

INSPECTION REPORT

**VALE OF ANCHOLME TECHNOLOGY
COLLEGE**

Grammar School Road, Brigg

LEA area: North Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 118100

Headteacher: Mr G. Hensman

Reporting inspector: Denis Pittman
16976

Dates of inspection: 24th – 27th March 2003

Inspection number: 249663

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Type of college: Comprehensive

School category: Community

Age range of students: 11 – 18

Gender of students: Mixed

College address: Westmoor House
Grammar School Road
Brigg

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Tom Glossop

Date of previous inspection: 21st April 1997

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16976	D. Pittman	Registered inspector		What sort of college is it? The college's results and students' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management What the college should do to improve
9724	B. Quest-Ritson	Lay inspector		Student's attitudes and values How well the students are cared for How well the college works in partnership with parents
32169	B. O'Hagan	Team inspector	Mathematics	
12499	M. Durkin	Team inspector	English English as an additional language	
1779	D. Leonard	Team inspector	Science	
30690	G. Allison	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Geography	
17868	E. Metcalfe	Team inspector	Art and design	How good curriculum and other opportunities are
23891	P. Slape	Team inspector	Design and technology	
20497	V. Williams	Team inspector	History	
17404	J. Tolley	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages	
22501	S. Jones	Team inspector	Music	
7926	J. Bowden	Team inspector	Physical education	

8216	G. Binks	Team inspector	Special educational needs Educational inclusion	
24713	J. Pestridge	Team inspector	Religious education Citizenship	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Vale of Ancholme College is a smaller than average comprehensive college with a small sixth form. There are 562 students on roll with 31 students in the sixth form. The college was recently awarded Technology College Status in 2002. The college takes its students from up to 19 junior schools. Well over 90 per cent of students travel by bus or coach into the college because many students live in rural areas. The socio-economic circumstances of students are varied, but are generally in line with the national average; the number of students eligible for free college meals is broadly average. Very few students come from a minority ethnic background or have English as an additional language. Around 18 per cent of students are on the college's register for special educational needs, and approximately five per cent have a statement of special educational need; both figures are above the national average. The overall standard of attainment of students when they enter the college has been below average but the ability profile is now higher for students in the current Year 7.

HOW GOOD THE COLLEGE IS

The Vale of Ancholme is a good college which is rapidly improving. Standards of attainment are broadly average and sometimes better; students make good progress. The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good, and a climate of change and development has been effectively promoted in the college. The quality of teaching is predominantly good and often better; this ensures that students learn well. Relationships in the college are based upon mutual respect; students are given good care and support. The college gives good value for money.

What the college does well

- The overall achievement of students is good; they make good progress in lessons.
- The leadership and management of key staff are very good.
- Students learn effectively because of the good quality of teaching.
- Relationships are very positive. The college promotes a caring and supportive ethos.
- The personal development of students is good; a good range of extra-curricular activities supports this as well.
- The drama provision is outstanding.

What could be improved

- The provision for modern foreign languages is unsatisfactory.
- The monitoring and evaluation by heads of departments is inconsistent.
- There is insufficient use of assessment data to inform planning and target setting.

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

HOW THE COLLEGE HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The college has made good progress since the previous inspection in 1997. Standards of attainment in National Curriculum tests and GCSE examinations have improved; the value added which the college is able to show in relation to students' achievements is significantly high. Standards in English and religious education are much better. The quality of teaching has greatly improved and is a factor in promoting students' higher levels of attainment in subjects. Assessment data is more comprehensive and provides useful information for monitoring students' progress. The key curriculum issues about improving the provision for music and religious education in the main college have been very effectively addressed. The provision for religious education in the sixth form is still not met. The college has made a good response to national initiatives in literacy, numeracy and citizenship. The management structure for the college is better defined with clearer indications of responsibilities. The commitment and hard

work of senior management and governors, and the support of the local community have led to significant improvements in the quality of accommodation and buildings through its Technology College status, and in the provision of computers.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
GCSE examinations	C	C	C	B
A levels/AS levels	*	D	C	

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

* The method for recording examination performance changed in 2001, so comparisons with data before that time are inappropriate.

In the 2002 National Curriculum tests for 14 year olds, the combined results were in line with the national average and were comparable to similar schools. In science, standards were above the national average and in English and mathematics they were average. There was no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. In comparison with similar schools, English and mathematics results were average but were above average in science. The overall trend in test performances is broadly in line with the national picture. In general, these results are above the expectations of students' prior attainment; they were well above average in English and science.

The trend in GCSE results, over recent years, is in line with the national picture; however, the overall performance in 2002 was above average. Standards in the range five A*-C grades were comparable to the national average but for the broader range five A*-G grades they well above average. In comparison with similar schools, the overall examination results were above average. The achievement of students given their prior attainment was very good. Examination performance was particularly good in drama and theatre studies, English literature and design and technology. Standards in modern foreign languages and chemistry and the girls' performance in sports studies were not as high as they should have been. Standards in sixth form examinations in 2002 were broadly average. Students achieved well given their prior attainment.

The target set in 2002 for the higher GCSE grades was exceeded by five percentage points and was achieved for the broader grade range. The targets for 2003 are realistic and appropriately challenging.

In Years 7 to 9, standards of attainment in lessons are above average in English, science and design and technology; they are well above average in religious education. Standards are in line with expectations for most other subjects apart from geography and history where they are below average. Standards in modern foreign languages are well below average. In Years 10 and 11 standards continue to be well above average in religious education and they are also above average in design and technology. Standards are in line with national averages for most other subjects apart from art and design, geography, history and information and communication technology (ICT) where they are below average. The low attainment pattern continues in modern foreign languages. Given students' below average attainment on entry, achievement in most subjects is generally good and in some areas such as drama and English literature it is particularly high. Overall standards in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are average. Students with special educational needs make good progress. Standards of work seen in the sixth form broadly reflect national averages.

STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the college	Good. Students show a commitment to, and an enthusiasm for, their studies; their positive attitudes help them to learn successfully. Their involvement in extra-curricular activities is good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. The movement around a large site is generally well-ordered and disciplined. Students generally behave well in lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Very good overall. Most students are responsible and show appropriate thought for others. They are comfortable speaking with visitors. Students respond well to the opportunities offered in the college. The positive relationships reflected amongst students and staff are a major strength.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance is well above the national average; unauthorised absence is low.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is good. There were examples of excellent teaching in drama, religious education, English and science. The consistently high quality of teaching in drama is outstanding. The general standard teaching meets the needs of students very well. Standards of teaching in English are very good and in mathematics and science they are good. A small number of lessons had unsatisfactory features; these occurred in French, geography and personal, social and health education (PSHE). The National Literacy, Numeracy and Key Stage 3 Strategies have been effectively introduced into the college. Across the college, the main teaching strengths are the teachers' knowledge of their subjects, clear learning objectives, high expectations, classroom management and good support and encouragement for students. Some lessons had insufficient variety in terms of being too teacher led and the overall control of the students was inadequate. In most lessons students learn well and work hard to develop their knowledge and understanding. They concentrate well and show good levels of maturity. The positive relationships in most lessons help to sustain students' interest and motivation.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE COLLEGE

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced; it caters well for the individual needs and interests of students. An appropriate balance has been achieved between academic and vocational courses in Years 10 and 11 and the sixth form. An extensive programme of extra-curricular activities is available for students.
Provision for students with special educational needs	Very good. It is successful in meeting the particular needs of students with more severe physical and learning disabilities. Students are supported well; they make good progress. The targets for students are reviewed appropriately; these procedures help to monitor progress

	effectively.
Provision for students' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for moral and social development is very good and provision for cultural development is good. Opportunities for spiritual development are satisfactory. The personal, social and health education programme promotes the personal development of students well. In general there is mutual respect between staff and students. .
How well the college cares for its students	Good. Staff know students well and are efficient in carrying out the college's arrangements for student welfare. Pastoral teams provide effective support and guidance for students. Procedures for assessing students' attainment are very good

The time allocated to humanities subjects in Years 7 to 9 is shorter than National Curriculum recommendations. The range of opportunities in drama and expressive arts promotes personal development very well. Participation rates in extra-curricular activities are good. The college has recently put in place its policy on developing its particularly gifted and talented students. There are good procedures when students transfer from primary schools so that they settle in quickly. Procedures for child protection are very good. The college has developed a very strong working partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE COLLEGE IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher's very good leadership has provided a clear direction for the college. The senior management team effectively promote the college's aims and objectives. An open style of management has created a good team ethos and spirit of co-operation. Most heads of department and pastoral leaders show good quality leadership and management.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are supportive and have a strong commitment to the well-being of the college. They have a very good understanding of the college's strengths and weaknesses. They have worked hard on such issues as achieving Technology College status and improving facilities. Communication between the governors and the college is open and productive. Most statutory responsibilities are met.
The college's evaluation of its performance	Good. The college has established appropriate strategies for quality assurance. Performance management procedures are good. The review and monitoring methods, which also involve governors effectively, identify both strengths and areas for development.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Financial planning and control are very efficient. The college's resources are mostly used well. The teaching and non-teaching staff are effectively deployed. The extra commitment to staffing ensures continuity in teaching.

The college's development plan clearly identifies priorities for improvement. Governors are not meeting the statutory requirement for the provision of religious education in the sixth form. The leadership and management of modern foreign languages are unsatisfactory. Some heads of department do not monitor teaching in their areas directly. Parents are very positive about the college. It has developed a very strong partnership with parents.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE COLLEGE

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students like the college.• The college expects hard work.• Students make good progress.• The college helps students to become mature and responsible.• The college is well led and managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework set.• Information about their child's progress.

Inspectors agree with parents' favourable views. However, inspectors found that the amount of homework set was appropriate and that information about progress is good.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SIXTH FORM

The college is part of a sixth form consortium with another local school; the consortium is called Brigg Sixth Form Centre. There are currently 31 students (14 boys and 17 girls) from Vale of Ancholme College in the sixth form. All the courses, apart from GCSE re-sits in English and mathematics are of an advanced standard, either as academic AS and A level courses or vocational A levels. Students enter the sixth form with below average GCSE results.

HOW GOOD THE SIXTH FORM IS

Provision in the sixth form is good. The cost effectiveness of the sixth form is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Standards are average overall and students achieve well. The broad range of courses offered meets the needs of the students effectively. The leadership and management of sixth form are good overall.

Strengths

- Achievement in English is very good because of the very good teaching.
- Students' attitudes are positive and students have very good relationships with their teachers.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and enables students to achieve well.
- The broad range of courses available effectively meets students' needs.
- The support and guidance available to students are good.

What could be improved

- Leadership across the Brigg consortium does not ensure effective evaluation and long-term planning.
- The roles and responsibilities of subject leaders need clarifying to ensure effective development and co-ordination across the consortium.
- The use of assessment information to ensure all students achieve their potential is inconsistent.
- There are insufficient opportunities to develop students' independent learning skills.

