculate percentages before working with a spreadsheet.

12. The achievement of all students is very good over the duration of the course in Turkish. Students achieve well in several subjects: in drama, where they grow in confidence in using its skills and disciplines; in art, where technical skills are evident in sensitive chalk pastel drawing and painting; in music, where strong aural and rhythmic skills are developed; in religious education, where customs and traditions, the use of symbols and the importance of prayer are well understood without any differences between students of different gender or ethnic background. Listening, speaking, and reading standards reflect good achievement in French and Spanish, but although achievement in writing is good in French, it is satisfactory in Spanish.

13. Standards of practical work are satisfactory in food technology and in design and technology resistant materials projects, but knowledge and understanding of the properties of materials is generally weak. Students' achievements are satisfactory in geography, where gains in knowledge are evident, and in history where they can successfully link facts together to build a cohesive explanation. Students in Years 7 to 9 have a secure knowledge of health and fitness, and in athletics their performance is above average. However, achievement in physical education in Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory, largely because a high proportion of girls particularly do not come to or take part in lessons.

14. Students with English as an additional language achieve standards well below national expectations throughout Years 7 to 11 because a significant number enter the school speaking little English or having low levels of literacy. Some students have not had enough time to learn sufficient English to be entered for examinations or to achieve higher grades. Many students value the support they receive and show good attitudes to learning. This enables them to make satisfactory progress in most subject areas, including the core curriculum subjects. Students new to English have made satisfactory progress in Years 7 to 9. Conversely, the progress and achievement of students in Years 10 and 11 *New to English* classes is unsatisfactory because of the quality of teaching and an inadequate course programme.

15. Students with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall in most subject lessons. In Years 7 to 9, their progress is good in English and religious education, and it is very good in art. It is good in Years 10 and 11. Students are making good progress in withdrawal lessons, particularly in developing and improving their literacy skills. Individual education plans (IEPs) have only recently been systematically re-introduced for students at stages 3 or above on the school's register of special educational needs. As they have yet to be reviewed as part of the review process each term, it is not possible to comment on the progress students are making towards the targets set out in them. It has also been impossible to establish the progress and achievement of students with special educational needs in the end of Year 9 assessment tests and GCSE examinations although there are plans to make a formal analysis of GCSE data in this respect.

Sixth Form

16. Most students enter the Sixth Form from Year 11 with GCSE grades that are well below the national average. For many of them, English is not their first language. The school takes great care to ensure that courses on offer in the Sixth Form are ones which cater for the needs and aspirations of its students, and in which they have a reasonable chance of success. Although the school sets entry requirements for all courses, it adopts a sympathetic approach in dealing with applications, always with the best interests of its students at heart. However, over the last few years, more students have been unsuccessful in mathematics than have been successful, and the school is currently reviewing its entry requirements for the course.

17. Overall the standard of work seen in Sixth Form lessons is in line with expectations, though often with little work at a level equal to higher grades. Since students' attainment on entry to the Sixth Form is well below average, this represents good achievement.

18. Within the range of courses available at AS and Advanced Level, results overall are well below the national average. Not surprisingly, though, results in Turkish are consistently excellent. The numbers of students enrolled on courses in mathematics, English, the sciences and art are generally small, and in some years courses do not run at all. Thus, in the current Year 13 there are four students preparing for A Level English, but none in Year 12. Conversely, there are currently no students taking chemistry in the Sixth Form, but 8 students took the A Level examination in 2001, gaining an average points score close to the national average. Sometimes Sixth Form students attend lessons for both Years 12 and 13. In biology and art the current Year 12 are studying for AS Level examinations which they intend to take at the end of Year 13. These special arrangements make it difficult to generalise about the standards reached, either in lessons or in examinations.

19. In their GCE examinations, students gain results that are well below the national average overall, though for many students they are as expected from their GCSE results. In particular, few students gain the highest grades, A and B, and a much higher proportion than the national average fail to gain a pass grade. In mathematics, for example, fewer than half the students who took the A Level examination in the last three years gained a grade in the range A - E, and in biology seven of the 14 students who took the examination last year gained a pass grade. In contrast, 9 of the 17 students who took A Level Turkish gained the highest grades, A or B, with all gaining a pass grade overall.

20. The school recognises the need to improve grades in AS and A Level examinations and is working hard to raise the standards reached. In English, for example, standards seen in lessons were satisfactory. Students are able to demonstrate a reasonable grasp of the terminology of literary criticism, though they need considerable encouragement to articulate what they know. In biology, teachers make particular efforts to develop students' literacy skills so that they become familiar with terminology and develop a good ability to express themselves in biological terms. Art students are able, with good leadership from the teacher, to discuss their work at a level indicating a pass grade. It is this good leadership and keen awareness of the needs of students that lead to good levels of achievement and better than expected grades.

21. In GNVQ Intermediate courses in ICT and business studies, students achieve the full range of grades, including some merit and distinction grades. In lessons, students have a positive attitude to their work and use a good range of software to good effect.

22. The school offers successful courses in NVQ catering at Level 2. All students who took the examination in 2001 gained a grade and, overall, their achievement is in line with expectations based on their prior attainment. In lessons, students' practical work is of high quality, and they have a good knowledge and understanding of the course. Project work generally shows the same confidence and understanding as their practical work in class. The *Foodles* restaurant, which is run by students as part of their course, operates to a high standard and enables students to put what they have learned into practice.

23. GCSE courses are offered in mathematics and English. Many students on these courses are taking other courses in the Sixth Form and are working towards a GCSE grade C in one or more core subjects. In lessons, standards are broadly as expected, and most students improve by at least one grade by the end of the course. However, absence from lessons is a serious concern in mathematics, as students who do not attend regularly not only miss valuable teaching but hold back the rest of the group on their return.

24. As in the main school, individual teachers cater well for the needs of students whose first language is not English, sometimes making use of other students as interpreters. Such students make satisfactory progress in the Sixth Form, in line with their prior attainment. Teachers also support well those students who have special educational needs (SEN) or who are gifted and talented, and these students also make satisfactory progress.

Students' attitudes, values and personal development

25. Although attendance is now at 87.7 per cent and is improving, it remains unsatisfactory. Furthermore, students are often late for lessons and many instances were noted when teachers could not start on time. Overall, students' attitudes in this respect are unsatisfactory.

26. Conversely, many students interviewed during the inspection week are clear that they enjoy school, and this was confirmed by the parental questionnaire in which the majority of parents reported that their children like coming to school.

27. In lessons observed during the inspection week, students were interested and involved in their activities. For example, in a discussion led by the teacher in a Year 9 personal, social and health education (PSHE) lesson observed during the inspection week, students of both genders asked sensible questions and discussed the advantages of using differing contraceptives. In lessons, many students listen attentively to their teachers, display enthusiasm and are keen to answer questions.

28. The school is developing its work with students with and SEN who are integrated into school life through the *Gateway* Inclusion Programme. They have positive attitudes to their work, are responsible and in the main participate well in lessons. Many students with EAL value the support they receive and show good attitudes to learning. In withdrawal lessons, the attitudes and behaviour of students with SEN are good. They respond well to the help and support they receive and are keen to make progress. In the Year 11 option support group, for example, the students' positive attitudes and behaviour helped promote a good learning atmosphere in which all could make progress. Younger students in Years 7 to 9 also have positive attitudes to their work and respond well to the ethos within which the lessons are taught. In discussion, older students with statements said they were appreciative of the extra help and support they had received since they joined the school.

29. Most students have a very good level of respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. In a Year 7 lesson on Refugee Awareness, students gave good examples of problems faced by refugees on a journey to safety, and were keen to offer their help and support for refugee students and asylum-seekers already at the school.
30. Students' behaviour is good. The high level of co-operation between teachers and learning mentors ensures that the support given to students has a positive impact on their behaviour. Many students identify with the high expectations that the school has for students' behaviour. They respond accordingly and make progress in their learning. Exclusions from the school are very rare.
31. Students treat other people's property and their own with care. For example, library books, computer and video facilities are treated with respect and there is very little graffiti or litter in the school.
32. The school is extremely pro-active in dealing with all matters of bullying. Although incidents of harassment and bullying are rare, staff are extremely effective in dealing with them promptly. Students of several different cultures, speaking a total of 64 different languages, are integrated harmoniously into the school and no incidents of racism were observed. At lunchtime, students of all year groups mix together well, with older students sitting with younger students and helping them. When students occasionally display poor behaviour and inattention in class, they work at a slow pace and display a clear lack of enthusiasm, usually when teaching is less focused and the work is not well matched to their needs.
33. Students' personal development is good, leading to very good relationships throughout the school. Students interviewed felt happy, safe and secure in school.
34. Students accept a good level of responsibility and the opportunity to display initiative. Year 10 students are trained as mentors. Year 11 students are appointed as Senior Students who undertake supervision duties within the school. They all wear a distinctive uniform with pride. Year 8 students willingly act as ambassadors in the reception area. Students represent their form at the form council, and the school council, where lively discussions about improvements lead to suggestions made to the leadership group. Others help with school productions, liaise with Year 7 students and are actively involved in fundraising for a variety of charities. They actively involve themselves in a variety of extra curricular activities.

Sixth Form

35. Students' attitudes to the Sixth Form are good and they regard the school as catering for their needs very well. They show generally good or very good motivation on their chosen courses. They get on well with one another and appreciate the adult way in which teachers treat them. Teachers, in turn, get to know their students well and give them good support, not only academically in their efforts to gain good results at the end of their respective courses, but in terms of personal development and development of study skills.
36. However, the overall size of the Sixth Form means that many teaching groups are very small, and in some cases consist of only one or two students. Students in such groups are deprived of the interactions that take place in larger classes, and teachers need to make a

conscious effort to counter these problems, for example by setting more activities designed to develop independent study skills. The school has opportunities, afforded by the extensive refurbishment of the school, including the library, to extend the facilities for private study and research.

37. It is a measure of their support for the Sixth Form that about two-thirds of Year 12 and 13 students participate in the community project. This involves them in working with local businesses and a variety of social work, including helping in local primary schools, and raising money for charity.

38. The relationships between students in the Sixth Form and those in the main school are good. The school makes some use of the undoubted strengths of members of the Sixth Form, both individually and as a group, for example through the school council. Nevertheless, the profile of the Sixth Form within the school is not high as many members of the Sixth Form remain isolated from students in Years 7 – 11. In turn opportunities are missed both for personal development through work together in all years and for Sixth Form students to be role models for younger students.

HOW WELL ARE STUDENTS TAUGHT?

39. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and has improved since the last inspection. Of the 155 lessons seen, the quality of teaching was unsatisfactory in just under eight per cent compared with ten per cent at the time of the last inspection. Over the same period, the proportion of excellent or very good lessons has increased from 19 per cent to 22 per cent, and the proportion of lessons where the quality of teaching was good or better has risen from 55 per cent to 67 per cent.

40. Many features contribute to the most effective teaching. Diligent planning, with the aims systematically made clear at the beginning of lessons and always referred to at the end, ensures that students are clear about their learning. Teachers' good subject knowledge and an understanding of how students learn lead to relevant tasks and carefully judged opportunities that allow students to succeed and make progress. Topics for study are chosen to impact effectively on students' learning. Tasks are pitched well and provision that is effectively made in other languages ensures that the progress of students with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language (EAL) is consistent with that of their classmates. For example, as part of the school's commitment to raising achievement through the science bilingual teaching project, an excellent Year 10 lesson on atomic structure was taught in Turkish. Lively pace and variety in lessons motivate and challenge students, as in religious education where very good use is made of deadlines to motivate students and keep them on track. Where teachers have high expectations, most students respond by trying hard to do their best. Students work hard and learn well when lessons are well controlled, and this contributes to a good climate for learning. However, whenever the management of students is satisfactory rather than good, learning is only satisfactory as a result. The high quality of relationships between the teacher and the students, and on-going individual feedback and support, ensure that students make good progress. New learning is regularly reinforced throughout lessons and careful questioning is used to test knowledge and understanding. Very good use is made of some resources. In art, for example, effective use is made of visual aids and practical demonstrations to help all students to understand the aims of the lesson. In geography, resources are adapted to match the different needs of students in the class.

41. There are aspects of teaching which require improvement, particularly establishing the importance of attendance and punctuality, and structuring lessons to suit the nature of the class. Poor attendance is a barrier to learning for many students. Punctuality, however, reflects limited intellectual effort being invested, and time lost that could have been used on activities. There is a lack of urgency in starting some lessons, and many lessons start up to 15 minutes or more after the bell. In consequence, far too many students do not take a full enough part in lessons regularly and they do not learn enough. Most students are highly dependent upon their teachers. Many, especially those with the greatest language difficulty, lack initiative and self-awareness of their learning and become passive receivers instead of active learners. Lessons that are poorly structured, with an unconnected sequence of inappropriate activities, do not foster their learning sufficiently well.

42. Good assessments based on national standards are carried out in science and are used to inform records of progress throughout the course. Marking is constructive and a key to raising standards in art because students are clear about targets and how to achieve them. Design and technology worksheets are retained to build up a good picture of students' progress, and are used to help mentoring and target-setting in Year 11. Some teachers follow guidance including giving detailed supportive comments with their correction of errors, but this is not universally the case. There is too much work left uncorrected, which leads to students being unclear about the standards they are reaching and what they need to do to improve. Marking of books, showing areas for improvement clearly is in need of further development.

43. Teachers' use of homework to support learning in lessons is inconsistent throughout Years 7 to 11 and is unsatisfactory, but there is some exemplary practice. In discussion, many students in all years confirm that setting of homework is patchy, often it is limited to finishing off what was started in the lesson, and often it is unmarked. There are practical difficulties caused where students miss lessons, whether because of absence from school, or because of withdrawal for extra support, but not all teachers set and insist on homework being done with sufficient rigour.

44. Teaching of literacy is relatively well advanced. Attention is given in nearly every subject to key words, to subject-specific demands of reading, to appropriate structures for writing, and to supported opportunities for talk and oral presentation. The National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive effect upon mathematics teaching, but as yet relatively little attention is paid to teaching numeracy skills in a coordinated way outside the mathematics department.

45. Information and communication technology (ICT) teachers give good individual support to students when working at computers within their timetabled lessons. Throughout other subjects, teachers are beginning to make effective use of web pages available from the Internet in a range of courses across the curriculum. However, implementing ICT throughout the curriculum and using it to foster learning in different subjects is still inconsistent. There are some good examples, such as students using *PowerPoint* presentations to report their work in science, and good quality word processing to enhance their design and technology reports and evaluations. However, teaching computer-aided design and control is hampered by the lack of necessary expertise. Elsewhere, there was little evidence of ICT use in students' work. For example, they have insufficient access to ICT to draft, edit and present their writing in English, and in modern foreign languages the use of ICT has not improved. Although computers are available to support language learning in the *Gateway* English induction classes, there was no evidence of its use in lessons.

46. Effective use is made of a good range of language learning strategies to support the development of English skills in the newly introduced induction classes for students with EAL in Years 7 to 9. For example, a paired work activity in which students had to use prepositions of place to describe a kitchen to each other motivated them and provided useful practice in speaking. However, aspects of the subject knowledge and skills of some EAL teachers that require attention are errors of spelling, confusing meanings of words, and using a mixture of upper and lower case letters, print and cursive styles inappropriately to model writing.

47. In comparison, the teaching for students with EAL in *New to English* classes in Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory for several reasons. Planning is not effective because there is no clear course structure for the development of language skills. For example, the same lesson plans are used for Years 10 and 11. A lack of relevance leads to students soon losing interest in the tasks set. For example, in a Year 10 lesson based on a worksheet describing places, material about Argentina and Brixton meant little to the students and no opportunities were provided for developing speaking skills. In a Year 10 class, the lengthy talk by the teacher about previous work was pitched at too high a level so students lost concentration and gained very little.

48. The use of bilingual teachers and teaching assistants to support students new to English is mostly satisfactory when they work in partnership with the subject teacher in the literacy project in mathematics and design technology. For example, specific teaching of mathematical vocabulary such as *numerator* and *denominator* at the start of a Year 7 lesson enabled students to understand some of the concepts required for the lesson. In Year 9, bilingual teachers using Turkish and Somali effectively supported students' understanding of simple algebra, enabling them to make good progress. In science, lessons conducted to a large extent in Turkish, enabled students to be fully engaged in learning, analysing, or evaluating information so that they became fully involved in the subject. A focus on teaching key vocabulary in lessons in most curriculum subjects gives effective support to students learning English. For instance, in a Year 10 art lesson, Turkish translations of key words had been provided to ensure that students understood the idea of distortion.

49. However, in other subjects English as an additional language (EAL) teachers make little effective contribution to teaching quality because they take a passive role in subject lessons. They rarely lead lessons or share responsibility for behaviour management. For example, in a Year 8 English lesson on *Macbeth*, the EAL teacher did not contribute except to remind the class about bringing equipment to the lesson. Even when EAL teachers support students' learning effectively on an individual basis, joint planning does not take place even though a planning format is available, derived from the literacy in mathematics and design and technology project.

50. A variety of well-structured and purposeful activities in withdrawal lessons for students with special educational needs (SEN) in Years 7 to 8 helps ensure they understand what is expected of them and remain attentive throughout. For example, a Year 7 lesson on extending language and vocabulary by looking at how different words are used to explore the same idea, led one girl to ask, 'Can we come to your lesson every day?' Students learn well and make good progress.

51. Students with SEN in Years 10 and 11 are well supported in their work in a range of GCSE subjects. In a well-managed and structured Year 11 English lesson exploring poetry from other cultures, for example, both teachers worked well as a team and ensured students were offered good linguistic challenge. In turn, students were learning well and making good progress in their use of language. However, special needs teachers and the two learning support assistants are able to offer only limited support in Years 7 to 9. When support is available, it is effective. For example it is good in design and technology and helps students

make progress towards the targets set by teachers in the lesson. A small group of challenging Year 7 boys is working with two special needs support teachers in a neighbouring nursery school, which is an unusual arrangement aimed at supporting their learning in art. High expectations, enthusiasm and effective use of praise encouraged students to contribute to the production of a large snake design on the playground for nursery children's play.

52. Teaching provides extended tasks that stretch more able students in English, design and technology, French, Turkish and religious education. Instrumental lessons for musically talented students and opportunities in athletics enable talented students to excel. However, progress and achievement are unsatisfactory where able students are not sufficiently challenged through suitably demanding work, such as in mathematics and geography, and in mixed ability classes in English. Higher attaining students are not as well attended to as those whose learning needs are more obvious

53. The personal social and health education (PSHE) teaching team as a whole has developed very good expertise and uses a range of skills that enable students to reflect upon the topics as well as learning about them. In turn, teaching is always good, mostly very good and occasionally excellent. Students become secure in their knowledge and so approach topics with confidence. Staff and student relationships are very good, enabling students to develop their own opinions and attitudes in an atmosphere of trust.

Sixth Form

54. Teaching in the Sixth Form is good overall and makes a positive contribution to students' good learning and progress. As yet, however, the impact of this good teaching has not been realised in improving standards in external examinations in all subjects. Seventeen lessons were observed as part of the inspection of Sixth Form provision, including lessons in Turkish, Spanish, drama, business and ICT. The teaching in eight of these lessons was good and in five it was very good. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen in the Sixth Form. There is no data available to indicate whether teaching has improved since the last inspection, but all the available evidence indicates that the high standards of teaching in the Sixth Form have been maintained. However, there has been a significant improvement in teaching in Years 9 to 11 since the last inspection, and the benefits of this will certainly be felt in the Sixth Form in due course, in terms of students' attitudes to their work and the standard of their prior attainment.