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	Good. Standards are average but students' achievement is good overall. The quality of teaching is good. There is effective monitoring of progress.
Biology	Good. Standards are above average and students achieve well because teaching is good. Management is good but leadership lacks clarity.
History	Satisfactory. Standards of work are broadly average. Achievement is satisfactory with most students performing in line with expectations. Teaching is satisfactory overall.
Art	Good. Standards are above average. Students achieve well as a result of

	good teaching and very good use of ICT.
English	Very good. Standards are average and students achieve very well because of very good teaching and a well-planned curriculum. Very strong leadership is improving standards.

Work was also sampled in other subjects. In a Year 12 physical education lesson and in a Year 13 chemistry lesson teaching and learning were satisfactory overall and students made appropriate progress. The quality of teaching in product design is good; students' achievements are good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Aspect	Comment
How well students are guided and supported	Students in the sixth form receive good advice, support and guidance. They are well prepared before deciding on courses, are helped to settle in quickly and receive good academic and personal support. Guidance on future career choices is less strong. Support for academic progress is good. Teachers know their students well, recognise when support is needed, and help them overcome difficulties.
Effectiveness of the leadership and management of the sixth form	The management of the sixth form is good; students are well informed and supported. Overall leadership of the sixth form is satisfactory. The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development but systems to evaluate provision, improve consistency and implement development lack overall direction and co-ordination.

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 choice of courses available. • Students think they are helped to settle in well. • They are taught well and challenged to do their best. • Relationships with their teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careers advice. • The range of extra-curricular activities. • Students feel they are not well informed about their progress. • The college does not listen to or respond to their views enough.

The views above were expressed in the questionnaire which was completed by students from the consortium and produced 79 replies though there are only 31 students from The Vale in the sixth form. In conversation, students from The Vale were far more positive especially in relation to the college's response to their views and the information they are given about progress. When these issues were followed up with students from Years 12 and 13 they emphasised that they were very happy with most aspects of provision and suggested minor improvements only. Inspectors agree with the views of the students interviewed

COMPARING PROVISION IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

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

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The college's results and students' achievements

1. Students' general standards on entry to the college are below the national average. The attainment of boys does not differ significantly from that of the girls.
2. By the end of Year 9, in 2002, students achieved results in National Curriculum tests in English that were in line with the national average but were well above average in comparison with their prior attainment. The mathematics test results were broadly average and in line with expectations relative to their prior attainment. Standards in science were above average. The overall performance of students in the core subjects was in line with similar schools. The trend in recent results is similar to that found nationally. Generally students achieved better than their prior attainment would seem to indicate.
3. Standards in lessons at the end Year 9, in most subjects, are those typically expected for their age; attainment is above average in English, science and design and technology. Standards in religious education are well above average. However, the standards in geography and history are below average and well below average in modern foreign languages. Achievement in English has improved significantly. When considering students' prior attainment levels, their overall achievement through Years 7 to 9 is generally good.
4. Overall, results in the last three years for the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) have been broadly the same as the national average but above the performance of similar schools. Given the students' prior attainment levels these achievements are very good. Results for 2002 in the higher grades have improved significantly since the previous inspection; overall performance in these examinations was above average. The trend in GCSE results is in line with the national picture. In the broader grade category A*-G the attainment of students was well above the national average and significantly high given their prior attainment. Most students make good progress. Examination performance was above average in drama and theatre studies, English literature and design and technology. Standards in modern foreign languages and chemistry and the girls' performance in sports were not as high as they should have been given the ability of some students. The difference between the attainment of boys and girls is similar to that found nationally.
5. The standards of work in seen for students in Years 10 and 11 are broadly average. However, there is a degree of variability between subjects; this reflects the wider range of ability in these year groups. Standards are above average in design and technology and well above average in religious education and drama. The general level of work in art and design, geography, history and ICT is below average and in modern foreign languages it is well below average. Achievement in English, art and design, design and technology, ICT and physical education is good, but it is unsatisfactory in modern foreign languages. Achievement is very good in religious education and drama. In Years 10 and 11, overall achievement is good. The progress being shown by students in most subjects results from the emphasis that has been given to improving standards of teaching and the quality of learning.

6. The college exceeded its 2002 target for the higher GCSE grades by five per cent and it was achieved for broader the grade range A*-G. The target for 2003 of 50 per cent in the higher grades is realistic and appropriately challenging.
7. Literacy skills across the curriculum are average. A range of texts, in all subjects, encourages the use of technical and specialist vocabulary, especially in science, drama and English. The library supports all subjects, for instance by stocking specialised texts and multi-media materials. However, insufficient non-fiction texts reduce the opportunity for students to develop research skills. The English department has dictionaries available in each classroom and key words are displayed prominently in most classrooms to familiarise students with these words. Carefully censored Internet access allows students to research topics in detail. Students discuss their work enthusiastically and sensibly in most subjects and show respect to their peers and staff by listening attentively. More developed discursive and analytical speaking is not consistent, however, in subjects where literacy teaching is less emphasised, for example art, French, mathematics and science. In modern foreign languages, for example, students' literacy skills at GCSE were comparatively weak. Writing at length is a feature in English and history. Most subjects undertake the teaching of basic literacy skills conscientiously and this is seen to particularly good effect in English, drama and physical education. With the support of the English and special educational needs departments, students gradually make improvements to their spelling, reading and writing skills.
8. The college has embraced the National Numeracy Strategy, and most students have sufficient knowledge and skill to use and apply number when this is required, for instance in science to calculate speed and to estimate background radioactivity as a percentage. In ICT lessons, students can accurately produce simple algebraic formulae and correctly represent statistical data when required in geography. In physical education lessons students can interpret data by drawing pie charts to illustrate food intakes and diet. The application of number is developed particularly well in music, where it is routinely used at the start of lessons to help students understand patterns in music.
9. The overall contribution that other subjects make to the development of students' ICT capability is satisfactory. The recent introduction of interactive presentation technology is a particular strength. These resources are used well by teachers to give clear, interesting demonstrations. They are an effective aid to teaching. Some subjects use ICT well to support students' learning. Good planned use is made of ICT in English for students to draft and review their work. Extensive and effective use is made of ICT in design and technology for students to research their design projects and to enhance their presentations. Students have good access to control technology. ICT is used well by students with special educational needs to improve their numerical and written skills. ICT is used very well in art to learn about artists' work and to inspire students' own work. The 'virtual tours' of temples and mosques in religious education uses ICT well to extend students' awareness of other cultures and beliefs. Provision in other areas is less developed although most include its use in their planning. Gaining access to the ICT facilities for other subjects has been limited. However, access has improved recently and the college has effective plans to develop this still further.
10. Students with special educational needs make good progress throughout the college because in most subjects teachers set appropriate and challenging targets. In almost all subjects they receive helpful support within lessons where this is needed. A small

number of students are withdrawn from lessons at times for intensive practice to improve their reading, writing and spelling skills.

Sixth form

11. The low number of students in the sixth form (only 37 entries) makes statistical comparisons with national averages tenuous. In general the 2002 A level results for the A-E grade range were broadly average; attainment in the higher grades A/B (16 per cent) was below average. Performance in art and design and English literature was particularly good. .
12. Results in the AS level examinations in 2002 were not so strong; the proportion of students gaining A-E grades (64 per cent) was lower than in 2001. Attainment was marginally below average. Given the students' prior attainment, achievement was satisfactory in both A level and AS level examinations.
13. In the Year 13 lessons seen, standards were above average in art and design and biology; they were average for English, mathematics and history. In Year 12 the same standards are reflected in these subjects apart from mathematics where attainment is below average. Given the relatively low prior attainment criteria for entry into the sixth form the achievement of most students is good. Students with special needs in the sixth form also make good progress

Students' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Students' attitudes to the college are good overall, though their individual attitudes are frequently very good. Students think highly of the college and enjoy coming there. Most students are enthusiastic about their studies and readily take part in the many activities available to them. They are interested in their lessons, are keen to learn, concentrate well and work hard. These good attitudes are enhanced in response to very good or inspired teaching. Particularly good examples of such good attitudes occurred in drama lessons, where with skilful teaching, students performed at a high level of dramatic intensity. Not all students share such good attitudes. A small minority of students – mainly Year 9 boys – can be troublesome in lessons. This type of response is usually, though not invariably, linked to weaker teaching skills.
15. Standards of behaviour are good in lessons, and often very good. Students are attentive and behave well because the college makes clear that this is what it expects from them. Behaviour is also good as students move around the large college site. Students are polite, friendly and good-humoured. They mix easily and harmoniously among themselves. However, they do have a tendency to take their time moving between lessons. Most students are careful with equipment. There is no graffiti but litter is still a problem, despite lots of bins. The number of exclusions, both permanent and for a fixed term, is higher than might be expected for a school of this size. This level reflects a determination to maintain acceptable standards of behaviour. It is weighted by a small number of persistent offenders who fail to respond to efforts to support them. Students interviewed did not consider bullying or oppressive behaviour to be a problem.
16. Students respond very well to the provision that the college makes for their personal development. They can work well together, whether in pairs, in groups or as teams. Students show awareness and sensitivity towards others as they develop social skills. They can applaud others' abilities and evaluate each other's work. Students use the opportunities they are offered to take the initiative and be involved in their own

learning. Those students elected to the year and school councils like the responsibility of planning improvements. The quality of relations, especially of those between teachers and students, is a particular strength. This is an important element in the success of this provision. Students consider that their teachers like them as individuals and want them to do well. As a result they learn more effectively.

17. Attendance is very good. The rate of attendance at the college for the academic year 2001/2002 was 93.7 per cent, well above the national median of 91 per cent. Authorised absence was 5.9 per cent compared with 7.8 per cent. Unauthorised absence was 0.4 per cent, well below the national median of 1.2 per cent. Punctuality at the start of the day is not a problem: students arrive on time unless there are problems with buses. Punctuality in coming to lessons is less good. Despite a five-minute changeover some students dawdle.
18. The quality of relations and levels of attendance have both improved since the previous inspection. Attitudes and behaviour remain good. The number of exclusions has marginally risen.

Sixth form

19. Sixth form students' attitudes are, on balance, good. In lessons they are often very good, especially when students take an active part by commenting on issues raised and engaging in discussion. However, there are occasions when students react in a more passive manner, answering questions but asking few. Students whose mother tongue is not English are particularly keen to do well. While students generally have a mature approach to their studies, not all have developed the skills they need to study independently. Students like being at the college and readily take part in the activities available to them. These include acting as Millennium volunteers and organising fund-raising events as part of the Third World Action Group. Relations between teachers and students are a particular strength, as they are in the main school. Students appreciate the help and support that their teachers and tutors give them: they feel that this commitment helps them to do well. Attendance is good.