55. Teaching is very good in catering and biology, good in English and art, and satisfactory in mathematics. There are examples of very good teaching in biology, drama, and catering. The strengths of these lessons include: good development of communication and literacy skills in biology, use of paired activities in drama and biology, and teamwork in catering and English. This emphasis on students working together helps them to gain in confidence, supporting the development of collaborative working patterns and independent learning skills. Other strengths in Sixth Form teaching include teachers' good subject knowledge and well-structured lesson plans, though in some lessons the learning objectives were not openly shared with students.

56. The number of students in Sixth Form teaching groups varies considerably from year to year and in some subjects classes are very small. In such cases, for example Year 12 mathematics and Year 13 biology, opportunities for class discussion are very limited. Students develop their independence more slowly in these subjects because they do not have opportunities to interact with other students.

57. Lessons are generally well matched to students' needs so that, except in English and mathematics, they develop their key skills well. In particular, explicit development of communication skills in biology leads to very good learning. In this subject, the measured pace of the lessons ensures that students' understanding is built on firm foundations and is supported by a good ability to communicate in accurate biological terms. In contrast, in English and mathematics students make less intellectual and creative effort than they should. This slows the pace of the lesson and, despite the good teaching, learning is satisfactory rather than good.

58. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan lessons to support good learning. Some subjects are timetabled as double or triple lessons, and teachers need to structure such long lessons well to prevent students losing interest. For example, in a very good biology lesson, investigative work around the school gave students the opportunity to learn how technology can be used to gather data in the field, as well as breaking the lesson into manageable units. Good visual aids are also used in art, and up-to-date resources are effectively deployed in Spanish.

59. Where teaching is less good, it is sometimes the result of students' attitudes. In mathematics, for example, a high proportion of students who arrived late, or were absent from the lesson, certainly had an adverse effect on the quality of learning.

60. The small size of teaching groups affects the quality of teaching and learning in several subjects. Throughout the Sixth Form, teachers make good use of discussion techniques to ensure that students are challenged at an appropriate level. This helps them to practise their literacy skills in the context of the subject and to reinforce their learning. These discussions are more successful where several students are present, because they have the opportunity to interact and to learn from each other's preconceptions and difficulties. In mathematics and Year 13 biology, groups of only two to four students mean that such discussion is much more firmly led by the teacher than is desirable, with the result that learning suffers, though it is still good. In contrast, one of the factors supporting good or very good learning in catering and Year 12 biology is groups of a good size. Here, teachers can challenge students at a high level, allowing them to discuss the work in their search for a solution to the problem. The good level of motivation that this technique encourages leads to high levels of involvement and good learning.

61. In nearly all lessons, students work productively and respond well to skilful teaching. Their positive attitudes to their studies and the respect they have for their teachers, combined with the strengths in teaching, mean that students make good progress overall. Students believe that they are taught well and challenged to do their best.

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

62. In Years 7 to 9, all subjects of the National Curriculum are taught, together with religious education. All students have specific lessons in information and communication technology (ICT) and drama. A specialist team of teachers provides a personal, social, and health education (PSHE) course which includes education about sex and the harmful effects of drugs misuse. Design and technology incorporates a good range of opportunities in graphics, resistant materials, textiles and food technology. The breadth and balance of the curriculum are satisfactory overall except in physical education, where, despite including karate and judo, only three rather than the four compulsory elements of the National Curriculum are offered.

63. All students in Years 10 and 11 study a core of English, mathematics and science, design and technology, a modern foreign language, physical education, PSHE and a short GCSE course in religious education. In addition, students can choose two subjects from an appropriate range that includes vocational options in information and communication technology (ICT), catering and construction. The school has successfully pursued the provision of other vocational courses, including key skills, hairdressing, and car maintenance, through the development of consortium arrangements with local schools, the College of North East London and Southgate College. The school helpfully provides teaching staff who contribute to the off-site training programme at Springboard Training. This facility is successfully providing full time opportunities for the continuing education of some disaffected students whose school attendance patterns have been poor.

64. Provision for literacy development is good, and development has progressed well since the last inspection. There is in place a comprehensive set of policies and procedures to assess students' literacy skills on entry to the school and to track their development. Lessons and registration sessions have a regular literacy focus. The school has established an intensive reading programme for students in Years 7 and 8, and a home reading scheme is planned for introduction next September. A Literacy Management Group oversees school initiatives and the well-received staff training programme. The London Institute is involved in evaluating a literacy project with the mathematics and design and technology departments, to be extended to other subject areas next year. Physical education was the only department where attention to literacy was judged to be unsatisfactory. Very good literacy provision was noted in English and drama, art, modern foreign languages and science.

65. The school is taking steps to improve upon the unsatisfactory approach to numeracy across the curriculum noted at the last inspection. The National Numeracy Strategy is being established, a draft numeracy policy is in place, and an audit of numeracy usage in each subject has been undertaken, which will form the basis of future training. There is, as yet, relatively little attention paid to numeracy skills outside the mathematics department, though there are unconnected examples. In art, for example, reference is made to links with symmetry, proportion and scale in Islamic art. Time lines and graphs are used in history, for instance, to identify links between unemployment and the growth of Nazism in the period 1929 to 1933 in Germany. Numeracy skills are applied within the context of using formulae and calculations for weight and volume in design and technology. Work in science involves measurement, calculation including manipulating formulae, and interpreting tables and graphs.

66. Careers education is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and of good quality and well co-ordinated in Years 10 and 11, where it is taught effectively by a specialist teacher as part of the PSHE course. The programme is enhanced by visits to the local careers convention. Impartial and well-considered guidance is provided by the careers officer and although this is appropriately focused on those in greatest need, there are good opportunities for other students to request interviews and receive support. All students in Year 10 participate for two weeks in a well-organised programme of work experience. Strong features are appropriate preparations, a strongly developing process for allocating placements, and sound support while the student is on the placement.

67. Year 11 students benefit from participation in an Industry Day that usefully involves local employers. Community groups, such as the Mesopotamian Youth Group, make an important contribution to developing musical, cultural and social skills. Links with other schools and colleges are good. Good relationships are enjoyed with contributory primary

schools, which are regularly visited by staff, and there is a successful programme of induction for new students. The school's strong association with other local secondary schools and colleges of further education is being consolidated as a result of current negotiations for consortium arrangements for some courses in Years 10 and 11.

68. The range of extra-curricular activities overall is good. Opportunities available in music, reflecting different cultures and traditions within the school, are very good. Opportunities to play instruments, such as the saz (an Anatolian stringed lute-like instrument) or steel pans, are well taken. A broad range of physical education activities, including athletics, judo and karate is available, leading to students' involvements at a national level. Some projects, such as one to widen drugs education, interlink well with community initiatives. In addition, theatre visits and visits to Europe, for example to study art, all further broaden the curriculum. There is extra-curricular provision for younger students with special educational needs outside normal curriculum time. Numbers are limited, particularly at lunchtimes, because of limited accommodation and resources, but students are very keen to attend. There is also after-school provision that is sport-based and includes links with Tottenham Hotspur football club. Because of this provision, students with special education needs (SEN) are able to ask for and receive any extra-curricular support and guidance they feel they might need.

69. Provision for SEN deteriorated after the last inspection. As a result of intervention by the new leadership group, drawing upon an external review very recently undertaken, this decline has now been arrested. Where appropriate, the SEN department organises special arrangements in examinations to help support those students with SEN. However, not all such students are routinely entered for the full range of GCSE examinations available, and alternative courses offering formal qualifications are not yet widely established. The very recent establishment of the *Gateway* facility shows that the school has a strong commitment to promoting an inclusive education which ensures equality of access and opportunity for all students. *Gateway* draws together English as an additional language (EAL) and SEN provision as well as the work of pastoral support staff. Targeted literacy withdrawal support lessons, particularly for younger students, in-class support in mainstream lessons, and option support in Years 10 and 11, are meant to give students SEN access to the full curriculum on offer. However, both for students with SEN and for those with EAL, the frequent withdrawal from mainstream provision at the same time each week means that they are denied access to the full curriculum. Continuity is hard to maintain in the lessons that they miss. Accordingly the overall provision for such students is unsatisfactory between Years 7 and 11.

70. Provision for gifted and talented students is satisfactory because there is isolated but effective provision for such students in some subjects. Extension tasks are closely focused on high attainers in design and technology. In French, more able students are stretched in both speaking and writing. In music, priority for instrumental lessons is given to those students who are musically talented. A good programme of extra-curricular activities in physical education provides opportunities for the talented to excel in athletics. In religious education, there are many challenging activities that develop students' analytical skills. Visits to mainland Europe provide good opportunities to enrich the experience of gifted and talented students in art. The course in Turkish stretches the most able at both GCSE and A Level. Accelerated course provision in mathematics is enabling two students to take AS Level mathematics in Year 10. There is reference to the provision for gifted and talented in the school inclusion plan, but there are no clear identification procedures, nor is there a register of gifted and talented students. Provision is not fully effective because it is not given high enough priority in curriculum planning in every department.

71. Overall, the school makes very good provision for personal and social education. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is seen by the school to be a vital resource in

the delivery of students' personal development. The relationship of the course objectives to the school's curriculum is well structured and appropriate. It is an important pastoral tool that enables students to develop skills, attitudes, values and independence of thought, feelings and actions. The programme is broad, balanced and well planned throughout to meet the needs of all students. Topics include attitudes to bullying, sex and drugs education, ethical issues, human rights, democracy, and survival skills. They provide good opportunities for students to develop good attitudes, values and citizenship skills. The development of PSHE is very well managed, with a strong vision and a clear sense of purpose and direction. The citizenship programme is clearly developing in preparation for its inclusion into the curriculum in 2002.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

72. Provision for students' spiritual development is satisfactory overall. Assemblies take place once each week, for each year group. The statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship is not met. Assemblies rarely constitute worship, although one good assembly on the theme of 'respect' did provide some opportunity for reflection. However, the school makes provision for Friday prayer for Muslim students which is well attended, and a Christian group that meets weekly is well supported. There is some evidence of opportunities in subjects for spiritual development, but this is inconsistent and lacks structure. The PSHE programme contributes little in this area. The religious education curriculum makes a good contribution; for example students are encouraged to consider and respond to questions about the meaning and purpose of life. In design technology, teachers help students to recognise their own creativity and identify it in others. In art, an excellent lesson on imagery enabled students to examine their inner self and put themselves in the shoes of others. In English, the study of literary texts invites empathy with certain characters, and the understanding of their feelings and impulses assists students to develop and give expression to their innermost thoughts and feelings. Opportunities for students to reflect on their experiences were also evident in drama. However, opportunities are missed in other subjects to develop this aspect of the curriculum.

73. Provision for moral development is good. The school has clear expectations of students knowing right from wrong, and students respond well when they are corrected. The headteacher and staff are excellent role models. Assemblies make a significant contribution. Opportunities are targeted largely through the PSHE programme, providing for the development of attitudes and values through discussion. Several subjects contribute well in providing opportunities for moral development. In religious education, students are able to respond to aspects of morality using their knowledge of religious and ethical issues. They are aware of the effects of technology on the environment and are encouraged to make informed judgements when designing. Students are encouraged to discuss moral issues, such as capital punishment, in English literature. Attention to fair play and playing to rules is well developed in physical education. Studies of immigration and prejudice in history and of the plight of Jews in Nazi Germany, make very good contributions to the development of good moral attitudes. Students have a very strong active concern for the disadvantaged, and have raised significant amounts of money for charity.

74. Provision for social development is good. The school provides significant opportunities for students to take responsibility and develop social understanding. The PSHE programme provides them with many opportunities to consider aspects such as rights and responsibilities, healthy environment, citizenship and sex education. The school council, the 'senior students' initiative and peer mentoring enable students to exercise social responsibility and develop communication skills. Participation in lunchtime clubs and sporting activities all help to develop skills of social interaction. Most subjects contribute

towards social development, encouraging students to work well together in pairs, groups and general discussion. Students create a safe environment, free from intimidation, and their concern for others is evident in class and around the school.

75. Awareness of and involvement in the diverse cultural context of the school and community is good and students' attitudes are characterised by mutual tolerance and understanding. There is a wide range of activities celebrating culture in many ways, from both whole-school and subject perspectives. There are some striking instances of this in art and music. For example, an appreciation of Islam is fostered in art and craft work. A fashion show involved the combined work of the art and music departments in drawing together cultural traditions. In music, the Anatolian ensemble and steel band contribute to a varied programme of culturally focused performances. Visits of all kinds enrich students' experience, such as those in art that have involved travel to Rome and Paris.

Sixth Form

Curriculum

76. The quality and range of opportunities for learning provided for students in the Sixth Form are good. An innovative structure extends the range and balance of courses offered. This is NEXUS NOW, which involves a consortium arrangement with local schools, and a very recent extension of the programme, centred on Middlesex University. The aim is to enable students who wish to study currently under-subscribed courses (such as geography and Spanish) to undertake some of their studies at another institution, whilst remaining in the Sixth Form at the school. Moreover, a far wider range of AS and A Level courses is offered. These include digital imaging and photography as well as psychology and mathematics. The school is actively planning a widening range of subjects, including those that offer GNVQ or AVCE pathways.

77. However, religious education is available for only about a quarter of the Sixth Form cohort. The failure to extend this provision and the failure to provide a daily act of collective worship mean that the school continues to be in breach of its statutory requirements in both respects. These were key issues in the previous report, and they are as yet unaddressed.

78. The curriculum for the Sixth Form in the school has been carefully designed to cater for the needs of its students, most of whom enter the Sixth Form from Year 11 in the school. The school offers a small range of AS and A Level subjects, GNVQ Intermediate courses in Business and in ICT, and NVQ courses at Levels 1 and 2 in catering. In addition, students can study for a wider range of AS and A Level courses by participating in the arrangements described above, whilst remaining enrolled at the school. At AS and A Level, the school offers English, mathematics, biology and chemistry (though no students are currently studying chemistry), art and Turkish. GCSEs are also available in mathematics and English.

79. The school claims, with some justification, that it is catering for the needs of its current students in offering an unusual range of subjects. It is responsive to local needs, as other opportunities are available for students who wish to study a range of AS and A Level subjects in colleges in the neighbourhood. Many students in the school still have only a limited understanding of English and benefit from the supportive environment of the small Sixth Form. Most have achieved only limited success in GCSE examinations. The Sixth Form is able to offer such students a range of courses in which they have a reasonable chance of success, and support which is very carefully tailored to meet their needs. For example, although only four students are currently working towards qualifications in AS mathematics, two of them are in fact from Year 10: these two students have already achieved high grades

in GCSE mathematics, but both have English as an additional language, having arrived in this country relatively recently. On the other hand, Year 12 students taking AS biology take module tests only when they are ready to do so: the intention at present is for them to complete the course in 2003. Similar arrangements are in place in art.

80. Courses leading to GNVQs are available in business studies and ICT. These courses are well run, with good teaching and learning taking place. Although results are below the national average overall, some students gain passes with merit or distinction.

81. The school runs a successful catering department, with courses leading to NVQs at Level 2. Students on these courses enjoy the benefits of working in the on-site restaurant, *Foodles*, and go on to achieve good results at the end of the course. The school achieved high accolades in the national *Young Chef of the Year* competition, taking runner up last year and first place in 2001.

82. As in Years 7 to 11, the *Gateway* facility provides good support for Sixth Form students who have SEN or for whom EAL.

83. A good range of opportunities exists for the Sixth Form to take part in extra-curricular activities, some of which provide opportunities for them to work with students from Years 7 to 11 and act as role models for them. Most members of the Sixth Form also participate in the community project which is a strength of the school. This project enables senior students to participate in a wide range of activities, including fund raising, working with the local business community, or working with local primary school children. Members of the Sixth Form have some opportunities to take responsibilities at whole school level through the school council. These whole school opportunities need to be developed further in order to raise the profile of the Sixth Form within the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS STUDENTS?

84. There are aspects of the school's procedures for ensuring students' wellbeing, health and safety that are poor. The recently appointed Child Protection Officer is aware of the role but, as procedures prior to appointment were poor, arrangements should now be developed to improve record keeping and ensure that systems are in place to maintain confidentiality for students on the *At Risk* register. Training is not up to date and no other members of staff have received any training in child protection matters. The school needs to address this as a matter of urgency. The school has not carried out a health and safety audit in recent years. Arrangements between the school and its Public Finance Initiative (PFI) partner, which manages the site and buildings, to monitor and record risk assessment and health and safety are unclear and should be resolved. Several serious concerns over health and safety relating to the premises and site were noted by inspectors and reported directly to the governing body. Some were addressed very promptly during the inspection week. Regular tests of the fire alarm and fire drills have not been carried out. During the inspection week, however, a very successful drill was undertaken in which the school was evacuated swiftly and students' behaviour was exemplary. Students' toilets are not as clean as they should be and present a health hazard because they do not have hot water and towels, and soap dispensers are either empty or inoperative.

85. The school has satisfactory arrangements for first aid. The three designated *First Aiders* have appropriate qualifications and operate from two first aid Rooms. The school keeps good records of accidents, but records of administration of medicines to students are not kept. The local authority nurse, whose work is much appreciated, is available to students twice per week on a 'drop in' basis and at other times for consultation.

86. Many students come from backgrounds where life is difficult and challenging. A large number are unaccompanied minors who do not have parents in this country to advise or give them support. All staff at school display high levels of care and commitment to help these groups, and all students. Staff know their students well. Form tutors, year managers, key stage managers, mentors and support workers bring an effective multi-disciplinary approach to their work. Form tutors, who move up with the school with their own tutor group, provide good role models and continuity of care. They work well and extremely hard to offer help and guidance to students who have academic and personal problems. Inspection findings confirm the views of parents that their children are well looked after and their needs are met.

87. The school has very good procedures for promoting and monitoring good behaviour and for the elimination of oppressive behaviour. Behaviour at the school has greatly improved since the previous inspection, and the concise system of rewards and sanctions, and the levelled system of disciplinary reporting, is well understood by students. The school applies its behaviour policy consistently, and in many lessons seen during the inspection week, students demonstrated good behaviour, learned well and remained on task. In the few instances of poor behaviour, teaching was not focused, students found it difficult to concentrate and succeed. Students and parents interviewed during the inspection week reported that the school has few incidents of oppressive behaviour or bullying, but that staff deal with them effectively when they do occur.

88. Good behaviour is reinforced through the *Gateway* facility, the personal, social and health education (PHSE) programme and by adult example. The school has actively pursued ways to reduce exclusions, including celebrations of achievement and the use of appropriate sanctions, such as Saturday detentions, which have the clear support of parents. *Gateway* provides positive support to students whose learning is inhibited due to a range of social and learning difficulties. The appointment of qualified learning mentors has resulted in improved behaviour by students who are in danger of temporary or permanent exclusion. Exclusion figures have been impressively reduced. Although there has not been time for the *Gateway* work to be evaluated, the signs are promising.

89. The school now has satisfactory procedures for monitoring and improving attendance, which are beginning to have effect. The appointed school attendance officer checks absences and arranges contact with parents on the first day of absence in English, Turkish or Somali. The pastoral team monitors attendance and parents are contacted if there are any concerns. Good attendance is rewarded and attendance figures are reported to the governing body. Senior staff regularly patrol the school grounds and circulation areas before and after school and during breaks, to prevent truancy. Their work has improved attendance figures. A *BROMCOM* computerised system for registration has recently been installed but is not yet fully operational. It cannot yet effectively monitor attendance in lessons after students have arrived at school. Significant numbers of students are missing from lessons and staff do not know where they are.

90. Procedures for assessing students' attainment and progress are now satisfactory. The good guidance available to teachers stresses the importance of keeping students well informed of their attainment and progress as well as what they need to do to improve their work. Some good practice deserves to be shared. In science, for example, assessments that relate to National Curriculum Levels in Years 7 to 9 and to the requirements of external

examinations in Years 10 and 11 give good indications of students' progress as well as providing targets for improvement. In art, where self-evaluation and self-reflection are encouraged through all years, students' attainment is especially well recorded, their progress is carefully reviewed and the marking of work is detailed, clear and very constructive. However, the quality of assessment lags behind in some subject areas. In religious education, for example, there is no clear assessment policy, levels are not used and marking is inconsistent. Within PSHE, the assessment of students' attitudes and values is accepted as being an area for further development.

91. Until recently, the school did not have a satisfactory system for the precise tracking of the progress of individuals and groups or, for example, the comparative achievements of students from different ethnic minorities. Now there is clear data on students' prior attainment before entry to the school. This is increasingly used to set targets, raise attainment and to track students' attainment and progress, including that of students from different ethnic groups. Class teachers build clear evidence in order to monitor students and tackle underachievement through direct intervention. Students at risk of underachievement in several subjects are appropriately identified. Information is shared with the *Gateway* facility, and this ensures that students are supported in a way that suits their respective needs. Regular meetings between pastoral and academic staff ensure that there is a whole school approach to the monitoring of students' achievement and progress. The school's use of data to track students' academic progress and personal development is satisfactory. Nevertheless, it should be improved by resolving inconsistencies in the way it is used in subject departments to support academic progress and personal development.

92. The school's developing ethos of inclusion and effective relationships with outside specialist agencies enhance further the quality of support for those students with SEN. Annual reviews of statements of SEN are generally effective. However, not all the transitional arrangements for students moving into their last years of formal compulsory education have taken place since the last inspection. The school does not meet fully the curricular requirements as outlined in students' statements of special educational needs. Though there is speech and language therapy provision within the local education authority (LEA), there has been no detailed needs' analysis as to what other specialist provision is necessary.

Sixth Form

Assessment

93. Procedures for assessing students' attainment and progress are satisfactory. They are well structured and carefully implemented. Effective use is made of students' GCSE results to guide those embarking on courses of study in Years 12 to 13. There is a strong link between good practice in Years 7 to 11 and in the Sixth Form. Subject areas such as art, science and information and communication technology (ICT), which have good procedures for assessment in Years 9 to 11, continue those good practices in the Sixth Form. In these subject areas, students agree on target grades to be achieved in coursework and eventually in external examinations. Progress in coursework is recorded and reviewed every school term. However, such practices are not yet uniform across the Sixth Form. At present, sixth-form staff do not have an easily accessible database to enable them to find and use assessment information efficiently. The school's current development of a computer-based system gives every indication of greatly improving this aspect of assessment and of providing alternative ways of judging students' progress towards their target grades.

94. In individual subjects, practices vary. In all subjects, teachers know their students well and are keen for them to succeed. Homework is generally appropriate and students take it

seriously. In art, biology and English, written work is carefully marked and related closely to national standards. Feedback is constructive so that students know what they must do in order to improve. This feedback is particularly useful for students who are not conventionally or ambitiously academic. In catering, assessment is continuous throughout the course and is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the awarding body. In mathematics, however, students often mark their own work. Although this is a reasonable strategy in itself, students fail to maintain notes on their marking which are sufficiently constructive to help them when they come to final revision for examinations.

Advice, support and guidance

95. Students are given good advice, support and guidance in the Sixth Form. All teachers know their students well. Students comment most favourably on their relationships with teachers and are confident to seek advice from them on both academic matters and those relating to personal development. The key stage manager, the head of Sixth Form and form tutors are committed to giving all students the best Sixth Form experience they can, and to ensuring that they are well advised in their choices about further study or employment.

96. The focus of guidance lies with the form tutor. Tutors see their students regularly, monitor their attendance, and maintain records of academic progress. Regular review days are held at which progress towards individual targets is discussed. Students value these review days and feel confident in their knowledge of their own progress. Good records are kept. Where individual subject records are based on valid and reliable testing, with well-maintained recording, the support that students get is excellent. However, where testing is infrequent or based on standards which are not secure, the system is less effective. The head of Sixth Form needs to monitor the system carefully to ensure that the supporting data is as secure as possible.

97. Sixth Form students participate in initiatives across the school, most notably the community project, and form tutors monitor their development in these broader contexts. Often, activities undertaken in connexion with the community project give students an insight into the world of work, for example when a student provided support for a hearing impaired child in a junior school. More formally, careers advice is readily available and of high quality.

98. Overall, the school succeeds in its claim to provide good support to students who, in many cases, have particular and sometimes specialised needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

99. The school responds well to issues parents raise and offers effective support. Parents are contacted promptly if there is any cause for concern and informed immediately of any action taken. Parents are encouraged to visit the school and are able to speak to the headteacher or any member of staff at any time by appointment or as soon as possible in an emergency. Parents value the Saturday morning surgeries where they meet staff on an informal basis to discuss immediate problems they may have regarding their children.

100. Arrangements to inform parents of their children's progress are mostly satisfactory. In Years 7, 9 and 11, three meetings per year usefully deal with settling in and guidance about choices for future study. Parents of children who may not achieve GCSE without support are especially invited in order to enlist their help. Meetings are well supported and appreciated. However, the quality of the written annual reports provided for parents is poor in one respect, that they do not give detailed information of students' progress on a subject-by-subject basis.

Although grades are given, there is no detailed explanation of what the codes mean, and therefore parents or carers who do not attend the meetings do not have a clear idea of the progress their children are making.

101. The quality of information provided for parents, apart from reports, is satisfactory. A regular termly newsletter is helpfully produced in four languages. The school prospectus is professionally produced and attractively presented, with all the statutory information that parents need, also helpfully in four languages. In addition, local radio broadcasts information about current promotions to parents. The school, through its pastoral system, makes considerable efforts to support the parents of all its children. It goes to great lengths to see that parents of all ethnic groups are made fully aware that the school is available to help and support them if and when difficulties arise.

102. The level of involvement by parents is developing. The school has provided a home-school agreement, signed by many parents, which clearly sets out the differing responsibilities of the school and parents for the successful delivery of their children's education. At the moment the school does not have a parent teachers association, but it has plans to amalgamate the active *share groups* of Albanian, Somali, Turkish/Kurdish and Afro-Caribbean parents into a single body. These four groups of parents regularly meet at the school in an allocated community room, and work well with the school to discuss and resolve items of community concern. A small number of parents come into school with their own children to monitor their behaviour. A few parents come into school to help with such events as school visits and sports days, and their work and contribution is greatly appreciated. The school has arranged various courses for parents in information and communication technology (ICT) and English language skills, and these are very well supported and much appreciated by them.

103. The views expressed by parents, that their children do not get the correct amount of homework, was confirmed by the inspection team. The issue of homework is evident throughout the school as some children receive too much and some too little. Students confirmed that on some occasions their homework was not collected by staff or not marked. The school does not have a coherent and consistent approach to homework.

104. Parents of students with special educational needs (SEN) are invited to annual reviews of their children's progress, and many attend. They are properly involved in discussions, updates of reviews and in target setting.

105. A significant minority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that the school does not work closely with them. A small minority of parents felt that they were not kept well informed about how their children were getting on. The inspection findings do not support these views.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

106. The new headteacher, appointed a year ago, has a clear vision and a sense of purpose. He provides very successful leadership by giving clear direction to the school. Two deputy heads and three new assistant headteachers have been appointed more recently, and they are equally dedicated and diligent in promoting the aims and values of the school. Together with the headteacher, they form a new and effective leadership group, with clearly established roles and responsibilities.

107. Staff with subject department or pastoral responsibilities are usefully included in the leadership group to form the senior management team. Pastoral management is developing

well. Subject department management varies from satisfactory to very good because some managers are very new in post and relatively inexperienced. There are some examples of effective practice reflecting good progress since the last inspection. In English, for example, there has been remarkable progress in creating an effective organisational framework for the support and development of members of the department. There are significant strengths within the senior management team, and the clear capacity to make further improvement.

108. The school sets out its aims and values clearly in its brochure, and the helpful presentation in English, Turkish and Somali strengthens their purpose. The effective ways in which the leadership group is putting these principles into practice offer good role models to teaching, learning support and administrative staff. For example, expectations of high standards of achievement, students' behaviour and mutual respect are reflected in their high profile in assemblies and between lessons in the circulation areas of the school. The headteacher and all the staff are working hard, and with some notable success, to make an orderly school with a supportive climate for learning. Students' views are valued. Good relationships and behaviour are now the norm.

109. The governors and leadership group together have a strong team spirit, characterised by a commitment to seek improvements. There is a clear working accord between the headteacher and governors, with their respective responsibilities being known and appropriately shared. The chair of governors, and other governors too, are enthusiastic about promoting the interests of the school and are taking an important part in shaping its direction. They have restructured their committees with clear terms of reference. As a result, they can now undertake their roles and responsibilities more effectively and participate willingly in a range of activities to carry out their agenda. Governors place a high degree of reliance upon senior staff for information, and during the past year this trust has not been misplaced. They are jointly involved in review meetings with senior staff and draw upon useful management information, such as reports from the leadership group, local education authority (LEA) personnel, independent consultants and students. They have conducted formal surveys of staff, parents and students' perceptions, and these, together with useful information gathered during day-to-day contacts within the community, are used to help them in their work. This all adds to their grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

110. The governors' monitoring group has fulfilled an important obligation to respond to the serious weaknesses identified in the previous inspection and to steer development work. The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection. Governors see the value of increasing their direct knowledge of evidence for improvement, through, for example, seeing aspects of the school's work at first hand and relating them to how well targets are being achieved. The need now is for governors to develop the committee structure further and, with the leadership group, to build upon their strengths to evaluate strategic developments, whilst always basing decisions on what improves the quality of education in the school.

111. The governing body is aware that it does not fulfil all its statutory obligations at present. There are some curriculum requirements which, although indicated in the previous inspection, are still not met. A daily act of collective worship throughout the school is not provided, and religious education is not part of the Sixth Form curriculum for all students. In

addition, there are National Curriculum components of physical education missing from the programme of study in Years 7 to 9. Although the policy and formal arrangements for the performance management of teachers are in place, the timescale has slipped.

112. These are significant weaknesses affecting the quality of education provided that the governing body needs to address urgently.

113. The school has embarked upon a programme of self-evaluation to improve teaching quality, based upon national criteria set by OFSTED. The present focus is on English and mathematics teaching, but is limited elsewhere. The provisional programme to implement the approach in other subjects extends far into the future, though it would benefit from being implemented more widely in the short term.

114. A review of the school's situation, conducted for the beginning of this school year, has focused very appropriately on key aspects such as students' behaviour, attendance and teaching quality to improve conditions for learning. Establishing the *Gateway* facility to improve provision and support for students with English as an additional language (EAL) and Special educational needs (SEN) has been a major step forward. Although the arrangements have been in place for several weeks only, early evaluations have indicated some areas for improvement that deserve urgent attention. The present regular arrangement for withdrawal to provide support for students with EAL or SEN leads to an issue of equality of opportunity and access in the curriculum, and needs greater flexibility of operation. Analysis of test and examination data is much more extensive and rigorous than at the time of the previous inspection. Targets for improvement in Years 10 and 11 are set and used in most subjects, but greater consistency is needed. Those students who, with additional support, are likely to improve their GCSE grades are carefully identified for help through the mentoring programme.

115. After a period of instability and high rates of staff absence, there are now enough suitably qualified and experienced teachers to ensure that the planned curriculum is taught at least satisfactorily in most subjects. The school has overcome recent severe recruitment difficulties by taking on several registered graduate and overseas teacher trainees. They are effectively supported in a well-planned programme of monitoring and training both within the school and in partnership with the local university. The trainees appreciate the good quality of the support they receive and, as a consequence, they are growing in confidence and have every opportunity to succeed. They make a significant contribution to the work of the school. Rates of staff absence have fallen considerably since the previous inspection, reflecting an improvement in staff morale.

116. In art, history, music and religious education the quality of the staffing is good, and high levels of expertise, qualification and experience have a major impact on the quality of learning and achievement of students. A small number of long-term supply staff in information and communication technology (ICT) and English is effective. However, in geography and mathematics, the frequent changes of supply teaching, some of which is non-specialist, have a negative effect on students' learning and achievement.

117. Technical support in most practical subjects is adequate, and there is a good level of administrative assistance. This level of support enables teachers to spend more of their time on tasks directly related to teaching. However, the number of support staff for students with SEN and for students with EAL is inadequate. The range of minority ethnic backgrounds among the students in the school is well reflected within the staff.

118. The arrangements for performance management are not yet fully in place across the school. Although there are agreed targets for the headteacher, teachers across the school have not yet agreed targets, nor has the programme of lesson observation and review meetings commenced. The official timescale for the first cycle of performance management cannot now be met, but there are plans to bring arrangements back on schedule.

119. The revised arrangements for professional development are satisfactory and are now more closely linked to whole school priorities. For example, the impact of recent training on developing students' literacy is effective in many subjects. There are good arrangements for the induction of newly qualified teachers and those new to the school, and for supporting trainee teachers and supply teachers. Newly qualified teachers and student teachers benefit from the regular weekly training sessions primarily organised for those on the graduate and trainee teacher programme. Staff working in all capacities across the school follow the same principles of professional development and review. They are included in the arrangements that led to the submission for *Investors in People* status, which reflects the improving quality of the procedures for professional development.

120. Since the previous inspection there has been a significant improvement to the atmosphere of classrooms and circulation areas through effective displays of students' work, for example in the mathematics corridor. However, there are still some pockets of mediocrity where displays contribute to drabness in some rooms, and do not offer inspiration, for example in some laboratories. Most subjects have suitable rooms but the quality is variable. Some are a good size but have particular inadequacies: for example in English where they do not lend themselves well to work in drama; ICT rooms lack the necessary ventilation to provide a comfortable working environment; design and technology and NVQ catering rooms need refurbishment to replace old equipment. The school has access to an excellent athletics track, but the hard play area is in a poor condition with loose gravel and netting.

121. The overall provision for resources is unsatisfactory, principally because there are not enough up-to-date computers to teach the curriculum and there are not enough books in the school. The ratio of books and computers to students is well below average for secondary schools. The computer suites are of sufficient size to enable students to develop ICT skills in timetabled lessons, and the computer suite in the learning resource centre is a very useful facility. Otherwise, the number of machines is insufficient to allow more use within other subjects. Spending on resources has been significantly less than in most schools. Despite this, in English, history, modern foreign languages and religious education, there are sufficient resources in terms of both quantity and quality. This helps to improve standards, particularly in Years 10 and 11. Resource levels are unsatisfactory in mathematics, geography and music. Although there has been recent expenditure in mathematics, it has still not been enough to improve resources to a satisfactory standard.

122. The number of books in the library is below average. A member of staff is permanently responsible for the library and has already carried out positive improvements in organisation, lay out, links with subject staff and accessibility. A non-teaching library manager has also been appointed and provides a much needed opportunity for further improvement. The school has clear and appropriate plans for further development of the library, including the acquisition of computers to support the curriculum and multi-media research.

123. The headteacher and governors' finance committee work together to control expenditure, and have procedures to ensure sound administrative control. Records of expenditure from the time of the previous senior management were incomplete, leaving the new management and governors working in a vacuum, with little accurate detailed information available. Not surprisingly, budget information only became clear part way through last financial year. In turn, a very cautious approach to spending led to minimal

purchase of resources. This prudent approach successfully created a balance between income and expenditure, with a reasonable contingency fund, and hence a more secure situation in the current year. Nevertheless, unforeseen costs within the refurbishment programme and a falling school roll will have an adverse effect upon the funds available, particularly in high spending areas such as staffing.

124. Specific grants that enhance the school's income particularly are from Excellence in Cities (EiC), which supports learning mentors, and Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG), which pays for learning support staff for students with EAL. The funds are closely targeted to specific areas. Early evaluations indicate successful learning mentor support in a range of settings, such as: help for individual students; help with groups, for example cultural development in music; help with parent groups whose language is Turkish or Somali. The value gained from the EMAG is less certain at present. Arrangements to channel support through *Gateway* are not yet as effective as they need to be, and extensive further development work and evaluation to improve quality is needed.

125. The school has lagged behind in the use of new technology to support the curriculum and its management and administration. New curriculum resources are substantially based upon a networked computer system. New equipment has recently been installed in the new administration suite. However, electronic management information systems, to handle data about students and their attainments, are not fully operational. Much still has to be collated, analysed and shared manually, which in the present day is less efficient. The computerised registration system does not yet extend to monitoring attendance in lessons, which leads to gaps in information about whether students are absent or truanting or withdrawn from the lesson for specific support.

126. As well as rigorously applying the principles of best value when making spending decisions before placing orders for goods and services, the school is applying other principles well. Useful information about similar and other local schools' performance is provided, and is now used to make comparisons and set targets in the drive to raise attainment. Importantly, the school has challenged itself in relation to an evaluation of its work and carried out a joint survey of the views of students, parents and staff on important issues such as punctuality, behaviour and teaching. The outcomes, discussed between governors and staff, are very clear and have given a good steer to help development planning.

127. The school has a hugely diverse range of students' abilities and times of entry. When considering the achievements they are now making in relation to their very low ability on entry, the substantial improvements in behaviour and the climate for learning, in parents' perceptions, in staff and students' morale, and in the quality of leadership which the new management brings, the promising signs of improvement noted by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) a year ago are being realised. Overall the school is now giving satisfactory value for money.

Sixth Form

Leadership and management

128. The key stage manager with day-to-day responsibility for the Sixth Form is one of the new assistant headteachers appointed last year, though he is not new to the school. He shares the vision and commitment of the governors and headteacher, and works hard to make a success of the Sixth Form. He is very well supported by the head of Sixth Form and form tutors. He has effective procedures in place for sharing his vision with colleagues within the school and is working to achieve a consistent approach to the Sixth Form.

129. Since his appointment, the key stage manager and his team have identified a clear role for the Sixth Form in the school. They promote the Sixth Form as catering primarily for students who, for whatever reasons, would be unlikely to succeed in a conventional further education or Sixth Form college environment. The team has forged links with other local providers of Post 16 education, including Middlesex University, so that a much wider range of AS and A Level courses can be made available. The manager has worked to strengthen the courses that the school currently offers, and is actively considering introducing further vocational courses within the school.

130. The school needs to continue to work to raise recruitment levels in the Sixth Form to ensure that all groups are viable, in financial terms and in terms of the opportunities they present for students' personal and study skills development.

131. The key stage manager is also aware of the need to raise attainment in some subjects and to ensure that the advice given to students is as helpful as possible. He has developed the system for advising students on their options on entry to the Sixth Form, and entry requirements are currently under review. In this he works closely with the head of Sixth Form and form tutors.

132. Procedures and systems to support this vision of the Sixth Form are actively promoted by the Key Stage manager, the head of Sixth Form and Sixth Form tutors, but these are not yet fully effective. Since the appointment of the current headteacher a year ago, there have been many improvements, including a much-improved work ethic throughout the school. If these improvements bring about the hoped-for benefits in terms of GCSE results, they will increase the pool of potential students in the Sixth Form and provide those who stay with a much more secure knowledge base for their Sixth Form studies. It is the vision of the Sixth Form manager to capitalise on these whole school improvements and to build a Sixth Form which provides significant benefits to the school. He looks well placed to succeed.