HOW WELL ARE STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20. The overall quality of teaching and students' learning is good. In 96 per cent of the lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory or better and in two thirds it was at least good. In one third of lessons the quality of teaching was very good; some lessons were excellent. The high quality teaching occurred in drama, religious education, English and science. In the most effective lessons students learn well and achieve above average standards. A small number of lessons (four) had unsatisfactory features; these occurred in French, geography and personal, social and health education (PSHE).
21. The overall quality of teaching in English is very good; in mathematics and science it is good. There are examples of very good teaching in a range of subjects such as English, art, history, music, religious education and ICT. These lessons were characterised by teachers' high expectations of what students could achieve, very good management techniques and highly effective teaching methods. In the few unsatisfactory lessons seen, lack of pace and challenge, insufficient variety in teaching approaches and poor control methods were the main causes. The overall quality of teaching in modern foreign languages is unsatisfactory. However, teaching overall has improved significantly since the previous inspection when there was less very good teaching.

22. Students make good gains in knowledge because teachers use their subject knowledge and understanding effectively in organising and presenting work. In music lessons the teacher demonstrates by singing, by playing an instrument or by using ICT, this helps students gain an understanding of a musical concept or of what they have to do. In history the good support material provided gives students a range of key words and terms to promote their learning. In physical education lessons the teachers' expertise enables them give clear explanations and instructions so that students know what to do and how to improve. Students gain new skills and are challenged to improve them through planned, progressive activities.
23. Teachers plan to provide varied and challenging work to engage students' interest and to move them on in their learning. Students respond well to their teachers' care for their achievement and this helps develop the good relationships evident in lessons. In a Year 9 English lesson on literary analysis, the students appreciated the structured guidelines provided for them that helped clarify their thinking. In many lessons the effective use of resources by teachers promotes understanding. This is particularly evident in development of literacy and ICT skills.
24. Teachers assess work regularly and share with students the standards at which they are working. Teachers usually monitor progress carefully. Students who are not doing as well as they might are identified for extra help. Teachers regularly discuss with students the progress they are making and at the end of units of work set targets for improvement; the system is increasingly used and appreciated by students. Some students are unsure about the difference between predicted grades and targets. The overall quality of marking is variable. In English, marking is detailed and informative. However, in mathematics and geography there is not the same level of consistency.
25. The range of activities and methods used by teachers is good. In mathematics lessons, interactive whiteboards are used effectively to promote students' understanding of ideas and to sustain interest. In English, writing frames are used well to give students, particularly the lower attainers, help in structuring and developing their work. The appropriateness of tasks to match the ability of students is a feature of the best lessons. The variety in the activity and relevance to the ability level of the student enable them to remain on task and interested for the whole of the lesson. For example, in drama lessons students are continuously challenged to think for themselves and give their own interpretation of events and activities.
26. Teachers generally manage their classes well. Relationships are good and a strength of the college. The ethos for learning in most lessons is purposeful, relaxed and friendly. Students' confidence in developing ICT skills is enhanced through clear lesson objectives and an orderly learning environment. . Students bring to lessons good attitudes and they behave well on the whole. They persevere, try hard and work well individually and in groups. However in some lessons, particularly in French, disruptive behaviour is not checked quickly enough or effectively enough and the progress of all students is affected.
27. Where teaching is less successful, it often lacks adequate planning and variety of teaching strategies to meet the needs of differing levels of ability. In some French lessons activities lacked focus, steps in learning were missed and students were not given enough opportunity to practise new language to feel confident and build effectively on previous learning. On other occasions, teachers' expectations were too low and students were left too much to their own devices to progress beyond single words and set phrases. Some geography lessons are over-reliant on worksheets and

use too few examples to expand the schemes of work to create interest or lead towards independence in learning. These lessons become mechanical and insufficiently challenging for students.

28. Overall the teaching of students with special educational needs is good. Students with special educational needs make good progress throughout the college because in most subjects teachers set appropriate and challenging targets. In almost all subjects they receive helpful support within lessons where this is needed. The quality of specialist teaching for small withdrawal groups is very high and this helps to improve students' self-confidence as well as their language skills.

Sixth form

29. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are planned well. Teachers set appropriate tasks and activities to effectively build the students' knowledge and understanding of their subjects. Overall, students are positive about the quality of teaching they receive and appreciate teachers' accessibility and support when they have difficulty with their work.
30. Of the five subjects chosen for inspection, the quality of teaching and learning is very good in English and good in mathematics, art and design and biology; it is satisfactory in history. In some of the other lessons seen, teaching was excellent in drama, good in design and technology and satisfactory in chemistry.
31. Many of the good features evident in the main college are also present in sixth form teaching and learning. The greater maturity and willingness of students to contribute to lessons help the effectiveness of teaching. A strength of teaching is the good specialist subject knowledge of staff. These qualities were reflected in history lessons where work is challenging and students show willingness to share ideas and question what is taught. Other very good features of teaching in English were high teacher expectations and the pace of the lessons. In most subjects, good questioning skills allowed teachers to draw on students' opinions and to challenge their thinking. In some mathematics lessons there were insufficient opportunities for discussion.
32. Most teachers plan lessons and activities well. In a biology lesson dealing with enzymes, the detailed structure of the activity effectively promoted students' learning. In art and design lessons technical resources such as *PowerPoint* are used well. In history lessons greater use could be made of visual material.
33. Teachers are aware of the needs of the relatively few students on the special educational needs register and take these into account when planning their lessons. Generally, good planning ensures that materials are suitably adapted to meet these students' needs and enable full participation in all lessons.

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

34. The college provides a curriculum that is broad and balanced and ensures equality of access and opportunity. There are 25 hours of teaching time provided each week, which is in line with recommendations.
35. The overall quality of the curriculum provision is good. In the first three years all students follow an appropriately broad and balanced curriculum that includes all the

subjects that are required by the National Curriculum. Students are taught French or German as a first foreign language and may choose a second foreign language. The college teaches a stimulating expressive arts course to all students; it includes art, music, drama and dance. There is one tutorial lesson that includes informative approaches to personal, social and health education, careers and citizenship.

36. In Years 10 and 11 students follow courses leading to eight, nine or ten GCSE examinations. There is a broad core of subjects that ensures good balance and breadth. All students follow GCSE courses in English, mathematics, sciences, technology, expressive arts and ICT and a long or short GCSE course in their first foreign language. In addition, students must take either history or geography to provide an appropriate humanities dimension. Students have a good range of further options. They may take either the three separate sciences, physics, chemistry and biology to GCSE or extra physical education. In addition they can choose one of French, German, art and design or GNVQ manufacturing, and one GCSE from physical education, drama, geography or a second language. All students take courses in physical education and religious education. Personal, social, health and careers education and citizenship are successfully taught in one tutor lesson each week.
37. In general there is adequate curriculum time for all subjects apart from history, geography and religious education in the first three years. The time allocated is shorter than the recommended five per cent of curriculum time; this adversely affects the curriculum coverage of these subjects.
38. The provision in personal, social and health education is good. The programme is well planned and taught by tutors. The course is effectively enhanced by the use of outside speakers such as health professionals. The programme has a wide range of topics that are appropriate for students' needs. The course includes strong citizenship elements.
39. The overall provision for extra-curricular activities is good, particularly in drama and music. Students have many opportunities to participate in a wide range of sport; in this context the provision is very good.
40. Arrangements with local colleges provide flexible curricular opportunities for older students. Several older students benefit from the opportunity to study National Vocational Qualifications in hairdressing and motor vehicle and construction engineering.
41. Provision for careers education is good. In Years 7 to 11 it is taught as part of the PSHE programme by form tutors. The careers programme is well supported by representatives from local businesses who work with Year 9 students to develop communication skills as part of an 'Industry Day'. Students in Years 10 and 11 receive information about post-16 choices through the tutorial programme, careers convention and a 'Post-16 Opportunities Day' and have opportunities to visit local colleges for taster sessions.
42. The college offers good study support. There are opportunities for students to do homework in college. This is a great benefit for those students for whom doing college work at home is difficult. It is particularly beneficial in providing access to computers. The college runs examination revision classes and booster lessons in many subjects on Saturdays and during the Easter holidays.

43. The Key Stage 3 National Strategy to raise standards by strengthening teaching and learning has been effectively implemented across most subject areas and particularly in the core subjects. Staff have had good training for this initiative. Provision for literacy and numeracy across the individual subjects of the curriculum is good. A core numeracy course has been introduced recently for Year 7 and Year 8 students who are not learning a second foreign language, and occupies one lesson per week for half of the year.
44. Overall the college makes good provision for equal opportunities. It is fully committed to providing equal opportunities for all. There is a good equal opportunities statement of intent and a policy for educational exclusion. These documents cover all the relevant aspects and are observed in practice. There is a clear focus on the needs of each individual and the college goes to great lengths to support the needs of all students, including those who present a challenge. The college meets the requirements of the Race Relations Act and the Sex Discrimination Act. Displays around the college suggest an awareness of an ethnically diverse society and groups are represented in non-stereotypical ways.
45. There are good links with the nearby secondary school and primary schools. Primary liaisons for students entering the college are good. Students and teachers visit the college to sample lessons. This ensures that students settle quickly into the new college routines.
46. The college makes very good provision for students with special needs. It is successful in meeting the particular needs of students with more severe physical and learning disabilities. It is undoubtedly a college which considers well the learning and social needs of all its students. Although the college has only recently put in place its policy on nurturing its particularly gifted and talented students, inspectors found evidence of good practice in English, drama, art, mathematics and design and technology.
47. There are good links with the local community. The community makes a good contribution to students' learning. Constructive links were forged, particularly at the time when the college was seeking to gain Technology College status. The college uses its technology resources to support other schools. Some of these are outside its own catchment area. There are good links with local business, industry and professional groups. Many of these provide work experience for students.
48. The college's provision for students' personal development is good overall, but there are differences between the various elements of this provision. Spiritual provision is satisfactory; moral and social provision is very good; cultural provision is good. However, the absence of an audit of provision across all curriculum subjects restricts opportunities for the college to monitor how effective its provision is.
49. The provision for students' spiritual development is, on balance, satisfactory. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when provision was judged to be unsatisfactory. Several subjects provide a good range of opportunities for students to develop a sense of self-awareness and understanding of others, most notably English, drama, history, art and design and music. The current strength of the religious education programme's contribution to this provision lies in a willingness to explore topics with a spiritual dimension combined with inspiring teaching. Similarly, imaginative teaching in drama allows students to explore human feelings and emotions and develop a greater understanding of both. Due emphasis is given to the spiritual and mystical aspects in art and design. However, some other subjects fail to

utilise the opportunities that arise within the curriculum. The college still does not meet the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship for all students. Not all assemblies contain a spiritual message or act of worship. The use of thought for the week and reflection in registration periods is inconsistent.