133. However, the key stage manager is also acutely aware of the need to provide value for money. Currently there are small teaching groups in several A Level subjects and, with many students gaining poor results at the end of the course, the Sixth Form as a whole gives unsatisfactory value for money.

Resources

134. Sixth Form resources for teaching are satisfactory. Teachers are well qualified in appropriate subjects, and professional development is available to them when needed. Technical and administrative support is good. Accommodation and resources are generally in urgent need of refurbishment, as in most areas of the school. Plans for this work are now at an advanced stage.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

135. The school should consider ways of improving:

- The standards of attainment, in English, mathematics and science particularly, in the Year 9 statutory tests and in GCSE.
- The quality of the curriculum, the specialist teaching, and the support within subject teaching for students who have English as an additional language (EAL) or special educational needs (SEN).
- The attitudes of a minority of students, especially with regard to attendance and punctuality to lessons.
- The arrangements for monitoring and dealing with health and safety issues, and for maintaining up-to-date child protection procedures.
- The way students' attainments and progress are assessed and the clarity of this information in annual reports for parents.
- Arrangements to meet curriculum and other statutory obligations for daily acts of collective worship, physical education in Years 7 to 9, information in the policy for SEN, and for the performance management of teachers.
- The consistent use of homework to reinforce learning in lessons.

Sixth Form

- * Levels of attainment in mathematics and English.
- * Religious education in the curriculum.
- * The profile of the Sixth Form, recruitment and retention rates from Year 11.
- * Development of independent learning skills, especially where there are small groups of students.

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)

136. The role of English as an additional language (EAL) co-ordinator has been taken on temporarily by a recently appointed and suitably experienced member of the leadership group to cover for long-term sick leave.

137. Various monitoring and assessment systems have been set up but they are not yet embedded in practice. The quality of provision at present is unsatisfactory, and this is well recognised by the school senior management team.

138. A review of EAL provision in January 2001 identified many shortcomings including ineffective classroom practice, the lack of assessment and monitoring systems and few records being kept on targeted students. The recommendations made have appropriately formed the basis of an action plan. However, at the time of the inspection, only a few of the recommendations had been put in place and many of the deficiencies identified remain. Within the newly formed *Gateway* facility, the induction programme for students *New to English* is a recent initiative since March 2002. This programme has a clear rationale and syllabus for students in Years 7 to 9. Although teaching is satisfactory, no judgement could be made on its impact on student achievement. The arrangements for the induction and teaching of students in Years 10 and 11 are undeveloped and unsatisfactory.

139. Assessment data based on language stages is used to target students for the induction and ESOL classes. Procedures for tracking targeted students in Years 7 to 9 ensure that they receive support in their mainstream subjects, but systems for monitoring their progress have only recently been introduced.

140. There are significant inadequacies in the administration of EAL teaching. Timetables are not accurate, and this leads to groups without a teacher or with the wrong teacher. English as an additional language teaching and support staff are not always timetabled to exploit their skills appropriately. For example, support for an English induction class was too often given in Turkish when the objective was to learn to speak in English.

141. Training for all teachers in the school took place in December and January on literacy and EAL. This has had an impact on classroom practice, particularly in art and history, and is helping to ensure that students with EAL make satisfactory progress in their learning. Providing information to staff about the reading ages of all students in the school, including those with EAL, is also an effective strategy because it highlights the need to address language as a priority across the curriculum. It has led to the recent and successful development of specific literacy-focused projects in mathematics and design and technology.

142. There is a considerable amount of guidance and information produced for every teacher. It includes various formats for joint lesson planning and assessments. Although the forms in themselves are appropriate, there was no evidence that lesson plans are being used, or assessments or monitoring taking place, when teachers provide support in mainstream subject lessons. The systems are not satisfactorily in place except in the Sixth Form.

143. Progress since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. The quality EAL teaching and curriculum needs to be improved, particularly in Years 10 and 11. The contribution of support teachers when they work in subject lessons is low and does not provide value for money. The action plan for the department needs to be implemented to ensure that provision improves.

144. In the Sixth Form, EAL students who are new to English make satisfactory progress. They are effectively helped by very good displays of target language and model examples of work. They study for an ESOL profile certificate at pre-entry level for a National Vocational Qualification, combined with a Foundation Level Business Studies GNVQ. Evidence from the 2001 course results shows they made satisfactory or better progress

SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS (SEN) ASSESSMENT

145. When statements of SEN are reviewed annually, the review draws upon a wide range of professional opinion and consultation with parents or carers and students. This provides for and informs the updating of students' records on a regular basis, and targets are either modified or maintained from year to year. Assessment data over time is not always included in students' records, thus it is not always possible to track the progress of statemented students as they move through the school.

146. Recently produced individual education plans (IEPs) are in place for all students at stages 3 to 5 on the school's register of SEN, but only for some at stage 2 of the register. Other than the 'key workers' (special needs support teachers) who write the targets, other teachers do not make sufficient use of IEPs. They rely on the summary sheets that are available for most of the students at stages 3 or above on the SEN register. These sheets at present do not include reading age information or other useful data such as National Curriculum Levels in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Targets set for students on IEPs are for the most part clear, concise, challenging and attainable. They help special needs teachers to plan their work well for withdrawal lessons.

147. The range of assessment data available to identify those students who need support and to place them appropriately on the school's register of SEN is narrow. Only recently has there been a systematic testing of reading ages as a means of initial assessment. The breakdown of students' needs at stages 3 to 5 on the school's SEN register, provided before the inspection, shows that almost 50 per cent of students have emotional or behavioural difficulties, and approximately 45 per cent have moderate learning difficulties. The breakdown of students' needs on the newly produced SEN register was not available during the inspection. Overall, assessment procedures are at an early stage of development.

148. Parents and carers are invited to, and most are involved in, the annual reviews of students with statements of SEN. Their views are recorded, and this keeps them fully involved and informed as to their child's progress towards the targets set out as part of the review process.

149. The school took the decision in September 2001 to have an external review of provision for SEN. This looked at the management and practice of support. The quality of provision had clearly deteriorated since the last inspection, when it was judged to be sound. The review reported that 'some dramatic changes' were evident, as a result of the vision of the recently appointed headteacher and implementation by the new deputy headteacher with responsibility for student support. As a result of this review, there have been further staffing changes as well as improvements in systems and procedures to improve

assessment and provision. Records and paperwork for statemented students have been rationalised, though there remain inconsistencies in content of students' files. These do, however, need time to become embedded, as does the planned introduction of the requirements of the new Code of Practice for SEN.

150. The school pays due regard to the old Code of Practice for SEN, and the register of SEN is now organised and up-to-date. A new school governor with responsibility for SEN has also been recently nominated. However, the school's draft policy for special education needs does not meet fully the statutory requirements in terms of information needed.

151. Overall, the recently appointed acting special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is beginning to provide effective day-to-day management of the learning support department and of the procedures for the assessment and support of students on the school's SEN register. The deputy headteacher with responsibility for student support has ensured the school has addressed the decline in provision for students with special educational needs since the time of the last inspection. Recent improvements, including a positive response to the issues raised in the external review of SEN provision, show the will and capacity to improve and develop further in order to meet the requirements of the new Code of Practice for SEN.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	Years 7 – 11	138
	Sixth Form	17
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and students		65

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
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Years 7 – 11

Number	5	25	61	38	10	1	0
Percentage	4	18	42	26	7	1	0

Sixth Form

Number	0	5	8	3	1	0	0
Percentage	0	29	47	18	6	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 here as each lesson represents more than six 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	1061	81
Number of full-time students known to be eligible for free school meals	701	N/A

Special educational needs

	Y7 – Y11	Sixth Form
Number of students with statements of special educational needs	24	0
Number of students on the school's special educational needs register	402	4

English as an additional language

	No of students
Number of students with English as an additional language	950

Student mobility in the last school year

	No of students
Students who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	194
Students who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	166

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	14.8
National comparative data	8.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	6.75
National comparative data	1.1

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year 2000-01

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

Number of registered students in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	144	86

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of students at NC Level 5 and above	Boys	32	47	42
	Girls	19	18	19
	Total	51	65	61
Percentage of students at NC Level 5 or above	School	22 (24)	29 (32)	27 (24)
	National	64 (63)	66 (65)	66 (59)
Percentage of students at NC Level 6 or above	School	7 (5)	11 (14)	12 (8)
	National	31 (28)	43 (42)	34 (30)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of students at NC Level 5 and above	Boys	32	48	41
	Girls	20	18	18
	Total	52	66	59
Percentage of students at NC Level 5 or above	School	23 (14)	29 (34)	26 (27)
	National	65 (64)	68 (66)	64 (62)
Percentage of students at NC Level 6 or above	School	7 (1)	12 (9)	12 (4)
	National	31 (31)	42 (39)	33 (29)

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

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

Number of registered students in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	142	87

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* - C	5 or more grades A* - G	1 or more grades A* - G
Numbers of students achieving the standard specified	Boys	16	68	117
	Girls	8	59	89
	Total	24	127	206
Percentage of students achieving the standard specified	School	10 (15)	55 (76)	90 (93)
	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	19.3 (22.8)
	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)

Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 on roll in January of the latest reporting year who were entered for GCE A Level or AS Level examinations:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	10	24

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	7.5	7.7	7.6 (10.6)	0.5	0	0.5(5.8)
National	16.9	17.9	17.4	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	87	62
	National	N/A	N/A

Ethnic background of students

	No of students
Black – Caribbean heritage	74
Black – African heritage	72
Black – other	29
Indian	24
Pakistani	8
Bangladeshi	39
Chinese	5
White	669
Any other minority ethnic group	222

Exclusions in the last school year 2000-01

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	12	0
Black – African heritage	26	0
Black – other	30	0
Indian	6	0
Pakistani	5	0
Bangladeshi	4	0
Chinese	0	0
White	31	3
Other minority ethnic groups	68	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)	74.4
Number of students per qualified teacher	15.35:1

Education support staff:

Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	19.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	551

Deployment of teachers:

Y7– Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	78.8
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Average teaching group size:

Y7– Y13

Key Stage 3	27
Key Stage 4	19
Sixth Form	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	5,166,161.00
Total expenditure	4,511,453.00
Expenditure per student	3667.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	Not Known
Balance carried forward to next year	496.00

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	35.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	20.4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	4
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	7.8
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out
Number of questionnaires returned

1150
106

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	37	8	3	1
My child is making good progress in school.	33	55	7	1	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	45	12	6	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	37	21	12	3
The teaching is good.	39	43	6	1	11
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	43	5	2	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	36	5	1	7
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	33	5	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	51	29	13	0	7
The school is well led and managed.	44	28	8	2	18
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	40	5	1	12
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	37	6	0	16

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

ENGLISH and DRAMA

English

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

Strengths:

- Well-planned provision for the support of staff in training.
- Long term planning and detailed schemes of work.
- Supportive relationships with students
- The adaptation of the National Literacy Strategy to meet the needs of students with special needs (SEN) and English as an additional language (EAL).

Areas for improvement:

- The use of information and communication technology (ICT).
- Consistency in the frequency and detail of marking.
- Target-setting in relation to levels and grades of attainment, particularly to support better standards in writing.

152. Year 9 English results in the 2001 National Curriculum Standard Attainment Tests were very low in comparison to the national average, and well below in comparison to similar schools. The proportion of students at Level 5 was very low compared with the national average. Half were below Level 4. The trend of results since 1997 is broadly in line with the national picture, though there was a dip in attainment in 2001.

153. In the 2001 GCSE examinations in English Language, results at A*-C overall were very low compared with the national average. A*-G grades come closer to those achieved nationally. Girls' results were significantly better than boys'. Taking prior attainment into account, students' progress was below expectations, and they did worse in English than in the average of their other subjects.

154. In English Literature, results at A*-C were also very low compared to the national picture. Boys' results were better than girls', which is unusual. Again, the position for A*-G grades is closer to the national average, though still well below it. For both language and literature, the proportion of students entered for the GCSE examinations is smaller than is the case nationally.

155. Levels of achievement observed during the inspection were better than recent examination results would suggest. Students' achievement and progress (boys and girls equally) are satisfactory. The impact of new staffing since January 2001 has been considerable. Expectations of students are generally high and they can be seen to be progressively meeting them. Students' writing showed particularly good improvement in Year 7, and evident, though less dramatic, gains in proficiency in other years. By age 14, students are writing in a range of forms, managing narratives and creative writing with a general degree of fluency and success. Argumentative and critical writing (for example discussion of motivation, character and imagery in *Macbeth*) is handled satisfactorily by high attaining students, though less advanced students find such writing challenging, and achieve only modest standards. The substantial numbers of students with special needs, and those for whom EAL, require and receive considerable and well-directed support. They make evident

progress in basic skills, and show increasing competence over time in the range of writing tasks required by the English curriculum. Again, this is equally the case for boys and girls. Higher attaining students are less well served. In some lessons they are stretched by activities and materials which match their abilities and potential. Such thoughtful provision is not sufficiently general however.

156. By the age of 16 further progress is clearly made. Low attaining students continue to have difficulty with spelling and expression. However, their writing is capably organised and shows the positive effects of the writing frames and drafting procedures used to encourage achievement. Some high attaining students' writing is notably fluent and assured. For example, an autobiographical piece, giving an account of a trip back to the author's birthplace, contained the sentence: 'Of all our experiences there, we never once met a person - be they Palestinian or Israeli - who was not decent or helpful'. It was accomplished, mature, and beautifully expressed writing. Such standards are the exception.

157. The range of attainment seen in the writing of students in Years 7 to 9 and Years 10 and 11 is below national expectations, but above what might be expected given students' prior attainment. This progress is the result of the energy, commitment and good practice of the new English team. Marking is inconsistent in its frequency and detail and students' have insufficient access to ICT to draft, edit, and present their writing. Nevertheless, the careful implementation of a variety of strategies to support literacy (and specifically to address the needs of special needs and EAL students) has clearly paid dividends. In order to further improve students' achievement, the relationship between marking, target setting, and the levels and grades of the National Curriculum needs to be clearer.

158. Achievement in reading has a similar pattern. By the age of 14, most high attaining students are able to read, understand and comment on a range of writing intelligently and well. Middle and lower attaining students need much support to develop their reading skills. For example, students in Year 7 were brought through an expertly managed series of stages of questioning, note taking, illustration and discussion to an understanding of the main ideas of the verses of a narrative poem. It was supportive and well judged teaching and typical of the procedures that result in standards at the age of 14 which are at least in line with expectations. So too with the teaching observed in Years 10 and 11. Students become progressively familiar with techniques to analyse and reflect upon texts so that across all levels of ability (as in a lesson on the GCSE anthology *Hearts and Partners*) students make clear progress in reading for understanding.

159. Standards of speaking and listening, though satisfactory given students' prior attainment, are less secure than those in reading and writing. At both key stages, teachers use direct questions to keep students attentive and to develop and extend their answers. In most lessons, pair and group work is planned to allow for supported discussion. Plenary sessions develop students' abilities to speak in public to a wider audience. Many students find these demands challenging, and they are given support to meet them with increasing success.

160. Special needs and EAL students had materials tailored to their needs. More able students' had extension tasks to stretch them intellectually. The department also has three graduate trainees contributing to English provision. The overall quality of teaching is testimony to their talent and to the arrangements made to support and develop their work.

161. Standards of teaching are good overall. Of four lessons observed in Years 7 to 9, two were judged to be very good and one good, though one was unsatisfactory. Of five lessons in Years 10 and 11, one was very good, two were good, and two were satisfactory. In Years 7 to 11, the beneficial impact of the National Literacy Strategy on planning and the conduct of

lessons is obvious. The pace and variety of lessons motivates and challenges students. Teachers' knowledge of their subject and their secure management gives students of all abilities tasks relevant to their needs, and carefully judged opportunities to succeed and progress. For example, a Year 9 lesson on suspense in storytelling brought students to a developed understanding of technique through impressively inclusive teaching. Boys and girls were equally attended to through direct questions. Special needs and EAL students were given materials tailored to their needs. More able students were given extension tasks to stretch them intellectually. It was teaching and management of a very high order, and from a newly qualified teacher. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, for example in a Year 8 lesson about the opening scene of *Macbeth*, it is because lesson activities are unconnected. Students do not understand their purpose and although close support helps maintain the attention of students with EAL and low attainers, more able students become less and less involved. The department also has three graduate trainees contributing to English provision. The overall quality of teaching is testimony to their talent and to the arrangements made to support and develop their work.

162. Learning is satisfactory overall, but with many good features, throughout Years 7 to 11. Students concentrate and respond well to teachers' high expectations of them. Relationships are positive, respectful and productive. Students' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good. However, the quality of teaching is not precisely reflected in the quality of learning. This is because most students are highly dependent upon their teachers, so that they lack initiative and self-awareness. Higher attaining students are not as well attended to as those whose learning needs are more obvious.

163. Curricular provision in English is satisfactory. Schemes of work cover the requirements of the National Curriculum in good and progressive detail. The literacy and Years 7 to 9 strategies to enhance students' knowledge and achievement in English are securely embedded. Information and communication technology (ICT) provision in English is currently a weakness. Access to ICT during lessons is unsatisfactory. There is little evidence of its use in students' written work for drafting, editing, and presentation.

164. The leadership of the department is very good. The current head of department inherited a poor situation in January 2001, since when progress has been remarkable. There is now in place an excellently comprehensive handbook, detailed schemes of work, clear descriptions of departmental responsibilities, and an organisational framework for the support and development of members of the department.

165. As a result of this clear sense of direction, improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall and in many respects very good. Although students' attainment in the 2001 public examinations was poor, inspection evidence indicates that their progress and achievement are much improved. Opportunities for students' to work collaboratively in order to develop their skills in speaking and listening (a weakness when last inspected) are now a strong feature in English work. Information and communication technology (ICT) in English, and the development of gifted and talented students, are areas still to attend to.

166. Students respond well to the professional, supportive, challenging and good-humoured teaching they receive. The English team is essentially new, and is doing very impressive work for the many students in the school who have particular needs, requiring continuity and stable teacher-student relationships.

Drama

Overall the provision for drama is **good**.

Strengths:

- Very good teaching.
- Respect for, and encouragement of, students from all backgrounds.
- Good specialist knowledge of teachers.
- Contribution to the cultural and extra-curricular life of the school.

Areas for improvement:

- Ensuring students are aware of the learning objectives of all lessons.

167. In 2001, attainment in the GCSE examination was below national expectations for grades in the A*-C range. All candidates obtained A*-G grades. Taking prior attainment into account, this represents very good achievement. The proportion of students entered was double that of the previous year. Within the school, comparison shows students' points scores in drama were considerably higher than in the average of their other subjects. This has been the case consistently over recent years.

168. Levels of achievement observed during the inspection matched these standards. Students of all abilities make clear progress in lessons and over time. By the age of 14 students are able to use a range of drama skills to present work of high quality. They are familiar and confident with techniques of mime, improvisation, and staging. By the age of 16 further progress is made. Students develop and evaluate their drama work intelligently both orally and in writing. The emphasis on a cycle of collaborative experiment, rehearsal, evaluation and presentation supports the progress of students with special needs and EAL particularly well.

169. Standards of teaching are very good overall. Four lessons were seen spanning work in Years 7 to 11, and AS Level in the Sixth Form. One was good, two very good, and one outstanding. These high standards of teaching lead to good learning at Years 7 to 9. Because at this stage students are dependent upon the alertness and expertise of teachers to keep them productively engaged, there is a difference between the quality of teaching and learning. However, at GCSE and AS Level, where students are sufficiently familiar with the disciplines of drama to be largely autonomous in their learning, both teaching and learning are correspondingly very good.

170. A strong feature of successful teaching and learning is the transparent criteria for assessment and evaluation of drama work. In a lesson examining the idea of conscience and its relevance to *Macbeth*, the work of the class was deepened and developed by considering how focus, use of space, and the skills and themes of the drama curriculum were successfully or otherwise represented in the improvisations shown. Evaluation also played a significant part in an outstanding lesson on Greek Theatre. Year 10 students were taken through a demanding series of exercises in choral speaking, improvisation and mime, referring constantly to the conventions of Greek drama and ritual. In each of these lessons, teachers were completely secure in their own subject and technical knowledge. This led in turn to students' growing confidence in the skills and disciplines of drama. In the best lessons, what was to be learned was made clear at the beginning and referred to throughout to frame and direct students' work. This helpful practice was not adopted in all lessons seen though.

171. The schemes of work for drama are progressive and detailed. The weekly drama lessons in Years 7 to 9 give a good basis for developing work in Years 10 and 11 as a GCSE option. Around 70 students currently opt for the subject, which is a good sign of its popularity and success.

172. The extra-curricular contribution of drama to the cultural life of the school is very strong. There are after-school performance clubs and Saturday morning classes to support Year 11 drama students. Performances give drama a public and motivating dimension at Christmas, in March for GCSE, and in June for Years 7 to 9. There are frequent theatre visits and equally frequent visits to the school of professional practitioners to enrich students' experience and repertoire.

173. Leadership of the department is good. The principles and practices of the drama team are firmly established and understood. Schemes of work and the conduct of lessons are explicitly inclusive. Special needs students, and those for whom EAL, are particularly considered. As a consequence, the achievement of those groups of students is supported and planned for in the content and delivery of the curriculum. Liaison with other departments capitalises on the possibilities of cross-curricular work. History, careers and English are amongst the areas to benefit. All this speaks of imaginative and committed leadership. The studio is a satisfactory space for drama, but the two classrooms used for drama are unsatisfactory. The refurbishment of facilities in the new West Building should resolve the accommodation difficulties currently experienced.

MATHEMATICS

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

Strengths:

- Departmental leadership is good.
- The teachers are well qualified, hard working and committed to the students' success.
- There is a capacity to improve.

Areas for improvement:

- The standards of the students' work are well below National Levels.
- Unsatisfactory attendance has an adverse effect on standards.
- There are not enough textbooks for use in class.

174. Students' results in the National Curriculum tests for 14 year olds were very low compared with the national average, and well below average when compared with those of students from similar schools in 2001 and over recent years. The results of boys and girls do not differ significantly. GCSE results were well below national norms for 2001. Improvement for those gaining higher grades (between A* and C) was also significantly below the national average. Almost twice as many boys gained higher grades in 2001 compared with girls.

175. The work of the students in Years 7 to 9 seen during the inspection shows that their current performance reflects these exam results. Although they have improved, standards remain well below national standards. About one third of the students in Year 9 are achieving at or above National Curriculum Level 5, with around half producing work at Level 6 or higher. This is in line with the school's examination targets for this year.

176. The work of higher attaining students in Year 9 shows that very few are capable of obtaining Levels 7 or 8 in the coming National Curriculum examinations. They can all construct pie charts but there are some who cannot interpret them. A few do not readily convert 75 per cent to three-quarters. Most can recognise that the sketch of three-quarters of a circle represents 75 per cent, but one or two suggested that this shape represented one third. All can recognise simple sequences and predict the next term, but several cannot find the algebraic rule for these sequences. Middle attaining students achieve at Level 4 with some at Level 5. Overall, their algebra is weak, although there are one or two who can gather like terms in an expression and add or subtract to simplify it. There are one or two with good knowledge of multiplication, including seven and eight times tables, but most are slow at mental arithmetic. Lower attaining students are almost all at Level 3 with some at Level 4. Some do not start from the right position on a ruler when measuring a straight line. Most are able to see what step in a number machine will increase one number to another. For example, they can recognise that five will go to 12 if one adds seven. Many, however, have more difficulty recognising when a negative function has to be used, and cannot see that to get from thirteen to eight you have to take away five. Basic numerical work is well below average standards. Whilst the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the use of a starter activity in three-part lessons are beginning to raise standards there is a great deal of ground to be made up.

177. The standard of work of students aged between fourteen and sixteen, seen during the inspection, is well below that attained nationally, with less than three in every ten showing the capacity to obtain grade C or better at GCSE. Very few high attaining students are on course for the highest grades A*, A or B at GCSE. Of these few, most can solve problems and understand circle theorems. Algebra is weak for most in the top ability sets. They have difficulty expanding brackets and factorising. Whilst most can apply the four rules to fractions, they find difficulty applying this to problems. Middle attainers can solve simple algebraic equations involving one step, but cannot make progress with more complicated examples such as $2x + 7 = 3x - 3$. Lower attainers have weak retention and understanding of number bonds. For example, none can manage to add 14 and 19 mentally. They can plot points in the first quadrant on a graph, but cannot use the negative numbers required for the other three quadrants.

178. Attainment is very low compared with that nationally when students join the school at the age of 11. There are individual examples of students with English as an additional language (EAL) making very good progress as a result of excellent support from the class teacher. The use of languages shared between student and teacher, such as Greek, has been a considerable help to their understanding in mathematics lessons.

179. The teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory with no lessons in which the teaching was less than satisfactory overall. The students' learning, closely linked to teaching quality, is also satisfactory in lessons. Lessons follow the three-part structure recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy. Most begin with a short introductory activity, followed by a longer period for the students to work on the main topic for consideration. The end is usually a review of what has been covered. The introductory sessions are effective for the most part, though they do not involve enough short sharp questions to practise mental methods. The use of small individual white boards, so that all students can display their answers to the teacher, is used effectively in some lessons but not in enough lessons. Teachers know their subject well and maintain a good pace in lessons so that in general the students' interest is maintained. Behaviour is well controlled and students work hard, reflecting good relationships with teachers who clearly care about them and their academic progress. Attitudes to the subject in general are, however, unsatisfactory, as is reflected in the untidy way in which many students present their work in books that have graffiti both on the covers and on the pages inside.

180. Marking of the students' work is inconsistent. Some teachers follow departmental procedures and include detailed supportive comments with their correction of the exercises, but this is not universally the case. Too much work is left uncorrected. Sometimes this is the result of students not writing corrections down as the teacher goes through the exercises in class. Quite frequently it occurs when the students have been absent. Whatever the reason, the students' books do not serve as a useful aid to reviewing and revising because their incorrect answers are indistinguishable from what is correct.

181. In spite of teaching that is satisfactory overall, many students make unsatisfactory progress across all years because their attendance is poor. In the mathematics lessons observed, an average of some one in every five students per class was absent. In some classes, this figure rose to two in five absent. In all cases where students attend regularly, they make satisfactory or better progress and achieve as well as expected in relation to their ability, including those with higher attainment.

182. The learning needs of students with special educational needs (SEN) EAL were met satisfactorily in all lessons, and most effectively so when they were supported by learning assistants or extra teachers in the classroom. This was especially the case in a Year 7 lesson focused on literacy where teachers from *Gateway* contributed very effectively. More able students make slower progress than they should. Many have come from primary schools where mathematics teaching is organised in groups arranged by ability. The department is considering moving to 'groups arranged by attainment' so as to build on the practice of these primary schools.

183. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Although standards have not shown a marked improvement, the department has successfully faced the challenge of a period of turbulence. The department is well led by a newly appointed, energetic and very committed teacher, and supported by a well-qualified team. Several vacancies have led to the disruption of students' learning in several of the teaching groups. The head of department and the team as a whole have worked well to reorganise departmental resources and provide extra lessons for students at break times, after school and during weekends and holidays. The resources available for providing for the students' varying needs have been improved, although there are still not enough textbooks to provide one for each student in class.

SCIENCE

The quality of provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Strengths:

- The quality and variety of the curriculum.
- The leadership and sense of direction of the department.
- The procedures for assessing students and for tracking their progress.
- The quality of some of the teaching, especially in Years 10 and 11.

Areas for improvement:

- Levels of attainment.
- The attitudes of some students, especially in Years 7 and 8.
- The quality of some of the teaching.

184. Levels of attainment at the beginning of Year 7 in science are well below average because many students do not enter the school from a traditional English educational

background and a high proportion has English as an additional language (EAL). The school sets standard tests for all students during Year 7 when they have become settled in the school, and uses the results to establish a firm baseline from which to measure progress. These tests show that students begin Year 7 with a very low knowledge base. During Years 7 to 9, they progress broadly as expected, and their results in the national tests at the end of Year 9 are also very low. In Years 10 and 11, progress is in line with expectations, and leads to GCSE grades which are also well below the national average, though some students gain good GCSE results.

185. Achievement in Years 7 to 9 is broadly as expected. Many students who speak and understand English to only a limited extent quickly gain in confidence, often making use of the skills of other students to gain in their understanding of the language. In practical lessons, they learn by observing their peers and make good progress in developing laboratory skills. However, their attention often flags in more theoretical lessons, so they start to talk and their behaviour deteriorates. In these lessons, their progress is less good than it should be. Students in Year 7 are able to set up an investigation into rusting, using a method provided by the teacher, and they can explain what they have done. However, they are much less confident in explaining the purpose of the experiment, or why the method used leads to the desired information. Nevertheless, the overall standards of work seen in lessons are better than suggested by results in national tests, though they are still below the national average.

186. Some very good work was seen in Years 10 and 11. In one group, students studying hydrocarbons were able to draw accurate molecular structures and write chemical equations to show how they react with oxygen in the air. They had a good understanding of the chemistry behind the production of hydrocarbons and their use as fuels. They can write word equations to describe the reactions, though only the higher attaining students are able to write equations in symbols. These students were working at levels equal to high GCSE grades. In other lessons, however, students adopt a much less thoughtful approach. They do not apply themselves as diligently as they should, and even where they succeed in the tasks set by the teacher, their overall gain in understanding is much more limited. For example, in a Year 11 lesson on Hooke's law, students did not understand the need to allow the mass to hang freely, even when this need was drawn to their attention. Nor did they appreciate the need to take measurements in a consistent way in order to collect consistent data. On the other hand, they could plot graphs of their results, and note that the results were not as good as they had predicted. As in Years 7 to 9, students preparing for GCSE examinations show levels of attainment that are overall below the national average.

187. Scrutiny of written work shows that standards of work have improved over the last year throughout the school, though there is still some way to go before students reach their anticipated potential. The excellent records kept by the head of department further support this conclusion. Students are tested regularly at the end of each unit of work and results are recorded in terms of levels, to the nearest one third of a level. There is clear evidence from detailed analysis of these results that the value added to students' learning has improved considerably since the scheme came into use during the autumn term.

188. In Years 7 to 9, teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and understand how students learn. They plan their lessons well, but their management of students is often satisfactory rather than good, and learning is only satisfactory as a result. Teachers have good strategies for working with students for whom EAL or who have special educational needs (SEN). Nevertheless, the demands of classes with a large number of such students but limited adult support leads to learning that is often satisfactory rather than good. In a satisfactory lesson on sound, for example, the teacher had prepared a very good demonstration using a computer and projector, together with a good variety of musical instruments, to investigate the waveforms associated with various sounds. This lesson had

the potential to be very good, but many students arrived very late, and they did not apply themselves sufficiently to get the most out of it. Even with good support from another teacher, the intellectual effort invested by most students was limited, and time which could have been used on activities designed to raise understanding was wasted copying information into exercise books.

189. In Years 10 and 11, the quality of teaching is much more variable. Of the six lessons seen, one was excellent and two were very good, but three were unsatisfactory. Where teaching is excellent or very good, the lesson is planned with a good variety of activities to suit different learning styles, requiring all students to invest significant intellectual effort throughout. In these challenging lessons, including one conducted to a large extent in Turkish, students were fully engaged in learning, through analysing or evaluating information so that they became fully involved in the subject. Sometimes this good involvement was associated with very good use of resources, as seen in a lesson in which students gave presentations in *PowerPoint* to the rest of the class. In this lesson, not only was very good use made of information and communication technology (ICT) facilities in the laboratory, but the teacher managed a question and answer session very skilfully so that all members of the class benefited from the research carried out by each group. Both questions and answers dealt not only with the science involved, but also required students to evaluate moral and social issues, thus developing their skills in citizenship.

190. Lessons that were unsatisfactory were characterised by a failure to involve all students. In one such lesson, only two sets of apparatus were provided for a class practical based on Hooke's law. Of the 16 students present (a further nine were absent) only about six were able to participate fully. These students made good gains in understanding, especially in practical skills, but the remainder failed to join in adequately and their learning suffered as a result. In another lesson designed to help Year 10 students to solve problems involving the concept of speed using distance/time graphs, the teacher failed to develop the subject in easy steps. This meant students had difficulty in understanding the relationship between speed and the quantities used to define it. By the end of the lesson, although most students could calculate the speed of an object from the distance travelled in a given time, very few could solve even very simple problems.

191. In many lessons, students' attitudes to learning were good or better, especially when the teaching was good or very good. However, a significant number of students arrived late to lessons and the number of absentees in some lessons was very high, sometimes approaching half the number of enrolled students. In lessons where teachers failed to hold the attention of all students, especially in Years 7 and 8, conversation tended to break out, students failed to engage with the subject and learning suffered as a result. In some cases, this was because of the difficulty of supporting, without additional assistance, the many students for whom EAL.

192. Leadership and management of the science department are very good. The head of department rightly sees raising attainment as a priority and has implemented an excellent science curriculum to support his vision. Detailed schemes of work include good sections on literacy and numeracy, and they also prompt the use of ICT. A very good section on citizenship is included. Good assessments are carried out, based on national standards, and these support the record of progress documents that all students maintain throughout the course. Most students welcome the support given by these records and attend extra lessons when necessary in order to improve their performance.

193. Resources are well managed, both in terms of staff and apparatus and equipment. However, recruitment is a significant problem and only four of the nine teaching staff are experienced teachers familiar with the British education system. The remainder, four of

whom are graduate trainees, need a lot of support and this remains a drain on the time and energy of the head of department and his colleagues.

194. The head of department has been in post for less than a year and although the initiatives that he has implemented have not yet had time to show through in test and examination results, they have made a major contribution to the good improvement overall since the last inspection. Nevertheless, the department is already showing signs of rising standards and is well placed to produce improved results in national tests and GCSE examinations.

ART AND DESIGN

Overall the provision for art and design is **very good**.

Strengths:

- GCSE results are well above the national average.
- Teaching is good.
- Students make good progress.

Areas for improvement:

- Increased access to information and communication technology (ICT).
- Develop fabric work.

195. In 2001, teachers assessed students' standards at the age of 14 at about the level expected nationally. This is confirmed by work seen during the inspection. The proportion of students gaining GCSE grades A*-C in 2001 was well above the national average and this showed a huge improvement, doubling the results of the previous year. Boys perform better than the girls, and all students do better in art than in most of their other subjects.

196. In work seen during the inspection, students are working around the expected level by age 14. Those with special educational needs (SEN) and those for whom English is an additional language (EAL) make the same progress as their classmates. Higher attaining students demonstrate their understanding of Pop Art through good discussion work. They are able to relate the work of famous artists such as Claes, Oldenberg and Warhol to their own work. They show their technical skills in sensitive chalk pastel drawings of everyday objects prior to making three-dimensional models of them.

197. By age 16, students are working at a level above national expectations. Most students show increasing control in drawing and painting, with progress demonstrated clearly throughout their sketchbooks. Higher attaining students draw well, using tone skilfully to show form. They are able to explain their ideas to others clearly, including those who are acquiring EAL. One higher attaining student gave an excellent presentation, explaining his work to the rest of the class and using work in his sketchbook to illustrate his points. Other higher attaining students understand concepts behind the work of artists and craftspeople from a variety of cultures and eras, and explain how these relate to their own work.

198. Most students are keen to do well and participate eagerly in discussions and question and answer sessions, particularly in Years 7 to 9. Older students tend to be thoughtful and give considered and often perceptive answers. Less confident students are encouraged to try to use English and subject specific vocabulary where possible. Students are always polite and friendly and respect one another and adults.

199. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with some excellent teaching in Years 10 and 11. Strengths lie in the good quality attention given to students in lessons, often supported by another art teacher. Tasks are pitched well and provision is made in other languages, ensuring that the progress of students with educational needs and those for whom EAL is consistent with that of their classmates. All teachers have high expectations, to which most students respond by trying hard to do their best. Teachers regularly record assessment data to chart progress. Marking is consistently constructive and instrumental in raising standards. As a result, students in both key stages are clear about targets and how to achieve them. The effective use of visual aids and practical demonstrations helps all students to understand the aims of the lesson and allows those acquiring English to make progress similar to that of others in the class.

200. The subject is led and managed very well. A team of hard-working teachers work well together. They share a common vision for the continued raising of standards and increased breadth of the curriculum, and this vision is set out clearly in a comprehensive action plan. Plans include the further development and integration of work using computers and the development of work using textiles, including silk-screen printing, batik, silk painting, embroidery and soft sculpture. The department celebrates creativity through an annual fashion show and in the displays of work around the school. Many students benefit from the commitment and enthusiasm of the department and its curriculum leader by being taken to places of interest and galleries in London, Paris and Rome. Students who participated in the ten-day study visit to Rome earlier this year made stained glass and mosaics and experienced fresco painting. These experiences have been instrumental in helping them improve their GCSE and A Level work.

201. All issues raised in the last inspection have been addressed. Standards at Years 7 to 9 have improved to the levels expected nationally and GCSE results have doubled. English as an additional language (EAL) students now make progress similar to that of their classmates. Sketchbooks are now used more consistently and show progress. Art rooms have inspiring and informative displays that are used as visual aids in lessons. The kiln has been serviced and clay work is now included in the programme of study. A full time technician has been employed, releasing time for teachers to use more profitably. Younger students now reflect on their work and carry out self-evaluations. As a result of all these improvements, progress since the last inspection has been very good.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

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

Strengths:

- Leadership and management of the department are good.
- Students achieve well.

Areas for improvement:

- Standards in all aspects of the subject.
- Students' punctuality.
- Resources for teaching computer aided design and control.
- The quality of display to provide the focus needed to stimulate interest.

202. Standards in design and technology are below national average, and they have remained at this level over the past few years. Nevertheless, inspection evidence indicates that the quality of teaching promotes at least satisfactory achievement, compared with students' low standards on entry to the school.

203. By the end of Year 9, students' attainment is below nationally expected standards, and students have an insecure knowledge of the subject. They know how to use tools and equipment to a satisfactory standard and can work with various templates and jigs that help them to achieve a satisfactory level of consistency. Satisfactory standards were seen in their food technology products and in the resistant materials projects. However, their understanding and application of the design process is insecure, and research and evaluation are weak elements of their work.

204. GCSE results in 2001 were well below national averages, as were results in the two preceding years. The standard achieved by girls is much better than that of boys. Results were better in food technology and resistant materials options, and there has been an improvement in the results for resistant materials. Students in the NVQ group are successful, with the majority achieving Level 1 by the end of Year 11.

205. Groups currently in Year 11 are achieving a higher standard than this in their practical work, though their design folder work is not at a satisfactory stage of completion for this time in the year. Year 11 students' overall attainment in lessons is below average. They have satisfactorily mastered a range of skills in making products, but their design folder work is below average and their knowledge and understanding of the properties of materials is generally weak. Though overall standards are below average, higher attaining students are attempting a good range of products and are using sketching well to develop their ideas. Their research is thorough and helps to shape designs, such as different types of work-wear used in industry and the emergency services. These are based on existing designs that the students sketched and developed to suit the materials and skills available. There is some use information and communication and technology (ICT). The quality of the work seen was good, for example word processing used to present design briefs and to carry out evaluations. There are resources available to teach computer aided design and control, but these are not being used effectively because teachers lack the necessary expertise.