50. In contrast, the provision for students' moral and social development is very good. There is a strong emphasis given to building students' confidence and developing mutual trust between members of staff and students. The college has developed a culture of praise and enjoyment. The units studied in the personal social and health education programme and, increasingly, in citizenship are an important part of this provision across the college. For example, a session on driving standards for sixth form students also explored the moral implications of bad driving. Opportunities to work together in lessons as well as trips and visits outside college hours promote students' social development. The college makes the standards it expects clear to all students and these standards are enforced. The opportunities to help students develop both morally and socially that arise within subjects are used well. In science lessons students examine the effects of genetic engineering. Year and school councils encourage students to take responsible action in a democratic way.
51. Cultural provision in the college is good. Subjects such as English, drama, music and history provide students with varied opportunities for cultural studies and performance. In history, students are given a good base from which to develop an understanding of British heritage. There is good provision for students to explore local cultural traditions in music and art lessons. Students do have some opportunities to explore other cultures, for example through selected texts in English and different musical styles. Visits abroad broaden students' horizons. The college's continuing support of a school in the home village of the caretaker in Benin gives students an invaluable insight into life in West Africa. However, students have only limited opportunities to develop an understanding of life in a multi-cultural society. Such perspectives do not feature strongly enough in planning across the curriculum.

Sixth form

52. Students after 16 are taught in the joint sixth form established with a nearby school. This makes good provision for all students. It is managed jointly by both schools. The greater numbers enable the college to offer a wide range of courses: 19 AS and A level courses and Advanced Vocational Courses in Education (AVCE) in art and design, business studies, health and social care and a vocational foundation course. There are GCSE courses as required. The post 16 timetable is reviewed annually to ensure that it meets the specific requirements of each year's intake. The courses throughout the college are appropriate for the needs of the students.
53. The sixth form curriculum does not meet the legal requirement to provide religious education for all students. This has not been rectified since identified at the time of the previous inspection.
54. In the sixth form good links have been made with the local community. The college opens some of its post 16 courses to adults in the community, particularly parents and unemployed job seekers. It supports life-long learning, particularly with help in the use of ICT.
55. Optional courses in key skills are offered in Year 12. These are in communication, application of number and information technology. Students are given good support

and guidance on these courses. The response from the students is average. They consider the value on an individual basis.

HOW WELL DOES THE COLLEGE CARE FOR ITS STUDENTS?

56. Standards of care in the college are very high. Several factors contribute to these high standards. Students are very well known to teachers and tutors. The small size of the college engenders a sense of family and community. More importantly, teachers and tutors use their knowledge of students well to make them feel valued and supported. There are good procedures when students transfer from primary schools so that they settle in quickly. Students interviewed said any initial apprehension they felt on joining the college had been very short lived. The general procedures to ensure students' health and safety are good. Health education is included in the personal social and health education programme (PSHE). Procedures for child protection are very good. They include general guidance and briefing for all members of staff. Raising awareness of such issues also forms part of the PSHE programme.
57. The procedures to promote and monitor attendance are very good. Parents are contacted promptly if students are absent. The college shows it values high levels of attendance. Co-operation with the education welfare officer is very good. There are very good procedures to promote high standards of behaviour. The college makes the standards it expects clear to students. Good behaviour is praised and the sanctions for unacceptable behaviour fairly imposed. The good standards of behaviour seen during the inspection show that these procedures work very well in practice. Students who do not reach these high standards receive good personal support in the recently established support centre. This provides a non-confrontational area for those students who need to calm down. It is also used to reintegrate them after exclusion. The college has a clear policy on bullying. Students interviewed considered any cases were handled very effectively.
58. Students' personal progress is very well monitored, largely because teachers and tutors know them so well and keep careful records. They use this knowledge to guide students throughout their time at the college. The monitoring and tracking of individual students' academic progress are less advanced – the college has only just started to compile academic profiles of students – and not yet fully integrated with the monitoring of their personal progress. Because integration of both types of monitoring of individual students is at an early stage, the overall quality of educational and personal support and guidance is viewed as good at present.
59. All students in Year 11 have received a careers interview with a Connexions personal careers adviser who also attends parents' evenings. Students in Year 10 go on work experience for one week for which they are well prepared through a well-planned programme in PSHE lessons. A good careers library and resource base, recently improved by the new careers co-ordinator, is situated in the learning resource centre to advise students on choices.

Assessment

60. Procedures for assessing students' attainment are very good. The college carries out its own tests for Year 7 students shortly after they arrive; together with National Curriculum test results from their last year at primary school, this provides a baseline from which students' future progress is measured. The local education authority (LEA) provides the college with a large amount of useful assessment data for the whole college, each subject, and individual students, including predicted results for

forthcoming National Curriculum tests and GCSE examinations. The college uses a good progressive grading system related to National Curriculum levels and GCSE grades; students know the level at which they are working in most subjects, although they are not always clear about the difference between a predicted grade and a target.

61. Assessment information is well used at school level. A recent example was the identification of small groups of students in Years 8 and 11 who were underachieving; senior members of staff now closely monitor their progress on an individual basis. However, the picture is less consistent across departments. In English, teachers' assessment of draft work is very well used by students when re-drafting. However, National Curriculum levels and GCSE grades are not used well enough in history to gauge students' progress, while in modern foreign languages assessment is unsatisfactory because teachers do not use the information to match work closely enough to students' abilities.
62. Procedures for monitoring and supporting students' academic progress are good overall. A particular strength is in art and design where teachers use assessment information very effectively in their discussions with individual students about the quality of their work; as a result, students understand what they need to do to move forward to the next level. The college has recently established a potentially very useful database that allows internal test information to be recorded alongside results from National Curriculum tests and GCSE examinations. It is not widely used at present, but will eventually allow teachers to access assessment information about individual students, identify any who are underachieving in their subject, and provide additional help where needed.

Sixth form

Assessment

63. Procedures for assessing students' attainment are good. Departments make good use of assessment data in measuring performance against predicted results and take effective action to improve courses when students do less well than expected. Students are aware of their target grades and what they need to do to achieve them. In several subjects, for example biology, students are very appreciative of teachers' willingness to give up additional time to provide help for individuals. Use of assessment information is good overall, with particular strengths in some subjects. In art, for example, examination criteria are very well used in evaluating students' work and guiding them towards improvement, while assessment of drafts in English is used effectively by students in improving the quality of finished work. On the other hand, in history, assessment of the various strands of courses is not well enough co-ordinated between consortium partners. Teachers regularly review students' progress, often resulting in dialogue about difficulties encountered by individual students and discussion of possible ways forward.

Advice, support and guidance

64. Students in the sixth form receive good advice, support and guidance. They are prepared well in Year 11 before deciding which courses to follow, whether in the college or elsewhere. Students receive plenty of information before applying and all prospective students have an interview. The two-day induction course at Lincoln University concentrates on teamwork exercises and activities to emphasise a break between the main college and sixth form studies. Students consider that they are helped to settle in and adjust to sixth form life quickly. There is good support too for

students during their time in the sixth form. Advice from teachers is an important part of this support that supplements the guidance from tutors in reviews and tutorial records. Reports provide a good overview of progress because of the amount of details that they include. The personal support that students receive is also very good. This is largely provided on an individual basis. Its strength lies in the good knowledge that teachers and tutors have of their students and the very good relations that exist between them. Guidance for those students who intend to continue in education (and who know where they want to go) is good, but guidance on future career choices is less strong. This affects mainly those students who are undecided or leaving for other training or employment. The monitoring of attendance is satisfactory.

65. Standards of care have improved since the previous inspection, but academic support is still not as strong as personal support.

HOW WELL DOES THE COLLEGE WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

66. Parents' views of the college are very favourable. The number of pre-inspection questionnaires returned was much higher than average while the meeting for parents was well attended. Parents say that their children like the college. They consider that the college expects their children to work hard, that they make good progress there and that the college helps their children to become mature and responsible. Parents say that they find the college approachable and that they consider it is well led and managed. Some of the parents who returned the questionnaire have concerns about the amount of homework set and do not think that they are well informed about progress. Inspectors agree with parents' favourable views. However, inspectors found that the amount of homework set was appropriate and that information about progress is good.
67. The college has developed a very strong partnership with parents. As part of this, it is determined to make it easy for parents to contact the college if they have any problems or concerns. There is an 'open door' policy with the dual purpose of providing easy access for parents and increasing the level of personal contact. The programme of meetings for parents is a good one. Planners are designed to give parents routine information about the college and for messages to be sent to and from. If correctly completed, planners also provide an effective means for parents to follow their children's progress. The college provides a very good range of information for parents, both about itself and about the progress students make. Detailed full annual reports in the record of achievement, new interim 'snapshots' of progress and the information in planners combine to give parents a clear picture of progress. As well as the series of consultation evenings for parents, the monthly meeting of the Parents' Association provides a highly effective link between home and college. This is because at each meeting time is set aside for discussion of educational issues. Since the headteacher attends these meetings, they are an effective method of consulting parents.
68. Parental involvement is also very good. Parents are ready to lend their support because they think that their children like the college and do well there. They ensure that their children attend regularly. Their support for the successful Technology College bid was generous. Attendance at consultation evenings is very high.

Sixth form students' views

69. The questionnaire was given to students from the consortium. This produced 79 replies, although there are only 31 Vale of Ancholme students in the sixth form. Responses showed that students like the choice of courses and that they think they

are helped to settle in well. Students believe that they are taught well, that they are challenged to do their best and that relations with their teachers are good. Students considered that both careers advice and the range of extra-curricular activities could be improved and that they were not well informed about their progress or that the college listened or responded to their views enough. In interviews with inspectors – and these covered most of the students from the Vale of Ancholme – students were far more positive, especially concerning the college's response to their views and the information they receive about progress. When these issues were followed up with students they affirmed that they were very happy with most aspects of provision and suggested only minor improvements. For example, they felt that careers advice could be improved, particularly for those students who were undecided or not intending to go to university. Inspectors agree with the views of the students interviewed.

70. The college has continued to strengthen its partnership with parents since the previous inspection.

HOW WELL IS THE COLLEGE LED AND MANAGED?

71. The quality of leadership and management of key staff in the college is very good. Since the previous inspection good progress has been made on the key issues that were identified at that time. Standards of attainment in National Curriculum tests and GCSE examinations have risen; the value added produced in relation to students' achievement is significantly high. The quality of teaching has improved markedly and is a factor in promoting students' achievement. Assessment data is now detailed and more comprehensive and provides useful information for monitoring students' progress. The management structure for the college is better defined with clearer indications of responsibilities. An appropriate emphasis has been given to the introduction of literacy, numeracy and citizenship.
72. The headteacher's very good leadership has provided a clear direction for the college. He has effectively promoted a climate of change and innovation. This approach was instrumental in the college's recent successful Technology College status bid and the development of sixth form consortium arrangements. The senior management team promote the aims and values of the college well. An open style of management has created a good team ethos. This spirit of co-operation amongst the staff is a strong and positive feature of the college. Members of the management team have appropriate responsibilities and delegated authority. Together with the governing body there is an evident commitment to improvement. Leadership is mostly collaborative, recognising the value of consultation.
73. The overall quality of leadership at middle management is good. It is excellent in drama and very good in English, science, music, religious education and special educational needs. Management is good in other areas of the curriculum apart from geography where it is satisfactory. The leadership and management of modern foreign languages are unsatisfactory; the departmental management needs to be rationalised to ensure greater co-ordination between respective areas and improve overall standards of student achievement. The quality of documentation in departments is generally good.
74. Pastoral leaders are effective and along with their teams help promote the aims and values of the college. They are appropriately involved in academic and pastoral issues and act as a direct link between home and college and between the college and outside agencies. The pastoral teams have a sound overview of the progress of groups of students and their subsequent levels of learning.