206. Younger students are very enthusiastic and well motivated by the activities provided because learning is relevant and they are successful. Students learn about a wide range of materials and use a good range of small and large equipment competently and safely. For example, students in Year 8 design and make an electronic alarm. They solder components to the circuit board and go on to fabricate a box for the circuit using vacuum formed plastic.

Similar skills are developed in Year 9 when they design and make an electronic keyboard. They demonstrate good graphical skills when designing imaginative and attractive 'pop up' books to illustrate stories. They are extremely proud of new products they have developed in food lessons. Higher achieving students plan their work and evaluate it objectively against specific criteria. Lower achieving students carefully evaluate how well they have worked.

207. Students in Years 10 and 11 are more confident in practical work and help each other in their tasks, offering comment and criticism in a positive manner. They generally work purposefully and demonstrate a positive attitude to the subject. They solve problems systematically. They can question and have sufficient confidence to experiment and explore materials and processes when they develop their designs. The higher achieving students work well independently and are very well motivated to succeed. Their work is thoughtfully and professionally presented, making use of ICT. Students' design work shows good progression in development and a high level of craftsmanship in their execution. The higher achieving students critically analyse their work well. All students, regardless of ability, gender or ethnic background, achieve well in response to teachers' high expectations. However, students regularly arrive late for lessons, and this causes some disruption, while late arrival means that they have less time to complete project work.

208. Teaching is good overall. The learning is well structured and teachers use a good range of activities to ensure there is a brisk pace to the learning. New learning is regularly reinforced throughout lessons. Lessons are characterised by the quality of teachers' focus on the progress and needs of individual students. Very effective challenging but supportive relationships between the teacher and the students, coupled with on-going individual feedback and support, ensure that all students make good progress. There is a good practice of individual mentoring and target setting in Year 11. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. The teaching is well planned and leads to a coherent learning programme that is well supported with prepared lesson notes and work sheets. These can then be retained to build up a good picture of individual progress. Progress is reviewed effectively in the plenary session at end of lessons.

209. The department is part of a strategy to improve levels of literacy skills and the staff have received training to support the initiative. Teachers work well with students with SEN. They support the literacy policy well, for instance by introducing new words carefully. Teaching and learning are well supported by a good technician and classroom assistants. A good level of support is provided for English as an additional language (EAL) students through the literacy strategy, but there is a lack of specialist support for EAL and SEN in lessons.

210. The management of the department is good. The head of department has a clear view of how the department should be developed. A system to record and track students' progress has been introduced to inform teachers' planning and lead to the necessary improvements in standards. There is some display of students' work but this does not always provide the necessary focus to stimulate interest. There are some new computers in the department but the majority of the equipment is obsolete and does not meet the demands of the curriculum. There is a sound emphasis on issues of health and safety. The department carries out risk assessment and there are regular health and safety reviews. There are sufficient workrooms to provide for all aspects of the subject but the quality of the accommodation is unsatisfactory. Improvements to the accommodation are planned.

211. The improvements since the last inspection include: better teaching of literacy skills; the use of assessment that is linked to National Curriculum Levels; teachers' expectations are higher; risk assessments are in place and there are routine maintenance checks.

GEOGRAPHY

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

Strengths:

- Overall understanding of the needs of students and the match of work to those needs.
- Team spirit and drive for improvement.
- The attitude of students towards the subject and their teachers.
- A rising trend in GCSE results until 2001.

Areas for improvement:

- Raising the levels of attainment in geography.
- Increasing the level of support to geography.
- Greater attention to the development of written work and consistency in applying the marking policy.
- Monitoring of the work and setting targets for improvement.
- Resource levels and accommodation deficiencies.
- The level of resources in the department, and the quality of accommodation.
- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) by students in their work.
- Resolution of the staffing situation.

212. Standards in geography are consistently well below the national expectation. In Years 7 to 9 many students are assessed as operating at levels well below the national expectations, with few at higher levels by the end of Year 9. The number of students with additional needs, primarily because English is not their first language, means that they have additional difficulties with learning and progress. This is understood and being tackled by the department.

213. Attainment at GCSE has varied. There was a welcome upward trend over the three years up to 2000 both in terms of higher grades and points score, but a decline in 2001. Whilst 93 per cent of the entry gained a grade in that year, only 19 per cent reached the higher levels A* - C. Attainment was significantly below the national average. Boys consistently outperform girls.

214. Throughout the school, high standards are expected of students in terms of growing knowledge and understanding of geography as well as their ability to express points, especially when speaking or in discussion. Evidence of current work shows that students are making progress in developing knowledge, understanding and skills.

215. Overall, students make frequent gains in knowledge and satisfactory progress between Year 7 and Year 9. For example, in Year 7, students grasp the features of microclimates, and in a practical investigation in the school grounds they recorded temperatures accurately and consistently. Later, they analysed the data using a computer, showing a sound knowledge of relevant numeracy skills. Year 8 students consolidate knowledge of physical features, for example in their work on watersheds and river basins, but knowledge of economic geography, when using terms such as underdevelopment, is less secure. By Year 9, however, students' understanding of these concepts is improved. For example in a lesson dealing with issues about emigration and immigration in Italy, some students were able to relate them to their own first hand experience. In Year 10, students' economic geography develops further, for example they work well at relating socio-economic indicators within case studies. In Year 11, their knowledge of mapping and understanding of factors relating to choice of industrial sites is clear in their work using Ordnance Survey maps to place a business park. However, weaknesses in English mean that their ability to bring together

knowledge from different aspects, and show understanding in extended writing for examinations, is a significant barrier to progress and attainment for many. In Years 10 and 11, students who have opted for geography overcome more of these barriers and there are examples of good coursework.

216. The quality of teaching seen was at least satisfactory. There were many good lessons, and one seen in Year 9 was very good, where a combination of good use of resources, assessment of learning coupled with support well matched to students' needs, high levels of challenge and a lively pace all contributed to students making good progress. The permanent staff are established subject specialists who skilfully communicate their subject knowledge to students. All lessons are well planned, with a structured time sequence designed to get the best out of the lesson. Students are expected to work hard and there is careful questioning to test gains in knowledge and understanding. However, whilst most lessons proceed very well, a minority are not challenging enough, especially for gifted and talented students, and some do not sufficiently involve students in activities. In turn, students become passive receivers instead of active learners, especially those with the greatest language difficulty. Most students are good listeners, but they also respond extremely well to opportunities to work together or in groups and help each other. Lessons that have these features are good, contributing significantly to the achievement and progress made.

217. Teachers usually see that all students are included in a lesson's activities. Often this is through providing differentiated work via skilfully crafted resources, as well as their emphasis on basic skills such as reading for understanding, writing through understanding, key words and structured writing frames. Outstanding resources produced in-house clearly promote greater achievement. Relationships between staff and students are very good. Students confirm this, speaking highly of their teachers, their expertise and knowledge and the reputation of the department. These are often reasons why they choose to take geography. Relationships between students are equally positive, in group work, pairs or whole class lesson work when helping each other. These positive influences helpfully develop a wider appreciation of the contribution of geography to the world the students live in, with consideration of sustainable futures, threats to environments, quality of life and migration issues all evident. Students are truly enthusiastic and enjoy the subject. Behaviour is normally very good. These hallmarks of the effective teaching seen reflect the value the department is adding to students' education.

218. The provision in geography caters for all students in each of the Years 7 to 9. In Year 7, however, geography is part of a humanities programme that is not taught exclusively by subject specialists. In Year 8, geography is taught in blocks of time in sequence with history, which means students do not receive any geography tuition for ten-week periods. This is unsatisfactory. About half the year group opts for geography in each of Years 10 and 11 where the course leads to GCSE.

219. The department is well led despite current uncertainties over staffing. There is a clear sense of purpose and direction, and a team consensus by dedicated, hardworking subject specialists as to what is to be achieved. The department has clear aims and there is a thorough analysis of the present situation and the issues concerned in raising attainment. However, it does not set targets against which to monitor students' past or future progress. Furthermore, marking is inconsistently applied, with not enough constructive feedback or evidence of suggestions for improvement in the students' books. In-class support is plainly insufficient to enable swifter progress and improved achievement. Funding has been insufficient for adequate resource needs, particularly for audio-visual and ICT equipment. Overall, however, the department is effective, successful and going forward.

HISTORY

Overall provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Strengths:

- Improving GCSE results.
- Committed and dedicated head of department and specialist teacher.
- Good teaching in challenging circumstances.

Areas for improvement:

- Levels of attendance.
- Procedures for assessment need strengthening.
- More in-class support for students with special educational needs (SEN) or for whom English is an additional language (EAL).

220. At the age of 14, standards are well below average when compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. In teacher assessments, only 21 per cent of students attained Level 5 or above. At the age of 16, standards are well below the standards achieved in similar schools nationally. Results in the GCSE examinations have improved over the last two years, but the 2001 figures, at 21.7 per cent A* - C, are well below the national average.

221. Standards are below national expectations in work seen overall in Years 7 to 9. However, in lessons, students sometimes attain in line with national norms. They handle facts well and increase their short-term knowledge. For example, Year 9 students, in their study of the home front in Germany during the Second World War, point out how the role of women changed in Germany as they were encouraged to undertake the roles of wife and mother rather than pursue a career. However, making meaningful notes of such information, which can be used in longer-term revision, is not yet successful for a large proportion of students. Nor have students sufficiently developed independent enquiry skills. In the case of both students with EAL or SEN, their relatively low levels of both speaking and literacy prevent their maximising their achievement. This is made worse by their weakness in remembering facts and therefore students with EAL or SEN attain well below national expectations.

222. Standards in work seen in Years 10 and 11 are below national expectations. In lessons, however, students often attain in line with national expectations. They are skilful at linking facts together to make a comprehensive and cohesive historical picture. For example, in their studies of immigration to the United Kingdom in the 50 years from 1950, Year 11 students can analyse and evaluate the historical similarities and differences between the experiences of the immigrants from the Caribbean and those of recent immigrants from Kosovo. Yet students do not yet demonstrate either the oral or the written analytical ability which is important to acquire higher grades at GCSE. Poor levels and patterns of attendance have a clear effect on their attainment. However, for those students who attend regularly, there are other reasons for low results. These are mainly the lack of strategies for retention of facts and students' heavy reliability and dependence on support from adults in class. Later in tests and examinations, this leads to students' lack of confidence when dealing with the complexities of analysis and evaluation.

223. Students' progress in each year from Year 7 to Year 11 is satisfactory overall. Many students have a very low base line of skills, knowledge and linguistic ability, but, by Year 9, students have a good knowledge of the periods they are studying and can explain cause to effect. Students in Years 10 and 11 build effectively on the progress made in the first three years. Learning through empathy is a strength of the subject. A Year 10 class, for example, was clearly moved at the accounts of the suffering of a range of people hounded by Senator

McCarthy during the period of his pursuit of alleged communists in the USA. The progress of students with EAL or SEN is also satisfactory. This reflects the particularly good teaching that often has to compensate for the lack of appropriate in-class specialist support.

224. The response of students is good overall. With the exception of a small but significant group of students of very low ability, who exhibit unsatisfactory attitudes towards both work and behaviour, students generally show application to their work. They respond diligently, settle to task and sustain concentration, though their oral contribution is often better than their written work. Students' positive behaviour and response, which is an important factor in their learning, is often a direct result of good teaching and good classroom management.

225. Teaching is good throughout Years 7 to 11. Several lessons seen were very good. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject. Lessons are well-planned and well-prepared. Teachers are particularly adept at drawing out significant points from material that is both challenging and exciting. For example, in a Year 10 lesson concerning rationing in the UK during the Second World War, the teacher laid out a sparsely filled tray of food and asked students to accept that this was the ration for an individual for a week and they must draw up a menu for the week. The quality of her teaching led to good learning since students were stimulated by the challenge and applied their best intellectual and creative efforts to fulfil the tasks she set. Despite the lack of appropriate in-class support for students with SEN, including language difficulties, the quality of teaching makes a significant impact on students' learning, attainment and progress. A characteristic of the department is teachers' belief in the value of the subject and their enthusiasm for it. This, together with their good subject knowledge and creative ideas, particularly involving the use of audio-visual and computer material, and the sensitive choice of topics for study, such as the module on immigration, impacts effectively on students' learning.

226. The department is led effectively by the head of department, who is a good role model for a department team committed to raising standards and encouraging students to high achievement. This commitment is evidenced in the extensive after-school, weekend and holiday classes, which the teachers voluntarily undertake to help students achieve even more. Good support by other staff in the department brings fresh and lively approaches to the teaching of the subject which are inspirational. The department has produced informed and informative policies, which are being implemented with success and which are beginning to impact effectively upon students' learning. There are some areas, however, where progress is underdeveloped. Procedures in some areas, such as the department's assessment policy, are based on sound principles and achievable outcomes, but require a sharper focus on data analysis from which attainment targets can be produced.

227. The teaching rooms have displays of students' work, which provide an incentive and create an atmosphere that promotes learning. However, the rooms are poorly furnished and a lack of suitable blinds reduces the use of visual aids. Resources are satisfactory. They include some interesting artefacts to stimulate learning, particularly of the Second World War, and a good supply of differentiated textbooks for GCSE. A series of visits to such diverse places as the Clink Prison and the Army Museum impact positively on learning and attainment. The lack of sufficient computer resources, and the lack of appropriate in-class support for students with EAL or SEN remain serious barriers to raising attainment.

228. Since the time of the previous report, the department has made much creditable progress. Good improvement is evident in GCSE A* - C results, with increasing numbers involved, and there are clear patterns emerging of a continuing upward trend. The department has a dedicated team, with a clear vision of how to take improvement further.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

The overall quality of provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

Strengths:

- Teaching in discrete ICT lessons.
- Provision of ICT courses for all students from Years 7 to 11 which are externally assessed and certificated in Years 9 and 11.
- Day-to-day management of ICT resources.

Areas for improvement:

- Standards in all years.
- Further increases in the level of ICT resources.
- The use of ICT for teaching and learning in many subjects of the curriculum.

229. Provision for ICT has undergone a very significant improvement recently. Evidence indicates that standards are improving rapidly, although they are still some way below national expectations. Teacher assessments indicate that standards by age 14 are well below expectations. There have been no examinations in ICT at age 16 in previous years. Standards of work seen in lessons and in work samples during the inspection in Years 7, 8 and 9 were below expectations overall. Students in Year 7 generally have very low levels of ICT skills and knowledge on entry to the school and have much ground to make up. Their keyboard skills are not well developed, and so they are often slow in entering text and data. However, there are encouraging signs of improvement, and, in some classes in Years 8 and 9, some students are beginning to match national expectations in some aspects of ICT. In a Year 9 class, which was constructing spreadsheets, the more able were beginning to use conditional functions to record and analyse data about a school trip. All students in Year 9 are now following a course that will enable them to gain an external certificate, and this is providing an incentive for many.

230. The curriculum offered to students in Years 10 and 11 has been expanded this year to provide appropriate challenge to the whole range of abilities. All students are following a GCSE course in office applications as part of their core curriculum, though the limited time available for this course presents some students with a real challenge. There is a wide range of attainment, but in most groups students are working well in class and producing the required coursework. The work in progress shows that skills and knowledge are improving, although the majority have not yet matched national expectations. However, some of the coursework recently produced has reached a good standard, for example in work using databases and presentational software. Poor reading levels and language difficulties are increasing the challenge facing a significant minority of students on all examination courses. Attention to low levels of numeracy and literacy is a feature needed in many lessons, for example giving students help to calculate percentages first before looking at the ICT aspects of the work with a spreadsheet.

231. Teaching is now good in all years and is a strength of the ICT department. It is characterised by well-planned lessons with appropriate pace and challenge. When working at computers in timetabled ICT lessons, students receive very good individual support from

members of the department including a member of the technical staff. However, no specialist support teachers were seen in any ICT lessons. Instead, students with language difficulties often received support from other bi-lingual members of the class. Students' attitudes are increasingly positive and behaviour has improved since the last inspection. In most groups, the majority of students are diligent although in some of the lower attaining classes in Years 7, 8 and 10, some students found it difficult to concentrate on their work without frequent intervention from the teacher. Computers are used well by students outside lesson times. In most classes, the way in which students' paper based work is stored needs to be improved to ensure they have a clear record of what has been covered.

232. The management of ICT has improved significantly following staff changes in September 2001. Responsibilities for improving standards are now shared by two teachers, making the task more manageable. New schemes of work have been written, new resources have been produced, and effective use is made of the Internet and school based Intranet resources. A completely new team of ICT teachers teaches the revised curriculum. GNVQ ICT is now offered as an option, and is taken by several groups at intermediate level, although some students will be given the opportunity to take foundation level if this is more appropriate. A small group of students on a college link course is able to follow an ICT skills course, for which they can also achieve a national ICT skills qualification. As well as the changes in the taught ICT courses, the cross-curricular use of computers has improved since the last inspection and is beginning to develop further. Web pages are being developed for a number of subjects to use in a range of courses across the curriculum. The curriculum has been audited, and more opportunities for using computers in the subjects of the curriculum have been identified. At present, the number of computers is below average for a school of this size, and there is little spare capacity for further use throughout other subjects.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES (French and Spanish; and Turkish)

Overall the provision for French and Spanish is **satisfactory**.

Strengths:

- The subject knowledge and linguistic competence of all permanent teachers are very good.
- The teaching is good.
- Relationships in lessons are very good.
- The management of the department is very good.
- The teachers work very well together and have a commitment to succeed.
- The teaching is well matched to the needs of different students.
- The assessment of students' work and the monitoring of their progress are good.
- Students with English as an additional language (EAL) make good progress because all lessons are conducted entirely in either French or Spanish.

Areas for development:

- Improve results in GCSE Spanish.
- There is no possibility for more able linguists to take two languages.
- The library provision needs to be improved.
- Information technology could be used more to enhance learning.
- Resources are unsatisfactory.
- The quality of the overhead projectors is generally unsatisfactory, which causes problems for students with poor eyesight.
- There are no visits or exchanges to France or Spain.

233. In 2001, the results in the teacher assessments of standards at the end of Year 9 were below average compared to schools nationally. About a third of students reached the expected standard, however, and this result is commendable when the low attainment of students on entry is taken into account. Observation of lessons confirms these standards.

234. In 2001, the results in the GCSE French course were below average when compared to all schools. However, students' attainment in relation to their ability is good when taking into account the results they achieved in their tests in Year 9. The results in Spanish were well below average when compared to all schools nationally. Boys achieved lower results than girls in both languages. The standard attained by students at the end of Year 11 meets national expectations in the French top set, but it is below average in the other sets. About a third of students in the Spanish GCSE classes are working at the national average. Both French and Spanish teachers strive to improve students' examination skills and focus on very carefully targeted structures and vocabulary to match examination requirements.

235. In French, at the end of Year 9, the attainment of students presently in the top set is in line with national expectations in listening, speaking, reading and writing. It is below in the other sets. In Spanish, listening, speaking and reading of present students is at the national average, but writing is below average. Students achieve well in French and make satisfactory progress in Spanish.