75. Developments are implemented, managed, monitored and evaluated efficiently. The good quality of these management practices is reflected in the successful outcome of Technology College status and the national recognition of improved standards. The college development plan is detailed and appropriately referenced to strategic issues. These include: continuing to raise standards by effective use of baseline data and targets; building upon the quality of teaching and learning; implementing the National Curriculum strategies; and increasing the effectiveness of post-16 provision. The capacity of staff to succeed in these areas of development is good. The college evaluates results carefully and makes use of monitoring information compiled by the LEA. The college monitors the progress of students well from entry in Year 7 up to Year 13. It is becoming more effective in using targets for raising results. In all departments results are monitored and plans made for improvement. .
76. The overall effectiveness of the governing body is good. The experience and expertise of members of the governing body are well co-ordinated by the chair of governors. Governors work closely with senior managers and contribute appropriately to planning improvements. They monitor and review the work of the college well through their committee structure and through the link arrangement they have with departments. They receive regular information on results and the budget, for example. Governors are committed to the continuous improvement of the college through the move to Technology College status and the development of the sixth form consortium. However, governors are not meeting the statutory requirement for the provision of religious education in the sixth form. They are vigilant about the health, safety and welfare of students and a risk assessment audit has been updated appropriately.
77. Financial management and the planning of the use of resources are efficiently related to the college's priorities. The college is effectively maintaining a balanced budget and utilises the additional funding for specialist college status and special educational needs well. An appropriate proportion of the budget is allocated to learning resources for departments. The quality of financial control and provision of budgetary information to senior management is very good. In financial administration, there are correct divisions of responsibility and good procedures for ordering, receiving and paying for goods and services purchased by the college. The last financial audit indicated minor areas for improvement financial efficiency. These have been corrected. Competitive tendering is used for the ordering of goods or services, and the college works hard to achieve the best value in its financial decisions. The administrative staff are very efficient and greatly assist the smooth running of the college.
78. The college's systems are not overly bureaucratic; they support the drive for raising standards. The college provides a good quality of education. A positive feature of the college is the shared commitment to improvement. The dedication of senior managers, staff and governors is a significant contributory factor to the effectiveness of the college. The college gives good value for money.
79. The match between teachers' expertise and subject needs is good. Staff are appropriately qualified and experienced and the majority are teaching their specialist subject. Staffing levels are deliberately high so that supply staff are rarely needed to cover lessons. The majority of staff have been appointed since the previous inspection and the college has benefited from a stable staff for the last four years. Teachers are well supported by administrative and other support staff. There are very good induction procedures for new staff, including newly qualified teachers, students on initial teacher training and teaching assistants, to effectively integrate them into the life of the college and these have been well appreciated by the staff involved.

80. Performance management procedures are well established in the college and all staff have recently received further training prior to starting the new cycle. The college has effective procedures for supporting the professional development of staff. Training opportunities are closely linked to the needs of the college and to the personal development of teachers and support staff. Teaching and support staff have attended a wide variety of courses which have contributed well to staff effectiveness.
81. Teaching and other accommodation is spread over three buildings on the campus. It is good overall and helps create a good learning environment. There have been considerable improvements since the previous inspection and there is a rolling programme for further improvements and refurbishment. The fencing in of the whole campus and the use of CCTV cameras have enhanced security. Students appreciate the improving quality of the college's environment; there is little evidence of graffiti or damage. Some very effective displays are evident in and around subject departments that are well respected by students.
82. Apart from music, all subjects have at least satisfactory accommodation, most is good and in physical education the very good range and quality of accommodation have a significant effect on the quality of learning. In music, the quality of accommodation is unsatisfactory because there is insufficient small space for rehearsal/practice rooms and to extend the use of technology for recording. The college is aware of this and plans have been drawn up to address this issue. The college resource centre is small; its size places distinct limitations on the range of books being held and access to ICT facilities. Students with physical disabilities can access all areas of the college.
83. Resources overall are good and often very good. An investment in interactive 'smart' boards is beginning to positively impact on teaching and learning, for instance in mathematics, English, science and ICT. The quantity and use of interactive boards continue to increase within other department areas. There are insufficient textbooks for home use in science. The college complements its sport curriculum experiences by making good use of the local leisure centre. Within the college overall there is a good ratio of computers to students, and in music and design and technology there has been investment in 'new technology' for composing and performing, and for computer-assisted design and computer-assisted manufacture (CAD/CAM). There is some lack of access to ICT facilities at present for some departments, such as history, geography and modern foreign languages. The impact of the college's learning resource centre on learning in the college as a whole is becoming increasingly effective but developments are constrained by size limitations. The number of non-fiction books is below recommendations; the college is aware of this and is attempting to improve the situation.

Sixth form

Leadership and management

84. Leadership and management of the sixth form are good overall. The headteacher and director of the sixth form have a clear vision of the way forward. Standards and provision are regularly reviewed by the Brigg sixth form governors' committee which includes representatives from the student body, as well as staff and governors, from both schools. Governors are very well informed about the provision in the sixth form. The college is committed to providing a wide range of courses that effectively meet the needs of its students and has been successful in doing this both through creating links with other schools and colleges in North Lincolnshire and, in particular, through its collaboration with Sir John Nelthorpe School.
85. Over the past four years the college has made significant progress. Standards have improved and the proportion of students staying on in the sixth form has increased year by year. The headteacher, director of the sixth form and the senior management team work in close collaboration with their counterparts at Sir John Nelthorpe School to plan and organise overall provision and this is working well, especially since both schools now have a common timetable. Governors and key staff from both institutions oversee the sixth form provision and now work very effectively together to evaluate and plan the provision and progress. This arrangement works well in ensuring the sixth form provision is well co-ordinated because communication is generally good between the two schools. However, the systems currently in place lack sufficient rigour to ensure consistency across the sixth form, to monitor and evaluate overall provision or to identify and spread good practice across the two schools. Leadership and management of the focus subjects are good overall and good use is made of the resources available. However, in those subjects where provision is shared across the consortium there is, as yet, a lack of clarity about overall responsibility for checking the quality of the work undertaken.
86. Management of the sixth form is good. The director of the sixth form is well informed about students' achievement and works closely with her counterpart at Sir John Nelthorpe to track their progress and provide prompt and appropriate support where necessary. She meets regularly with her counterpart to exchange information, organise activities and ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the sixth form. There is a thorough induction programme beginning in Year 11 to inform students about the sixth form and the choices available and enable them to settle quickly into sixth form life. Students appreciate the support they receive and the efforts made on their behalf to organise events such as work experience and extra-curricular activities. Students are encouraged to involve themselves fully in the life of the college and to express their views through the sixth form social committee.
87. Any movement between courses is restricted to the beginning of the year and after that dropouts are rare. Very few students fail to complete courses that they start at the beginning of Year 12.

Resources

88. Resources available to students are good overall. Students have good access to ICT and other resources within subject areas. However, at present more general resources available in the library do not adequately support independent learning and research at advanced level.

89. Accommodation to deliver the curriculum is good. Students benefit from the provision of a sixth form common room and social area.

WHAT SHOULD THE COLLEGE DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- Improve the provision for modern foreign languages by:
increasing students' opportunities to use the languages for themselves;
improving students' attitudes towards learning languages by enabling them to succeed in tasks, thus increasing their confidence;
ensuring behaviour management strategies are applied consistently and effectively in all lessons;
using assessment information effectively to ensure all students make appropriate progress in lessons, by providing appropriate support and challenge;
ensuring consistency by monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies closely and taking appropriate action to spread good practice.
(Paragraphs: 4,5,20,26,27,73,159-162,165)
- Ensure greater consistency in the monitoring and evaluation by heads of departments.
(Paragraphs: 73,108,131,143,144)
- Develop the use of assessment data to inform planning and target setting. (Paragraphs: 24,62,107,144,151)

Sixth form issues:

- Improve leadership across the consortium to ensure effective evaluation and long-term planning. (Paragraph: 85)
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of subject leaders to ensure effective development and co-ordination across the consortium. (Paragraph: 85)
- Develop greater consistency in the use of assessment information to ensure all students achieve their potential. (Paragraphs: 61,63,198)
- Increase opportunities to develop independent learning skills. (Paragraphs: 195,206, 210,212)

Other issues for consideration:

- Increase the curriculum time provision for humanities subjects in Years 7 to 9.
(Paragraphs: 37,178)
- Make provision for religious education in the sixth form. (Paragraphs: 53,184)
- Improve facilities in the resource centre. (Paragraphs: 82)
- Achieve greater consistency in the delivery of a daily act of collective worship.
(Paragraphs: 76,184)

PART C: COLLEGE DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	Years 7– 11	101
	Sixth form	21
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
Years 7 – 11							
Number	6	28	41	22	4	0	0
Percentage	6	28	41	22	4	0	0
Sixth form							
Number	2	5	8	6	0	0	0
Percentage	10	24	38	29	0	0	0

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

Information about the college's students

Students on the college's roll	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of students on the college's roll	532	31
Number of full-time students known to be eligible for free school meals	43	0

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of students with statements of special educational needs	28	0
Number of students on the college's special educational needs register	101	0

English as an additional language	No of students
Number of students with English as an additional language	0

Student mobility in the last college year	No of students
Students who joined the college other than at the usual time of first admission	29

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

18

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	7.8

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	1.2

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered students in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	2002	44	42	86

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of students at NC level 5 and above	Boys	27	28	30
	Girls	37	31	34
	Total	64	59	64
Percentage of students at NC level 5 or above	School	76 (65)	69 (65)	75 (65)
	National	66 (64)	67 (66)	66 (66)
Percentage of students at NC level 6 or above	School	36 (22)	45 (39)	34 (28)
	National	32 (31)	45 (43)	33 (34)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of students at NC level 5 and above	Boys	28	29	31
	Girls	39	33	34
	Total	67	62	65
Percentage of students at NC level 5 or above	School	78 (64)	72 (64)	76 (66)
	National	67 (65)	70 (68)	67 (64)
Percentage of students at NC level 6 or above	School	31 (26)	46 (40)	29 (30)
	National	32 (31)	44 (42)	34 (33)

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
	2002	50	42	92

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	27	49	49
	Girls	20	40	41
	Total	47	89	90
Percentage of students achieving the standard specified	School	51 (42)	97 (92)	98 (96)
	National	50 (48)	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	42.5
	National	39.8

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

Vocational qualifications		Number	% success rate
Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those students who achieved all those they studied	School	44	68
	National		

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

		For candidates entered for GCE A / AS / Advanced GNVQ / VCE examinations		
		Boys	Girls	All
School	Number of candidates	8	9	17
	Average point score per candidate	13.75	9.89	11.71
National	Average point score per candidate	*	*	*

		For candidates entered for GCE A / AS examinations			For candidates entered for Advanced GNVQ / VCE examinations		
		Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All
School	Number of candidates	8	9	17	3	0	3
	Average point score per candidate	13.75	9.89	11.71	12.67	-	12.67
National	Average point score per candidate	*	*	*	*	*	*

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

Ethnic background of students

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of students on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	555	54	4
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	34.1
Number of students per qualified teacher	16.4

Education support staff: Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	411

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y11

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	74.8
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 3	23.9
Key Stage 4	21.3

Financial year	2001 – 2002
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	£
Total income	1743377
Total expenditure	1751482
Expenditure per student	3317
Balance brought forward from previous year	191363
Balance carried forward to next year	183258

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the college during the last two years	10.65
Number of teachers appointed to the college during the last two years	13.8
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	559
Number of questionnaires returned	207

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	47	1	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	48	46	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	59	6	1	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	51	16	3	2
The teaching is good.	42	51	3	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	47	20	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	35	3	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	35	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	30	50	13	3	4
The school is well led and managed.	54	43	2	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	48	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	47	11	0	9

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

ENGLISH

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

Strengths

- Very strong leadership of the department encourages high standards.
- Teaching is very good; there is much excellent teaching leading to very good learning.
- Relationships between students and teachers are very good and lead to productive learning.
- Documentation is very effective for teaching because it is clear, targeted and very helpful.