236. The progress made by students with EAL is in line with others. Students with special educational needs (SEN) achieve well. In a Year 8 French class, with a large number of students with SEN, basic listening skills were good. Students readily followed a lesson conducted entirely in simple French, accompanied by mime and gesture. In a Year 9 French top set, students' listening skills were highly developed as the teacher spoke all the time in French at normal speed. In a Spanish Year 9 class, students had very good listening skills and could cope with all aspects of a lesson taught in Spanish. Speaking is a well-developed skill in both languages. Year 9 students in the top French set have good pronunciation and intonation, for example when recording high quality extended presentations about themselves. In Spanish, students were keen to take a speaking part, asking and answering prepared questions fluently using the past tense. Higher attainers in French write accurately using a range of different tenses. However, middle and lower attainers have difficulty writing correctly. Writing in Spanish in Year 9 is below the national expectation since students do not produce enough longer, personalised texts. Nevertheless, they do copy words and phrases accurately and write short dialogues and answers to personal questions. The higher attainers have a good awareness of basic grammatical patterns in both languages. Some writing in both French and Spanish is redrafted using information and communication technology (ICT), though this is not widespread. Reading in French and Spanish is satisfactory, with reasonable pronunciation. There is not much extended reading or reading for pleasure, although some higher attainers are encouraged to borrow reading books on a regular basis.

237. Many students in Years 10 and 11 achieve satisfactorily in French in relation to their ability. Higher attainers achieve well in Spanish, but the progress of the majority is unsatisfactory. Students generally achieve well in listening. In both French and Spanish, they successfully follow lessons conducted entirely in the foreign language delivered at normal speed. For example, in the Year 11 top French set, students could pick out details from a demanding recorded text about jobs but in a bottom Year 10 French set, students' listening was poor. The listening of about half of the students in a Spanish Year 11 group was good, and they were able to cope with unexpected language and situations, but the remainder was unsatisfactory, however. Some students' speaking skills are well developed in both languages. In the Year 11 top French set students could talk fluently and accurately with good pronunciation and elsewhere pronunciation was generally satisfactory, but some

utterances that were hesitant. In the Spanish Year 11 group, about a third of students participated actively in oral work and their accents and fluency were good but the others did not attempt to speak or only replied in monosyllables. High attainers write extended texts on a range of basic topics in French or Spanish and their work is accurate and varied. However, low attainers can only make lists of vocabulary, write short paragraphs and simple letters. The standards of writing are higher in French than in Spanish. In both languages, some of this writing is occasionally redrafted using ICT, but the use of computers is limited. Reading is satisfactory in both languages, though there is limited extended reading material. Modern foreign languages make a significant contribution to students' general literacy.

238. The teaching and learning of French and Spanish are very good in Years 7 to 9 and generally satisfactory or better in Years 10 and 11. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge and good linguistic competence. They also have a good understanding of the National Curriculum and GCSE requirements. In both languages, teachers have high expectations of students' work and behaviour. They clarify the aims and objectives systematically at the beginning of lessons and always refer to them at the end to ensure that students are clear about their learning. In all lessons, teachers use French or Spanish very effectively, which improves students' listening skills. All lessons in both languages are very well prepared. Planning takes into account children with special needs, those with EAL and high attainers. Consequently, lessons match the needs and interests of students, with frequent change of task and activities and good coverage of the four skills. This enables all students, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress. Students with EAL are able to achieve in line with other students since the foreign language is used exclusively in all lessons. The pace of lessons in both languages is generally brisk, with very good use of a wide range of resources. Information communication technology is not used very often because of lack of accessibility, but many students use the computer for the completion of homework assignments and its use is planned in the schemes of work. Very good use is made of deadlines to motivate students and keep them on target. On rare occasions, teaching is not brisk, the activities are unchallenging and the teacher's linguistic skills are not sufficiently developed.

239. Students' attitudes and behaviour are generally good in both languages. Most students are keen learners, eager to show what they know and can do. Most students concentrate well, settle down to work quickly and remain on task. Very occasionally motivation is low and attitudes poor. In some French and Spanish groups, one or two students were not attentive during the presentation phase and were subsequently off-task during practice and consolidation.

240. The management of the department is very good. The teaching of French and Spanish is monitored well by the head of department. The teachers of French and Spanish work well together to ensure common approaches and the sharing of expertise. Departmental assessment procedures ensure that students' progress in French or Spanish is monitored very well. Resources are unsatisfactory. The library does not contain up-to-date magazines and readers to encourage reading for pleasure. The quality of the overhead projectors is generally unsatisfactory, which causes problems for students with poor eyesight.

241. The improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Speaking, listening and writing skills have improved. The quality of teaching is higher. The results in Spanish GCSE continue to be well below average. The use of ICT has not improved, but the proposed new language suite to be built next term will have good ICT facilities.

Turkish

The quality of provision in Turkish is **very good**.

Strengths:

- The subject knowledge and linguistic competence of the teacher is very good.
- Relationships are very good.
- Resources are very good.
- The students are highly motivated and committed.
- The standards at GCSE are very high.

Areas for development:

- Increase the use of information communication technology (ICT).

242. A GCSE course in Turkish is offered to native speakers of the language in Years 10 and 11. A large number of students take up this option instead of doing French or Spanish. The results over recent years have been consistently high. In the 2001 GCSE examinations, all students passed and a high number achieved the highest grades. Of the 57 students entered, 29 achieved grade A* and 17 a grade A.

243. The main focus of the course is on developing writing skills and improving students' quality of expression and literacy. The achievement of all students is very good over the duration of the course. Some students have learned to write in school in Turkey, but several are illiterate in their mother tongue. Standards of writing observed in lessons were generally very high. Many students could write a dictation with good levels of accuracy, answer questions on a reading text and manipulate grammatical patterns. The teaching and learning of Turkish is very good.

244. Lessons are very well prepared and good use is made of very good home-produced materials. Relationships are very good. Students hold the teacher in high esteem. Students work conscientiously at a good pace. The management of the subject is very good.

MUSIC

The overall quality of provision in music is **good**.

Strengths:

- Good quality teaching in class which motivates students and helps them make progress.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities and strong community links.

Areas for development:

- Improve schemes of work by making amendments to content and organisation.
- Consolidate extra-curricular work, giving more attention to singing.

245. Teacher assessments show that students' attainment is approaching national expectations by the end of Year 9. This has been achieved from a generally low starting point on entry to Year 7. The GCSE examination results for 2001 show a significant improvement over previous years and are well above the national average.

246. The curriculum for students in Years 7 to 9 is taught through a range of projects. At its best, work seen is imaginative and challenging. For example, in the project on African music in Year 8, students develop strong aural and rhythmic skills and gain subject knowledge in a musically active context. They also improve their physical co-ordination, powers of concentration and ability to work co-operatively in a group situation. A Year 7 lesson provided evidence of students developing practical and listening skills and acquiring knowledge of relevant technical vocabulary. For example, the words *syncopation* and *calypso* were encountered in a project on Caribbean music. At all levels, literacy and language skills are reinforced explicitly, as in the Year 9 project on song writing. In the early stage of the project, students wrote their own lyrics, recognising the relationship with rhythm and pulse.

247. The progress made by students in Years 7 to 9 results from effective teaching. All the teaching observed in class lessons was satisfactory and the majority was good or very good. Lessons were well planned, with due account taken of the needs of all students, including those with SEN, and there was evidence of appropriate assessment procedures. Students are handled firmly but sensitively and they respond well. Their attitude to the subject is positive and their behaviour is good. This is a marked improvement on the situation at the time of the last inspection and is evident in responsiveness in lessons, readiness to be involved in music out of class, and general demeanour around the school.

248. Students in Years 10 and 11 have the opportunity of instruction in music technology to assist the development of their composition skills. Their abilities in score reading and recognition of musical features (including instrumentation) varies considerably, but detailed teaching, coupled with careful on-going monitoring of students' responses, ensure that progress is made. The targeting of coursework in composition and performance has been a major factor in improving GCSE results.

249. Whilst the projects have the potential to cover most National Curriculum requirements, there are some weaknesses to be addressed. There is very good coverage of world music, but music from the western classical tradition and that from the British Isles is under-represented. Singing and conventional musical notation require a more on-going and systematic development in order to increase facility and raise standards in these areas. No work at this level was seen which had an information and communication technology (ICT) focus or involved musical invention.

250. One of the strengths of the department is the wide range of opportunities provided outside the formal curriculum for students to enrich their musical development. The number receiving instrumental tuition is very similar to the last inspection but the variety of tuition on offer has been greatly increased, with 18 specialisms now catered for. This provision reflects the musical cultures of groups within the school by offering tuition, for example, on the saz and steel pans. The quality of instrumental teaching is less consistent than in class, and some lack of punctuality and attendance at individual lessons means that this important and valuable provision is not always used as effectively as it should be. Practice record books need more careful monitoring, and the possibility of group tuition should be considered.

251. The extra-curricular provision is equally diverse and culturally relevant, though choral singing, particularly among younger students needs more attention. The way in which students' music making extends into the community beyond school and embraces local initiatives, such as the Haringey Drugs and Music Project, is highly commendable.

252. Leadership of the department is positive and committed, which has led to significant improvements since the last inspection. The day-to-day management is generally efficient and there is good mutual support and co-operation. Some of the written guidance requires attention. For example, the department handbook needs updating so as to become a streamlined and clear working document rather than an historical record. Much time and effort is given by the staff to meet the needs of students, and this ethos is providing a strong basis for the growth and development of the musical provision.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

Strengths:

- A good range of activities takes place out of lesson time and helps higher-attaining students, in particular, to achieve well.
- The school is successful in local and district competitive sport, especially in athletics and football.
- Standards in athletics are above average in Year 9.
- Higher attaining students achieve well in GCSE.
- Good assessment procedures in GCSE help to motivate and guide students.

Areas for improvement:

- Standards are not high enough in core physical education in Years 10 and 11.
- Too many students in Years 10 and 11, especially girls, do not take part in lessons.
- The range of activities taught in Years 7 to 9 does not meet national curriculum requirements, or the needs and interests of enough students, especially girls, in Years 10 and 11.
- The number of girls taking GCSE physical education is very low.
- Not enough attention is paid to improving students' basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), or to supporting their learning of English.
- Risk assessment of activities and working areas has not been completed.

253. Standards of work in Year 9 are average overall and students' achievement in relation to their prior attainment is satisfactory. Students have a secure knowledge of health and fitness. They know how to warm up and sometimes do so on their own. Students' performance in athletics is above average. Higher attaining students sprint with good style and achieve good times. Most students know how to train for specific athletic events. However, in Year 7, although students know the rules of events they do not understand how best to perform them. Students' standards in basketball in Year 8 range from satisfactory to below expectation, and depend directly on how well they are taught.

254. Standards of work in Year 11 are well below average overall and students' achievement in relation to their standards at the start of Year 10 is unsatisfactory. This is because a high proportion of students do not come to lessons or do not take part in them, especially girls. The range of activities taught in Years 10 and 11 does not provide enough interest for enough students. Those who take part in lessons achieve satisfactorily and reach average standards in trampolining and athletics. Higher-attaining students achieve good standards in trampolining. For example, they perform complex and difficult routines and coach each other effectively. Lower attaining students perform simple and less difficult routines with good style.

255. Current standards of work in GCSE are well below average, though they reflect satisfactory achievement for most students when taking account of their prior standards. The results for 2002 are on course to improve significantly compared to the very low results of 2001, and the department is likely to meet its target. There is little difference between the results of girls and boys, though very few girls are taking the GCSE examination. This reflects the lower level of interest and motivation among girls in Years 10 and 11. Higher attaining students achieve well in their practical work, especially in athletics and football. Lower attaining students and those who do not attend regularly are not achieving the standards expected of them. Somalian, Afro-Caribbean and Black African students all achieve well in GCSE, whereas students from Turkish and white European or United Kingdom backgrounds often underachieve. The weak literacy skills of many students hold them back from achieving more highly in the theoretical part of the course, although there is a good emphasis on teaching theory through practical activities. Clear individual targets, together with regular feedback from the teacher on progress towards them, help to maintain students' motivation and raise their aspirations.

256. The progress made by students with special educational needs (SEN) and students with English as an additional language (EAL) is similar to other students. Teachers know which students have special educational needs and they provide activities and equipment to match their needs. Those who have physical difficulties take a full part in learning with support from teachers. In particular, the needs of students with sensory and physical difficulties are known, and appropriate tasks and activities are provided for them. Students with EAL benefit from some very clear demonstrations and explanations, though not enough written material is used in lessons or displayed in working areas to aid their development of the English language.

257. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory overall. The quality of learning is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 but unsatisfactory in Years 10 and 11. This is because in Years 10 and 11 there are far too many students who do not take part in lessons regularly and they do not learn enough. By contrast, the students who take part in lessons learn at a satisfactory rate. The quality of teaching is good in almost half the lessons, but unsatisfactory in around one in six lessons. In the best lessons, students work hard and want to improve because the teachers set high expectations and good relationships are well established, based on mutual respect. In these lessons, students know what is expected of them because the teachers make the aims for the lesson clear and this helps students to remain on task. In the better lessons, teachers use their specialist knowledge to give clear demonstrations, give useful guidance and question students, so that they develop their understanding of skills, techniques and tactics. These features are particularly effective in most athletics lessons, when students not only improve their performance but also develop an understanding of the underlying mechanical principles of the events. Furthermore, the range of approaches used by teachers in the best lessons ensures that students maintain good rates of activity, have time to practise and improve, and have plenty of opportunity to evaluate and suggest improvements. A consistent approach to warming up is followed in almost all lessons, and this helps students to understand the need for warm up activities and the technical terms for the muscle groups they use.

258. Where teaching is unsatisfactory or there are unsatisfactory features within satisfactory lessons, this is sometimes, but not always, associated with non-specialist or inexperienced teaching. In some lessons, students learn incorrect techniques because teachers do not always have enough knowledge of the activity they are teaching. In others, the limited range of learning activities does not interest and motivate the students. This leads to lack of concentration and unsatisfactory behaviour, and teachers do not always succeed in maintaining good discipline. There is a lack of urgency in starting some lessons, and many lessons start 15 minutes or more after the bell. Activities are not always well demonstrated,

and then students do not have a clear understanding of what to aim for in their performance. Evaluation tasks are not always well structured, resulting in students having too many criteria against which to judge performance. Not enough attention is paid to developing students' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.

259. Students' attitudes are satisfactory overall but unsatisfactory in Years 10 and 11 where there is a high rate of absence and non-participation. Nevertheless, those students taking part generally have positive attitudes in response to good teaching. Occasionally, students do not behave well in lessons where the teaching is less than satisfactory and the pace is slow.

260. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. The head of the department sets a high standard and leads by example. There is a strong commitment to providing extra-curricular activities, including Saturday morning revision classes for GCSE. A development plan sets out the right priorities for the department. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored regularly and the support for the graduate trainee teacher is good. However, there is not yet enough support for less experienced teachers of the subject to ensure consistency in the quality of teaching. Schemes of work are not in place for Years 10 and 11, and those in place for Years 7 to 9 lack detail and do not provide enough detail to support the planning of the less experienced teachers.

261. The curriculum in Years 7 to 9 does not meet statutory requirements, in that only 3 out of 4 required activities are taught, and this is unsatisfactory. The school does offer an interesting range of activities, including judo and karate, which students enjoy. In Years 10 and 11, the restricted range and choice of activities at certain times of the year means that many students, especially girls, opt out and do not bring their kit.

262. Although the facilities are extensive, the quality of some areas is poor. The outdoor hard areas are in poor condition and loose netting is a hazard. The fields drain poorly and the changing rooms and corridors are badly decorated, drab and pungent. Until they are improved, these poor areas are not helpful in the attempts to overcome the poor attitudes of some students to the subject.

263. Improvement since the previous inspection is unsatisfactory. Standards in GCSE remain well below average. In Years 7 to 9, standards and achievement have remained the same. However, achievement in Years 10 and 11 is not as good as at the last inspection. The quality of teaching remains satisfactory, although the proportion of good or better lessons has increased. After a period of instability, the department is poised to improve, with a relatively inexperienced staff ready to develop confidence as they gain further experience.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of provision in Religious Education is **satisfactory**.

Strengths:

- Good teaching.
- Good progress made by students with special educational needs (SEN).
- Good student management.
- Good contributions towards the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students.

Areas for improvement:

- Standards in Years 7 to 9 and in the GCSE short course.
- Procedures for assessment linked to levels of attainment.
- The setting of detailed targets, against which student progress can be identified, and sharing these with students.
- Developing further the monitoring of students' work through a systematic and planned approach.

264. Attainment in Years 7 to 9 is below the expectation for 14 year olds in relation to the Haringey Agreed Syllabus. In Years 10 and 11, attainment also below expectations in the GCSE short courses. In 2001, standards in the GCSE full course were 29 per cent A* - C and 80 per cent A* - G, which was a good result.

265. In lessons and work seen during the inspection, attainment in Years 7 to 9 is below expected levels. Students develop their knowledge and understanding of religious language, principles and concepts well. They generally make sense of what they study and can relate it to their experiences of life. In Year 7, they developed good understanding of Jewish customs and traditions as a result of a well-directed lesson on the Ten Commandments. In Year 8, students develop a good knowledge and understanding of the development of the Torah and, as a result of a well-directed question and answer session by the teacher, they saw its relevance in today's world. In Year 9, through the well-organised use of Sikh artefacts by the teacher, students understand the importance of the use of symbols as signs of purity. Students with SEN make good progress. The teacher's use of key words, technical language and good discussion work were useful aids to improve the speaking, listening and writing skills of students. Overall, learning is good. Students achieve well and make good progress. Their good behaviour and willingness to collaborate with both the teacher and other students contribute well to their achievement and progress.

266. In lessons and work seen in Years 10 and 11, attainment is below expectations. In Year 10 GCSE, students achieve well. They show a sound knowledge and understanding of the importance of prayer in Christianity and Islam. As a result of the teacher's precise knowledge, students understand the importance of prayer as one of the five pillars of Islam. They relate this well to the Christian view, and make sound judgements. In Year 11, students understand the Christian view of love through a well-developed lesson on the life and death of Martin Luther King. They can justify their opinions and produce reasoned and well-balanced arguments in their reflection on the Christian principle of loving one's enemies. This is due to the teacher's excellent knowledge of the topic and very good questioning skills. Students achieve well and make good progress. There are no significant differences in the standards achieved by students of different gender or ethnic background. Students with SEN, those with English as an additional language (EAL) and those who are gifted or talented make good progress. Overall, learning is good.

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

268. Assessment of students' work is generally unsatisfactory. Some helpful comments are made in exercise books, but marking is not helpful enough in showing clear targets for improvement. The procedures do not currently provide a sound basis for assessing what students know and understand, and so they do not help teachers to plan work that meets students' needs. The department does set targets, but these tend to be general and not related to assessed levels of attainment. Consequently, students are unclear about the standards they are reaching and what they need to do to improve. This is recognised as an area for development.

269. The curriculum in Years 7 to 9 is broad, balanced and meets the needs of the students and the requirements of the Haringey Agreed Syllabus. This syllabus is currently under review by the local education authority (LEA). The schemes of work are in need of further development and will need to be linked to the new syllabus in the future. Lesson plans are satisfactory, and provide sufficient flexibility to allow for staff initiative and planning for the range of abilities in some class groups. In Years 10 and 11, all students follow the GCSE short course, which is under review. The course provides a sound curriculum that is in line with the Agreed Syllabus requirements and it provides continuity with the syllabus in Years 7 to 9.

270. Religious education makes a valuable contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students, so providing opportunities for students to explore world issues of justice, relationships and personal beliefs. In lessons, teachers encourage students to explore their personal views about religious and moral issues. Work on the major world religions necessitates discussion about the cultures that support them, so preparing students for life in a multi-faith and multi-cultural society.