Area for improvement

- Students' involvement in their learning is occasionally insufficient when classroom management is less skilful.

90. Results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for students at the age of 14 were in line with the national average but were well above average when taking their prior attainment into account. The average points score in English was broadly similar to that in science but higher than mathematics. The English results reflect an improving trend higher than the national picture.
91. In the GCSE examinations in 2002, English results at grades A*-C were below the national average and above the national average for similar schools. Results for grades A*-G were in line with the national average and include a slightly higher entry than nationally. Results in English literature were above the national average and were based on a higher entry than nationally.
92. In the work seen, attainment by the end of Year 9 is above average. This represents very good achievement and improving standards, because, when the students joined the college, their overall standards were below average. Reading, in particular, has improved, showing particularly good achievement. Most students have good knowledge and understanding of literacy skills by the time they have been in the college for three years. Their oral skills are good in classroom discussion and they are keen and confident speakers in formal situations. Listening skills are less developed especially when the teacher does most of the talking or does not wait for silence before continuing the lesson. Writing standards are good; students have grasped key skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar and their work is generally very well presented. The standards of all students are benefiting from a wide choice in the variety of writing assignments and increasing use of ICT to aid the presentation of work.
93. Standards in English language by the end of Year 11 are average. The standard of work in English literature is above average. The relative difference in standards is because the National Literacy Strategy has not impacted so much on these students to raise performance in English language. Students in Year 10 show comparable standards in English and English literature. Overall, this level of performance represents good achievement. Students write with understanding and appreciation of Shakespearean texts and pre-20th century poetry. They read a wide variety of texts and successfully place them in a historical context. They can evaluate character and theme and produce detailed writing assignments. Overall, presentation of work is

Careful and consistent. Students can analyse media texts and research references. They use standard and non-standard English appropriately and are respectful listeners. A minority of students rely too heavily on the teacher and their work is brief, and lacking in detailed understanding and insight.

94. Students with special educational needs make very good progress. They receive good support from their class teachers who use educational plans provided by the special educational needs department to plan lessons and devise strategies for success.
95. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. In a small minority of lessons, students learn less than in others because the teacher talks too much and successful classroom management strategies are lacking. In these lessons, students make satisfactory rather than very good progress. In the very good lessons, there is a brisk pace; students are clearly motivated and a large amount of work is completed. Students enjoy exchanging ideas with each other and their teacher in an atmosphere of achievement and respect. Students respond well to the teachers' care for their achievement and this helps develop the very good relationships evident in the department. In a Year 11 lesson on poetry, the students thoroughly appreciated analysing race and prejudice and deepening their understanding of the poem. They presented their findings in a deeply felt and expressive manner, because the teacher sensitively drew out their ideas and encouraged their thinking. In a Year 9 lesson, students worked very hard to draft and polish their intellectual response to an extract from *Down and Out in Paris and London* because of teacher's high expectations and clear, structured guidelines. They produced a large amount of work and enjoyed it immensely; the teacher's enthusiasm infected the students, whose enjoyment of the lesson encouraged and developed their appreciation of the subject.
96. The leadership and management of the department are very good. The head of department has a clear educational vision that inspires both teachers and students. Teachers share the preparation of schemes of work and departmental responsibilities; as a result, they are regularly discussing what is best for the students. They observe each other's lessons and this sharing of good practice is improving teaching styles, classroom management and students' learning. Procedures for assessment are clear and used by the head of department to set individual students' targets. Students' work is cross-checked for progress, standards and capability and this ensures that they are pushed to reach their potential. The head of department has developed a cohesive team after a period of instability at the last inspection.
97. Progress since the last inspection is very good. Standards have risen and literacy teaching has been used effectively to target improvements in English language. The main priority in the English departmental action plan is to target students working around grade D to help their improvement to higher grades at the end of Year 11, and to increase the number of A*-C grades. This exemplifies the department's commitment, which reflects that of the college, to improve standards. Homework is used effectively to support students' learning by giving challenging opportunities to extend students' skills and thinking. Standards are continuing to rise, and, with the commitment to sharing good practice and the attention to identified areas for improvement, the department has the capacity to succeed even further.

Drama

98. The provision of drama in Years 7 to 11 adds significant depth and breadth to the curriculum. Results were well above the national average in the 2002 GCSE examinations; this is based on an entry that is higher than the national average. Students' achievement in drama was better than in most other subjects. Standards of work are well above the levels expected nationally and students continue to achieve much higher standards than could be expected, as their attainment was below average on entry to the course. Achievement reflects this position and is well above average.
99. The quality of teaching and learning is excellent. Teachers are committed to the subject and contribute to the wider education it gives the students. In particular, the drama teachers successfully put emphasis on encouraging decision-making skills, and providing opportunities for students to think for themselves. At the same time, the teachers' encourage students to empathise with others. Students learn very well because lessons are well prepared and maintain a very good pace. Consequently, all students gain the maximum insight into the subject as well as gaining knowledge of a wide range of sophisticated drama skills. Emphasis on varied activities, personal development and collaborative work enhances the enjoyment and motivation of the students. In a Year 11 lesson, dramatic presentations were professional, carefully planned and executed, and skilful, thanks to the high expectations of the teacher and carefully targeted lesson planning. A powerful feature of the teaching is the regular combination of intellectual and social development so students frequently discuss and analyse philosophical questions with sensitivity and maturity. The attitude of the head of departments is that the students can do it and she uses everything in her power to make sure that they do. The students bask in this confidence and so they do achieve the highest standards. A wide range of extra-curricular activities contributes to the positive ethos of the college. The fact that all students who want to take part in a production do so is further evidence of the care and value placed on them. In the annual production, staff and a large number of students work with many departments, which encourages collaboration in different disciplines and develops the excellent relationships. The success of the subject means that one dedicated drama space is not enough to cope with the ever-increasing numbers and a second area is a priority.

Expressive arts

100. The expressive arts course makes a significant contribution to the college through high standards and its part in an ethos of care and respect. Preparation for Years 10 and 11 begins early so that students are planning, realising, making and then evaluating products. Consequently students' thinking and artistic skills are constantly used to achieve high quality work. Relationships are excellent; students are keen learners in lessons where they are valued and celebrated. Drama is the driving force and incorporates music and art in a very well organised team. The course attracts large numbers and the achievement of students with special educational needs and the gifted and talented is excellent. Drama teaching is outstanding because the students learn exceptionally well because of the teacher's zest, knowledge and deliberate focus on them as individuals.
101. The music department makes a very good contribution to expressive arts. Students work collaboratively in groups to produce successful compositions. They show good understanding of musical elements and devices to achieve their intended effects.
102. In GCSE art, students have completed group work on the theme of 'Metamorphosis' to a good level. They are engaged in making masks that will be used in drama. These are based on studies of masks from a range of cultures. They understand the power

and dramatic qualities of masks. Boys in particular show a keen interest in this work and are keen to get dramatic and grotesque effects. Students in Year 11 are engaged on their final controlled test and explain their ideas well. There is very good use of *PowerPoint* presentation for research. There is good exploration of features and emotions of characters in studies of masks from different cultures and modern sculpture. Students are given very good guidance on how to evaluate their ideas and work and how to contribute to the whole group.

MATHEMATICS

The overall quality of provision for mathematics is **good**.

Strengths

- Teachers use new technology and interactive resources well; this adds greater variety to lessons.
- The national improvement strategies have been effectively introduced and are raising standards.
- The good management of the department underpins a collective determination to succeed.

- Areas for improvement
- The provision for gifted and talented students is not sufficiently developed.
- The procedures for monitoring teaching and learning are insufficiently rigorous.
- The use of assessment data to inform improvement strategies and student target-setting is not consistent.

103. Students' standards on entry at age 11 are rising, so that whilst the current Year 9 were below average on entry, the current Year 7 are above average. Statutory test results at the end of Year 9 are rising, and were in line with the national average in 2002. In comparison with similar schools these results were average. Results were not as high as in English and science. Last year's GCSE results were below the national average.
104. Work seen during the inspection confirmed the improving picture. The work of Year 9 students is average and that of Year 7 students is above; those in the top set, for instance, know the properties of angles within intersecting and parallel lines and can represent mappings expressed algebraically. Year 11 students' work is close to the national average. Students in all year groups are now making good progress as a result of recent improvements in teaching. Those with special educational needs achieve particularly well, although not all those who are capable of reaching the highest GCSE grades are yet doing so.
105. The quality of teaching is good. In lessons seen it was never less than satisfactory, and was good or better in two thirds of lessons. The department has embraced the national framework for mathematics teaching and the National Strategy for Key Stage 3 wholeheartedly. The college's recently acquired Technology College status is having a direct impact on teaching. This is shown in the way teachers are successfully using the new resources such as interactive whiteboards to create more interesting lessons. The 'Maths Alive' scheme with its interactive resources, graphical calculators and the students' use of 'show-me' boards is particularly impressive. These innovations have enabled teachers to introduce more pace and challenge into lessons, particularly in Years 7, 8 and 9. The well-qualified and talented team of teachers also makes good use of focused question and answer, and students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Provision for gifted and talented students

is at a rudimentary stage, however, and students do not yet have enough opportunities to conjecture or to develop skills of mathematical investigation and experimentation.

106. The quality of learning is related to the quality of teaching, and is good overall. In the best lessons, tasks are varied, students are challenged, and they collaborate in finding solutions. For instance in a Year 9 lesson where one in five students had special needs, the teacher began with a mind-mapping activity about ratios, used question and answer techniques effectively and made very good use of the interactive whiteboard to bring a dry topic alive. She allowed the students time to think first, and to formulate and talk about their answers to her questions, and then allowed them to collaborate in solving further examples while she moved round the class, helping individuals. Learning is not so effective when teachers continue with a single task for too long, allow students to call out their answers or other comments, or fail to check on prior learning so that students repeat work from primary school.
107. Teachers' assessment of students' work is accurate, and students have a good sense of their current standard of performance, but they do not have more challenging targets to aim for, and they do not receive sufficient guidance from teachers to help them understand how to improve. Although the department identifies gifted and talented students, they are not yet fully challenged.
108. Overall, leadership and management are good. The efficiency of management is very good, and there is a collective determination to succeed. Particular strengths include the deployment of staff, the department handbook, the use of classroom display, the introduction of booster classes for Year 9 and the annual revision weekend for Year 11 students. The effectiveness of leadership is satisfactory. Strengths here include department development planning and setting of priorities, while there are deficiencies in the strategic use of data to support improvement and procedures for monitoring teaching and learning.
109. The department has made good progress since the last inspection. There were only two permanent specialist teachers then, and now there are five. More recently, the Key Stage 3 Strategy and numeracy framework have been successfully introduced, and the quality, diversity and skilled use of resources for learning have improved substantially.

SCIENCE

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

Strengths

- Teachers plan lessons well, focusing students' attention on key learning points.
- Students concentrate well in response to teachers' high expectations of good behaviour.
- The encouragement for students to develop thinking skills has a positive effect on progress.
- Learning is enhanced by effective use of inter-active whiteboards.

Areas for improvement

- Key words are not used effectively enough to help students recall previous work.
- The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent across the department.
- Students have insufficient 'hands on' experience of using ICT in the laboratory.

110. The results of National Curriculum tests in 2002 at the end of Year 9 were above average nationally and in comparison with similar schools. Students made better progress than expected compared with their results at the end of Year 6. Results have improved at a faster rate than those nationally over the last three years; they were similar to those in English but higher than those in mathematics.
111. Although GCSE results at the end of Year 11 were well below the national average for the proportion of students gaining the higher, A*-C, grades in 2002, they were better than those in the previous year. Students did less well than expected in comparison with their National Curriculum test results two years earlier, largely due to their poor performance in chemistry; staffing difficulties in that area of the science curriculum have now been rectified. Girls did significantly less well than boys, but this was also the case for these students in their National Curriculum tests two years earlier. Overall, results in science were lower than those in English and mathematics.
112. When students enter the college in Year 7, standards are just above average. For example, they can describe how to separate salt from a mixture with sand, and about half can explain the process of dissolving in terms of what happens to particles. Standards reached by students currently in Year 9 are above average, matching recent National Curriculum test results; this represents good achievement for these students because data show that standards were average when they entered the college. Students in Year 9 have much better than average understanding of the arrangement and movement of particles when materials change state, largely as a result of very effective use of inter-active simulations.
113. Standards in Year 11 are average, with no significant difference between boys and girls. This represents satisfactory achievement for these students through Years 10 and 11. Standards seen during the inspection for Year 11 students are significantly higher than those reached in recent GCSE examinations for two reasons; standards were higher when they entered the college, and they suffered less than those in previous years from lack of continuity in teaching. Almost all know some differences between plant and animal cells and can describe the functions of the principal parts of cells. A small number are unable to do this because key words are not used effectively enough to help them recall correct scientific terminology.
114. Overall, students with special educational needs make similar progress to others but, when they are helped by learning support assistants, their progress is never less than good. In Year 10, learning support assistants were very effective in prompting students to make accurate observations of indicator colour changes when an alkali was neutralised with an acid.
115. Students use laboratory equipment carefully and safely. Their scientific enquiry skills are good because they are encouraged to use aspects of scientific investigation, such as planning and predicting, in most lessons. Students have insufficient 'hands on' experience of using ICT in the laboratory, for example in data-logging. Except in biology, they have too few opportunities to develop their skills in extended writing on scientific topics.
116. Teaching and learning are good in Years 7 to 9 and satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. More than half the lessons seen were good or better, and occasionally excellent; all the rest were satisfactory. Key features in good teaching are well-planned lessons with clear learning objectives, emphasis on key learning points, encouragement for students to think through explanations for themselves, and high expectations of good behaviour and work-rate. An excellent lesson in Year 7 was very well planned; the

teacher first reviewed what students already knew about patterns in the behaviour of acids with carbonates, before students investigated how acids react with metals. Learning was excellent because students knew they were looking for another pattern while at the same time being encouraged to look for anomalies that did not fit the pattern. Almost all students concentrate for the full length of lessons because teachers make clear at an early stage that this is expected, often with a quiet word to an individual. Work is usually well matched to the learning needs of students. This was the case in Year 10 when the teacher encouraged those students who were adept at handling apparatus to spend additional time in improving the accuracy of their measurements. Teachers know their students well and use questioning effectively to challenge where appropriate. For example, in Year 8 the teacher expected higher attaining students to explain in terms of particle movement how convection currents arise in liquids. In less good, but still satisfactory, lessons, the pace of learning is slower and opportunities are sometimes missed to challenge students. In Year 10 the teacher missed an opportunity to encourage students to plan a fair test when they measured how much alkali would be needed to neutralise an acid, while in Year 11 a minority of students could have coped with faster pace when interpreting velocity-time graphs. Teachers' marking of students' day-to-day work is inconsistent. About half of the teachers provide students with helpful comments and targets showing them how to improve their work, but others make only superficial comments.

117. Leadership and management in science are very good. Following a period of staff upheaval in the department, teachers now work well together as a team with a clear commitment to further improving examination results. National Curriculum test results are already showing a marked upward trend, but GCSE results are only just beginning to improve. The head of department has been in post for about a year and has ensured that key elements of the new strategy for teaching science in Years 7 to 9 have been implemented. As a result, students' learning has improved; they know what they are expected to learn and measure their progress during a lesson against objectives set at the outset.
118. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. National Curriculum test results have improved, although GCSE results are similar. A significant proportion of unsatisfactory teaching was found at the last inspection, but now there is none.

ART AND DESIGN

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

Strengths

- Teaching is good and ensures that students make good progress.
- There is a good use of ICT to study works of art.
- Three-dimensional work is of a good standard.

Areas for improvement

- Continue to improve the skills of drawing and painting.
- The subject has insufficient time in Year 11.

119. Over the past three years standards in GCSE have fluctuated from the national average in the higher grades A*-C to a little below the national average. The proportion of students gaining a pass grade has been at the national average. Teacher assessments at the end of the Year 9 have judged attainment to be average.

120. In work seen, standards in Year 9 are in line with the national average; students' overall achievement is good. Students in Year 7 learn the basic elements of design and develop these into patterns for printing. They can use a viewfinder well to abstract a design from their own drawings. In Year 8 students learn the expressive qualities in sculpture and can develop these successfully in their own light sculptures. In Year 9 students gain a sound knowledge and understanding of modern developments in art including work that is currently popular in the modern, commercial world. These include Art Deco and the works of Mackintosh and Morris. Overall, students show a good understanding of the power and impact of line. However, students do not have adequate skills in mark-making techniques to achieve tone and texture in their drawings. Although they do some formal work on colour theory they do not use this knowledge to shade for tone and texture. There is inadequate control in much of the painting.
121. Approximately half of the students in Year 11 are taking a GCSE examination. This is a much higher than average proportion choosing this subject. In work seen, standards in Year 11 are a little below the national average. Approximately half of the students are reaching the higher grades A*-C. Work in ceramics and light sculpture is above average. There are some very good designs in high relief in pottery. However, few students have chosen this medium. In work on portraits students do not have adequate knowledge of the proportions of the features. This is not studied formally in Year 11. Overall, students' work shows weaknesses in the use of tone and texture in both drawing and painting. Standards in Year 10 are above average and do not show these weaknesses.
122. Students in Year 11 have inadequate time for GCSE art in one hour per week. Although all these students also study art as part of their expressive arts course this does not make a significant contribution to their GCSE art as the requirements are different. Group work and links with themes in music and drama, although valuable, do not contribute to the skills needed in art. Students' knowledge and understanding of the work of artist are above average. This is helped by the very good *PowerPoint* presentations given on the context of artists' work.
123. Teaching and learning are good. There is very good use ICT to explore the work of artists and art movements. This enables students in all years to gain a good understanding of the work of artists. It also provides inspiration for students' own work. Teachers plan well and work hard to make the lessons interesting. Students respond well. They display good initiative in most lessons by asking questions and making astute comments. All students get good individual attention in all lessons. Because of this all students, including those with special educational needs and the gifted and talented, make good progress.
124. Management is good. Planning and schemes of work are done in good detail. This provides good support for all teachers. Assessment is ongoing in all lessons and is good overall. However, students' mistakes in spelling and the use of language are not corrected in the majority of cases. Marking, therefore, does not support the acquisition of skills in literacy.
125. The subject makes a good contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These aspects, particularly the spiritual are examined in the work of artists.
126. There is satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. Although standards in Year 11 are lower, this has to be viewed in the light of the much greater proportion

of students taking the subject. ICT and sketchbook work has improved. Students with special educational needs now make good progress. The kiln still has no extraction system for fume removal so for health and safety reasons it can be used only at weekends.

CITIZENSHIP

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

Strengths

- Citizenship is taught well within the context of a very good PSHE programme.
- A good curriculum audit supports developments in this area of the curriculum.
- The reports to parents clearly identify citizenship programmes of study within subjects.
- There is good support for the introduction of citizenship from governors and senior management.

Areas for improvement

- The monitoring and evaluation of citizenship need further development.
- Departments need to identify specific strands of citizenship education within their schemes of work.
- Assessment and recording procedures are not sufficiently developed.

127. The citizenship programme of study is effectively delivered both through the tutorial personal, social, and health programme and also across the curriculum. From evidence seen within documentation, students in Year 9 are achieving well. They are developing good skills of enquiry and communication through work on decision-making related to subject options and other life choices, such as those concerned with health and sex education.
128. In Year 7, during the 'Citizenship Day' many aspects of citizenship were explored, including links with local industry, providing students with positive information and first-hand experience. In Year 8 an emphasis on equal opportunities enabled students to develop skills of participation and responsible action for the benefit of others, considering the moral implications of their actions. The contributions to the citizenship curriculum by outside agencies, such as the police and business representatives, make a positive impact on the experience of students. Work experience in Year 10 gives students an excellent insight into the issues around rights and responsibilities as well as the world of work, and students are able to learn about civil liberties. Further units of work on 'Law and Crime' issues, which are currently being prepared for both Year 8 and Year 10, will ensure appropriate coverage of these aspects. Students in Year 11 are given specific opportunities to discuss human rights and to consider the issues from a global and local level, as well as from an individual perspective.
129. The audit, which is a very good initiative to map opportunities for citizenship education across the curriculum, identified particular departments, religious education, geography and English, where explicit opportunities already exist to deliver the citizenship curriculum. The audit has also identified areas for future development such as political literacy.
130. The standard of teaching in those lessons seen, where explicit citizenship is being taught, is good. Students in Year 7 are able to understand the significance of self-

review and are beginning to consider their personal contributions to the community. Students in Year 8 are learning first aid skills and are making very good progress in the skill of being able to take responsible action.