271. Departmental management is satisfactory. The head of department approaches the task with commitment and a clear sense of purpose and direction. There is strong support from other departmental staff. Planning is satisfactory. Support and in-service training for all departmental staff is a significant part of departmental planning. Written guidance is satisfactory, but the creation of a well-focused development plan is needed to form the basis for targeting priorities and ensure that future actions are taken in a meaningful way. Regular formal meetings of the department provide opportunities for the discussion of important issues relating to student attainment and progress. Accommodation is satisfactory. The quality of display that celebrates students' achievement is high. Curriculum resources are generally good. There is regular monitoring of teaching and support for newly qualified teachers. However, the monitoring of the work of students needs to be carried out on a more regular and frequent basis.

272. Since the time of the previous inspection, attainment in all years has improved. Standards in the GCSE full course have improved significantly. Good improvements have been made to the quality of teaching. There has been a significant improvement in the contribution religious education now makes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. However, the use of assessment continues to be an area for development. Overall, the improvements since the last inspection have had a satisfactory impact on standards, student achievement and progress.

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

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

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

GCE A Level and AVCE courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Mathematics	4	25	87	0	43	1.0	5.8
Biology	6	83	88	0	34	4.0	5.3

NB There were no candidates in A Level English or art in 2001.

Catering is offered at NVQ Level 2 in the Sixth Form.

SUBJECTS AND COURSES GROUPED IN CURRICULUM AREAS

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCES

The focus was on mathematics and biology at AS and Advanced Level.

The school offers courses leading to mathematics at AS Level and A Level. The students taking mathematics study a combination of pure mathematics, mechanics and statistics. There is a re-sit GCSE course for those studying A Level in other subjects who did not achieve a grade C in mathematics in Year 11.

Lessons in pure mathematics and in statistics were seen for Year 12. There are currently no students in Year 13. One GCSE retake lesson was observed. Work was scrutinised and a sample of students interviewed.

Mathematics

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

Strengths:

- Teachers' subject knowledge is good.
- Students' attitude to their work and their teaching are positive.
- Provision is also made for very able students from Year 10.

Areas for improvement:

- Levels of attainment in Advanced Courses.
- Recruitment onto mathematics courses in the Sixth Form.

273. The small number of students recruited to Advanced Level courses in recent years means that comparisons with national results are unreliable. Nevertheless, it is true to say that more students have been unsuccessful at A Level than have passed over the last three years. More experienced and permanent members of the department teach the A Level courses. Weaker results have resulted from the policy of admitting students to study advanced mathematics courses who have studied the intermediate rather than the higher-level paper for GCSE and students who have obtained only a grade C. This policy is now not followed, and only those who have studied GCSE at a higher level are encouraged to continue with mathematics on Advanced Courses.

274. The standard of the students' work seen during the inspection was in line with national expectations, and was of the quality required for GCE grade C in AS examinations. Students' work in applied mathematics is stronger than that in statistics, reflecting a greater level of confidence in this area. In pure mathematics, they now have a good understanding of how to apply sine and cosine rules to solving practical problems. They are secure with basic calculus, although they find it difficult to apply it, for instance in finding probability from a given probability density function. In statistics, they deal well with descriptive work and use algebra effectively but do not always follow problems through to a full conclusion. In mechanics, drawings are not always drawn carefully enough to clarify how best to solve problems, and students still have difficulty with problems associated with acceleration.

275. In addition to the two 17 year old students studying AS over one year, there are two Year 10 students who attend some lessons and are preparing for the AS papers over two years, having obtained high grades on the GCSE higher paper last summer in Year 9. They currently follow the courses in statistics and in pure mathematics. Both are students with English as an additional language (EAL) and they are making good progress. Their work is currently at a level comparable with a grade C or better in the examination.

276. GCSE students find much of the work difficult and some lack confidence. Most are, however, making satisfactory progress in building upon and improving what they have learned for GCSE in Year 11. Their work shows that up to half of those who attend the lessons regularly are likely to achieve the grade C that they seek. This reflects an improvement on results in recent years, in which one in four students has been successful.

277. Class teaching is satisfactory overall, both for GCSE and Advanced Level courses, although one of the teachers of GCSE is not keeping sufficiently full records of the students' test marks and achievement levels to ensure they make their best progress. Advanced Level lessons are carefully prepared and presented, providing the right level of pace and challenge. Discussion in A Level classes is more difficult to sustain because of the small group size, and it did not play enough part in the lessons seen because the teacher tended to dominate the lesson. The students enjoy their work for the most part and feel well supported by their teachers. They feel free to approach them when they are in difficulties, and are particularly appreciative of the level of individual support available in small groups.

278. The students' work would benefit from better organisation in folders, properly labelled topic-by-topic. Quite rightly, they are expected to take responsibility for correcting much of what they do. Whilst this is done and answers are checked, too frequently work is not corrected clearly enough to be of value when it needs to be used for revision purposes.

279. The mathematics department is well managed overall, but the focus of attention for the relatively new head of department has been more on the schemes of work and teaching in the main school than in the Sixth Form so far. The teachers are enthusiastic and pull together as a team. The assessment of students' work is thorough and effective. The students commented on the feedback they receive as being very helpful to them in identifying their own weaknesses and showing them how to improve.

Biology

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

Four Sixth Form lessons in biology were seen, two in each of Years 12 and 13. In addition, samples of work were scrutinised and students were interviewed.

Strengths:

- The quality of the curriculum.
- The quality of teaching.
- The support given to students, especially in the key skill of literacy.

Area for improvement:

- Levels of attainment in national examinations.

280. When they come into the Sixth Form, the grades obtained by students in GCSE science double award are below average, and some do not hold a pass grade in the subject within the range A* – C. However, the entry policy for the course requires the school to consider carefully all applications on their merits. Most students have gained the equivalent of at least a grade C pass in the biology component of the examination. During the Sixth Form course, they make good progress and, although their A Level grades have been below the national average over the last few years, they are showing clear signs of improvement since the last inspection in terms of the average points score. However, no candidate has gained either of the higher grades A and B over the last three years, and this remains a target for the future.

281. In lessons, students show that they are making good progress in the AS and A Level courses. They respond well to the very good teaching in most lessons and, as a result, they gain knowledge of biological facts and understanding of their significance. They progress particularly well in their ability to communicate their ideas to others, and this good gain in literacy skills further supports their understanding of the ideas underlying the biology course. Thus, students in Year 12 can participate well in discussion, using correct biological terminology. They can recall relevant facts and explain how the facts are interlinked with theoretical concepts. Their practical skills are broadly in line with national standards. Students in Year 13 show that they have a good understanding of the process of inheritance and that they are able to make good predictions of the outcomes of various genetic crosses.

282. In the four biology lessons seen, teaching was good in one and very good in the remaining three. A particular strength in teaching is the development of literacy skills through the medium of biology. The head of department has chosen a good course that caters well for the needs of students and has prepared good schemes of work. Teachers are knowledgeable and experienced, and individual lessons are well planned. Most lessons involve a substantial amount of discussion, led by the teacher, and it is in this part of the lesson that the best learning takes place because all students are involved, and challenged

to think at a high level. Teachers are at pains to reinforce the use of correct technical vocabulary and to insist on students making accurate biological statements at a level appropriate to an advanced course. Teachers explain biological ideas very clearly and then use discussion to reinforce these ideas in students' minds so that they in turn can express them accurately.

283. Teachers use a good mix of discussion, exposition and investigative work. For example, in a very good lesson on nutrition, the teacher explained the ideas involved, gradually bringing students into the discussion at a pace they could cope with to improve their confidence. Only when all students had understood the ideas associated with saprobiotic nutrition did the teacher introduce the investigation. In this, students had to make their own decisions about the method to be adopted, and this process identified any weaknesses in their understanding, enabling the teacher to provide the necessary support. In a Year 13 lesson on genetics, the teacher used a variety of techniques, including a good software programme, to maintain the level of challenge and the students' interest.

284. Students in the Sixth Form are well supported in their studies. Written work is regularly and constructively marked. Teachers know their students well and are keen for them to do well. Students enjoy studying biology and have a good understanding of the progress they are making, as well as of their weaknesses. Teachers are always willing to support students individually when necessary. This support is a strength in the department because many students on the course lack confidence and would find it difficult to make satisfactory progress in a less supportive environment.

285. Leadership and management of the biology department are good. The head of department has chosen a good course and makes the maximum use of the flexibility afforded by a modular structure in the interests of students. For example, in the current Year 12, students take module tests when they are ready to do so with confidence. The possibility exists for these students to take the AS examination over two years, if that is the most appropriate course of action.

286. Resources are broadly adequate for the course and are well managed. Information and communication technology (ICT) facilities are available and make a significant contribution to the quality of learning, though their use needs to be developed further. A very good lesson was seen in which a group of Year 12 students investigated the organisms found in various habitats in and around the school pond, using data loggers to record numerical information about the environment.

287. The head of department has been in post for only one year and has already made a good contribution to the quality of teaching and learning in the department. Although attainment is still low in comparison with national standards, students are making good progress in relation to their GCSE results, and show good signs of improvement since the last inspection. A very good system of assessment is in place, and is used to monitor students' progress and set targets for improvement. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, improvement over the past year has been good, and the department is well placed to improve further.

BUSINESS

288. No subject in this section was the focus of inspection Post 16. However, one lesson was sampled in GNVQ business studies. Teaching was good and students made good progress in their work on personal finance. The use of information technology is fully integrated into the course and students were using a range of software to good effect.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

289. No subject in this section was the focus of inspection Post 16. Attainment in GNVQ intermediate ICT was well below the national average last year, although some candidates achieved distinction and merit grades. Two lessons were sampled in GNVQ ICT. Overall, both teaching and learning were good, attainment in the lessons was in line with expectations, and students had a positive attitude towards their work.

HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

290. The focus of the inspection was on NVQ Catering at Level 2. Three sessions were observed. The teaching was good. During the lessons there was use of demonstration, questioning and explanation, regular review of student progress and a well-structured sequence of activities. This led to students gaining a secure knowledge, very good understanding, and the necessary high-level skills of preparing food and cooking meals to a specification.

Catering

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

Strengths:

- Students have a sound grasp of concepts, and apply them well in the kitchen in answering questions and during discussions. Overall, they are achieving well.
- Teaching is good, and sessions are well structured with a range of activities that are effective in helping students to build up their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Students work well together, and they share ideas and information freely.
- There are very good links with outside agencies to support the teaching programme.

291. The NVQ Level 2 results in 2001 were good and all students who took the examination gained grades.

292. Standards in current work are in line with expectations. Students achieve very well in relation to predictions based on their prior attainment. In the lessons seen, they were doing very well as a result of effective teaching, which demanded much of them. The lesson structures and activities clearly focused their learning. Students' knowledge and skills are good, and they apply them very well. Their practical work is of high quality.

293. Teaching is very good and students very learn well as a result. The principal features of the very good teaching are clear objectives, sharp planning, brisk pace and a range of teaching strategies to bring about learning. The teachers have a very good level of subject knowledge and use it well in questioning and during the practical tasks. Lessons provide opportunities for students to practise what has been demonstrated and discussed. Their skills and techniques improve through practice as the lesson progresses. In lessons, students have opportunities to carry out tasks, working as individuals or as part of a team, to prepare and cook food and record their results. The teacher coordinates the practical work, helping to plan menus and organise work schedules. Students respond confidently to the activities.

294. Students learn very well. They are attentive, work productively and respond very well to the supportive teaching and different learning styles they experience. They rise to the challenge of preparing meals for different clients. Time is used well in lessons. Students support and help each other effectively and, in groups, talk and listen to each other in a mature way as part of their learning. They are always confident when offering ideas in more open discussion.

295. The good teaching and learning result from work in the course being well led and managed. There is a commitment to building on what has already been achieved and to improving standards. The planning effectively reflects the course requirements and determines the level for good teaching. Recording of progress and target setting, based on careful analysis of student performance from testing and assessment, is well established. Learning outcomes are sharply focused.

296. The standard of students' work seen meets the course requirements. In the sessions observed, students were doing very well as a result of effective teaching, which demanded much of them. The lesson structure and activities clearly focused their learning, and in the lessons seen, students drew well on their knowledge of food preparation and skills, meeting the requirements of a specification. The students recall and apply their knowledge and understanding well. Their project work generally shows the same confidence and understanding as their practical work in class.

297. The local Education Business Partnership supports the course very well. Students take part in the National Young Chefs Competition and last year won first place. There are very good links with local employers, who offer regular work placements for students as part of their coursework requirements. These experiences give opportunities for students to work with other adults in the work place, helping to raise their self-esteem and confidence. The course has proven to be very successful in providing opportunities for lower-attaining students to gain a nationally recognised vocational qualification.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

Art

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

In 2001 the one candidate due to take the AS Level exam withdrew on medical grounds. The four candidates who were due to take A Level deferred to take it this year.

Strengths:

- Teachers have good subject knowledge.
- Discussion work is challenging.
- Work journals are used well to record work and develop ideas.

Areas for improvement:

- Further develop independent learning skills.
- Improve productivity.
- Use computers more to record and develop work.

298. In work seen during the inspection at AS and A Level, students are working at close to the expected level and are making satisfactory progress, taking into account the grades they achieved at GCSE. Journals are used effectively to record and develop ideas. Drawing skills

are generally competent, and progress can be seen over the two years. Higher-attaining students draw well, with some particularly skilful sketching having been done on location in Rome. Some higher attaining students have produced some effective paintings, but there is too much work that is unfinished. In general, the amount of work is less than one would expect for A Level groups.

299. Students are soundly motivated, with very good attitudes towards their work, but all would benefit from a greater sense of urgency. Higher attaining students discuss their aims and objectives perceptively and relate the work of artists to their own work. Even students who are new to English can discuss their ideas and express their ideas well visually.

300. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. Strengths lie in the good subject knowledge teachers have, evident in the challenge of probing questioning, which encourages students to push their ideas and perceptions further. Planning is good and so is the use of visual aids and examples to ensure all students understand the aim of the lesson. High quality interaction is possible between students and teachers due to the small group size. Often there are two teachers in the class, one of whom speaks Turkish. Weaknesses in teaching lie in the management of some students and inadequate procedures to ensure that all work is completed.

301. Teachers regularly record assessment data to chart progress and relate it to exam criteria. Marking is consistently constructive and is instrumental in raising standards. The curriculum leader has recently had training in AS and A Level teaching. This informs leadership and management of the subject, which are good. Numbers are low but rising, and standards seen in the inspection are better than previously. Photography, clay and work using computers are additions to the curriculum also. As a result, progress has been satisfactory overall since the last inspection.

ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

302. The focus of the inspection was on English, but lessons in Spanish and Turkish were also sampled.

303. Spanish was sampled in one lesson in the Sixth Form. Spanish was introduced into the Sixth Form last year, and four students opted to take the AS course. Their level of attainment is uneven, ranging from a native speaker to a student with a GCSE grade D. The teacher of Spanish has very good subject knowledge and very good linguistic competence. The lesson observed was very well prepared and good use was made of up-to-date materials. The students are well motivated and achieve very well in relation to their ability. Relationships in lessons are very good.

304. A Level Turkish has been offered as an option in the Sixth Form for the last four years and results in external examinations have been consistently excellent. In the 2001 AS examinations, all eight students passed and six obtained grades A or B. In the A Level examination in 2001, all 17 students passed and nine obtained the highest grades. The teacher of Turkish has excellent subject knowledge and highly developed pedagogical skills. In the lesson observed, students were very motivated and worked conscientiously. The course is very demanding, both linguistically and culturally, and additionally makes a strong contribution to development of students' general literacy skills.

English

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

The provision for English caters for around 40 students. There is a GCSE English Language course for 24 Year 12 students, Level 1 and Level 2 Key Skills courses for 12 candidates in total, and four Year 13 students are doing A Level English Literature. Numbers following AS and A Level courses are historically erratic. There are no students currently in Year 12 on such courses.

Strengths:

- The very supportive relationships between teachers and students.
- Students' achievement, leading to better than expected results.
- The full and well-judged marking which encourages achievement.

Areas for improvement:

- The pace and variety in lessons.
- Making lesson objectives clear to students to encourage and direct learning.
- Teaching methods which require and develop independent thinking.

305. Standards achieved at A Level are considerably lower than the national average. However, the small number of candidates entered reduces the significance of the comparison. Students consistently achieve beyond expectations. Candidates on the GCSE re-sit course do well, enhancing their achievement by at least one grade, and frequently by more.

306. Work observed during the inspection confirmed the picture suggested by these patterns of attainment. In the A Level literature class and in the written work seen, students reach satisfactory standards. They show a reasonable grasp of literary critical terminology in discussion and in response to questions. They are able to refer to other reading to compare and contrast intention and effect. Although they need much encouragement to articulate what they know, they have clearly developed abilities to read, interpret and comment. Their writing is of a quality superior to that shown in discussion. It is generally direct, well-organised, and sensibly presented. The use of ICT to draft, edit and present final versions allows for reasonably accurate and extended essays. At its best, students' writing comes across as confident and clear: 'The central obsession for Gatsby within the novel is his fixation on Daisy.' At worst, meaning is obscured by limited powers of expression: 'In the novel, water is shown to be nearby as Gatsby's main obsession lives across the bay.'

307. The Year 12 GCSE re-sit class shows students making progress, but they are highly dependent upon the teacher. Their ability to discuss and amplify what they know (about tabloid and broadsheet conventions of news presentation) is limited. Nevertheless, on account of a well-judged framework for analysis and note taking, students are able to accumulate relevant information and subsequently to present it. They make good progress. Their writing confirms that, over time, improvements in expression and organisation are being made. A third of the class were absent from the lesson, however, which is a significant factor in limiting their progress and achievement.

308. The standard of teaching overall is good. Because of the timing of the inspection, only two Sixth Form English lessons could be seen. The planning and the conduct of those sessions, together with the evidence of the marking and commentary on students' writing, shows that teaching supports students well. In the A Level lesson, the teacher's extensive subject knowledge made clear the connections between Tennyson's depiction of Mariana,

Shakespeare's characterisation of her in *Measure for Measure*, and Keats' poetic style. Students' knowledge and understanding were evidently taken forward by the teacher's patient, supportive, and scholarly exposition. The pace was rather slow, and the learning objectives implicit. Students would have benefited from a clear statement of what was to be learned from the lesson and from a sharper requirement to research and comment for themselves. Nevertheless, relationships were positive, respectful and productive. The teacher's response to written work was remarkably detailed and gave exemplary pointers for development.

309. In the Year 12 GCSE lesson, a clear plan, high expectations and a variety of tasks gave the proceedings momentum and purpose. Questioning was sharp and directed so as to keep everybody on their toes. Groups were organised to mix gender and ability in such a way as to maximise the opportunities for collaborative learning. By the end students had gained, through the variety of activities, a grasp of the differences between tabloid and broadsheet approaches to the issue of bullying.

310. Both A Level and GCSE students are highly dependent upon the teacher for their progress. The quality of learning is satisfactory, but students show little initiative or autonomy. They would benefit from teaching methods which progressively required independence and responsibility.

311. Staffing, resources, and accommodation are adequate for the courses followed. Reference materials in the library are unsatisfactorily thin.

312. Leadership and management of Sixth Form English are good. Courses appropriate to the needs of students are offered. Schemes of work cover course requirements fully, and great attention is given to the support and encouragement of students who are not conventionally or ambitiously academic. Student progress is carefully tracked, and every effort made to keep people on board and motivated. Students recognise and appreciate the efforts teachers make on their behalf and consider the school, for them, a good place to be.