131. The subject is being introduced effectively by the co-ordinator, with the full support of senior managers and governors. The college is providing good opportunities, both within and across the curriculum, to deliver the citizenship programme of study in Years 7 to 11. Reports to parents contain information regarding strands of citizenship within subjects, as seen in Year 7, which give a good indication of the aspects covered. Further overall monitoring and evaluation of the programme will ensure that the programme fulfils its potential to contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. Departmental monitoring will need to emphasise, in more detail, the implicit and explicit strands within subject programmes of study, building on the good preliminary analysis provided by the audit. Departments, such as mathematics, need to ensure that specific elements, which they have identified in schemes of work, are actually covered in lessons. Assessment remains an area for improvement and in anticipation of this development the co-ordinator has prepared a good training programme for staff.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

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

Strengths

- Strong leadership and management are leading to an improving department.
- Overall teaching is good and some is very good; this leads to good learning.
- Standards are rapidly improving.
- Department refurbishment and new technology facilities are leading to improved standards.

Area for improvement

- The use of regular formal written feedback and targets for all teaching groups.

132. Examination results in the GCSE A*-C higher grades have improved dramatically by over 50 per cent over the past three years and are now below but approaching the national average. This result was achieved despite students being denied access to workshop facilities for about three months last year because of a fire. In these circumstances, students did less well than in their other subjects overall. In national comparisons, girls do less well than they do on average. Student average point scores for the proportion achieving A*-G grades are now average. In GNVQ manufacturing, a high proportion of students achieve the equivalent of two GCSE pass grades at foundation or intermediate levels. There are differences in performance between contributory subject areas. Standards in graphic products are high, and high attaining students do particularly well. Students do less well in food technology, where low attainers underachieve. In other areas, students' performance is broadly in line with their predicted grades. The department monitors performance in Years 7 to 9 well, and teacher assessment of attainment in Year 9 in 2002 is above the national average.

133. Standards of current work seen in Years 7 to 9 are above average. Attainment on entry to the department is average overall, because students' prior experience varies widely, particularly in food and textiles. They progress rapidly, and by Year 9 their

achievement is therefore good overall. Students can carry out sensory analysis to compare food products when ingredients are changed. They are good at developing a specification from their ideas, and evaluating their work, helped by the emerging use of supportive writing frames. Students can plan their making and evaluate their work objectively. Their graphic communication skills are usually well developed, and they sometimes model their ideas to help develop them before making. Students use a wide range of tools and processes safely. They develop an understanding of electronics and computer control and get experience with *ProDesktop* computer-aided design (CAD).

134. By Year 11, standards of work are above average and achievement is good in relation to their prior attainment. In food, students investigate multi-cultural diets and carry out Internet research. They understand quality control and risk areas in food hygiene. In graphic products, students can enhance their work with simple CAD and computer-aided manufacture (CAM). They use good drawing and graphic techniques to develop their equally good products. In some coursework there is a good mix of hand and ICT-generated work, but in general ICT is underused. In resistant materials, students spend too much time copying up details of techniques and processes, instead of research and developing design ideas. Industrial issues are covered well in food, and in manufacturing where students understand the differences between hand-made and mechanised roof-tile production having seen the processes on an industrial visit. Industrial liaison needs further development across the curriculum, in line with the newly acquired Technology College status.
135. There is no difference in the current attainment of boys and girls. Students with special educational needs make equally good progress as they are well supported by the department and learning support staff. Gifted and talented students are identified, and sometimes offered appropriate challenging opportunities. These need to be more widely developed through Years 7 to 11.
136. Teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9 are good overall and some are very good. Teachers manage students well and have very good subject knowledge and expertise. This means that progress in lessons is good and students readily acquire relevant skills, knowledge and understanding, some through skills-based tasks when appropriate. Teachers' expectations are usually high, but there is some variation across different units of work where expectations of the open-ended nature of the task vary. In consequence there are sometimes fewer opportunities for diverse design challenges than there should be, particularly in Year 9. In a very good lesson, students used a wide range of specialist processes and CAD/CAM to enhance the quality of their notelet holders, and develop their metal products by modelling them in card first. In another good lesson, students carried out product analysis to establish what is good or otherwise about existing products before developing their own 'batch production' gift bags using textiles.
137. In Years 10 and 11, teaching is good overall; one third seen was very good. Teachers encourage well-organised and presented design coursework, and this means that in general there is good development of graphic skills and presentation of design ideas. Subject knowledge and expertise are very good, and skilful questioning is used. This enables students to focus on issues relevant to examination requirements. In a very good lesson, they were given access to a range of commercial food products such as potato and pasta salads, and draw considered conclusions about quality and value for money, before proposing their own product development. They are aware of what they can learn, for instance about nutrition and proportions of ingredients, from the

product packaging. Good relationships encourage independent learning and research, and students contribute and share what is learnt.

138. Subject leadership and management are very good. The department works well together to deliver appropriate priorities for the development of the subject area. The recent well-managed refurbishment and emerging use of new technology (such as CAD/CAM and computer control) are starting to impact upon standards. ICT facilities are good but have yet to fully impact upon the quality of students' coursework, although there are good examples of its use. The department has very good procedures for assessment of work against National Curriculum levels and examination criteria, but it needs to develop good practice for all subjects so that monitoring leads to more regular written target setting. The analysis of student performance data is not yet used to its full potential. Attention to health and safety is generally good, and risk assessments are built into schemes of work. The curriculum is broad, covering the National Curriculum well including computer control, and includes a vocational option which is appropriate for some students. Students' attitudes and behaviour are at least good and often very good, and this contributes to their learning and good creative effort. They enjoy their time in the department.
139. Since the previous report, standards have improved significantly, and are no longer below average. The majority of portfolio coursework has improved. Students' designing ability is characterised by good graphic skills and increasing use of ICT and CAD. Homework is relevant and supports curriculum learning. The development plan is now very good, and responsibilities have been delegated. Teaching is good overall; expectations of students are high and as a result they are motivated. The department is in a very good position to further consolidate upon recent very good improvements.

GEOGRAPHY

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

Strengths

- Students with special educational needs make good progress because of the effective support they receive.
- Homework is set regularly and helps students to learn.
- Students in Years 10 and 11 are well prepared for their GCSE coursework.

Areas for improvement

- To ensure that teaching methods have sufficient variety to challenge and interest students.
- Insufficient use of assessment data to set targets and monitor students' progress.

140. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2002 indicated standards of attainment to be below average. GCSE results in 2002 were also below average. Girls' results are consistently better than those of boys. GCSE results have been below average for the past three years.
141. Standards of work seen, at the end of Year 9, are below average. As students entered the college with below average standards their achievement is satisfactory. Most students describe features and events well but only the higher attaining students explain these in depth. For example, higher attaining students explain clearly why Brazil encouraged the clearance of the Amazon rainforest. They link a variety of factors well, including more complex ideas such as the impact of the loan

repayments that Brazil faced. As a result these students are working at above average levels. Average attaining students' work is more descriptive but their progress is in line with expectations. Lower attaining students' written work is brief and lacks supportive details. However, the answers they give in lessons show better understanding. For example, they explain clearly the difference between weather and climate in discussion. Students with special educational needs make good progress because of the effective support of teachers and support assistants. However, their written work is often inaccurate in terms of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Higher attaining students use ICT well, on their own initiative, to enhance their presentation of a pamphlet on the tropical rainforests. Most students draw accurate graphs. Boys and girls progress at similar rates. The restricted time allocated to geography in Years 7, 8 and 9 is a factor in limiting the department from improving attainment.

142. The standard of work of students in Year 11 is below average. Boys are reaching higher standards than girls. Achievement, from their below average standards at the end of Year 9, is satisfactory. Most students' written work lacks the necessary depth and examples that would get them the highest grades at GCSE. For example, average attaining students' analysis of the impact of technology on employment in the United Kingdom deals only with the negative aspects and lacks illustrations. Lower attaining students are handicapped by below average literary skills in their ability to write at length. Their sketch maps are poorly drawn with little understanding of their purpose. Some of their work is incomplete. The good individual help that teachers and support staff provide for students with special educational needs enables them to make good progress. Students are well prepared for their coursework by their teachers. Higher attaining students' coursework shows good presentation skills. This is especially effective in the work presented by those who choose to use ICT. As a result they show good understanding of the complexities of the impact of the tourist industry on the Peak District.
143. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The best lessons include a variety of activities that maintain student interest and concentration. These include good questioning by the teacher, and discussion involving the students, which develops students' understanding of geographical issues. Learning is good in these lessons. However, there is an over-reliance on the use of worksheets, especially in Years 7, 8 and 9. These do not give enough opportunity for average attaining students in particular to develop their skills of analysis and independent writing in response to geographical questions. Homework is set regularly and is used well to enhance student learning. Teachers consistently clarify the meanings of words which helps students' understanding. Marking of students' work is inconsistent. Some comments give students good advice on how to improve the geographical content, others merely comment on presentation. The lack of comment does not help students to improve their attainment. Teachers do not give enough opportunities for average attaining students to reinforce their learning to improve their powers of recall. Teachers' subject knowledge is appropriate to the level at which they teach. They answer questions fully and, especially in lessons with Years 10 and 11, use their knowledge well to give good illustrations that enhances student learning. Most students' attitudes to geography are satisfactory. Generally they are interested and join in the activities enthusiastically. However, in some lessons this inhibits the learning of themselves and others.
144. The day-to-day management of the department is satisfactory. However, leadership for future development is weaker as there is no overall head of department. As a result there is only limited monitoring of teaching and learning. The planning of courses is good. A good emphasis is placed on supporting students' literary and

numerical skills. Good use has been made of links with local colleges to develop more suitable courses for Years 10 and 11 in order to improve attainment. Students' work is assessed well in Years 10 and 11. However, there is no common method for assessing the work of Years 7, 8 and 9 against National Curriculum levels. The use of assessment data to set targets and monitor students' progress throughout the department is undeveloped.

145. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. The attainment of boys has improved. However, there is little planned use of ICT to enhance all students' learning.

HISTORY

The overall provision in history is **good**.

Strengths

- Standards of work have improved, including recent GCSE examination results.
- The good teaching and learning result in sound achievement.
- The very good relationships between teachers, students and their peers aid progress.
- The improved teaching and learning methods are leading to higher standards in lessons.

Areas for improvement

- The teaching time provided in Years 7 to 9 is inadequate.
- Assessment procedures are not sufficiently rigorous to establish clear attainment targets.
- There are insufficient opportunities for the study of the local history and the use of ICT within the curriculum.

146. Recent GCSE results at A*-C grades have shown a significantly improved trend from well below to below the national average in 2002. The proportion of students attaining the highest A* or A grades is in line with the national average and all students entered attain an A*-G grade pass. When compared with other GCSE subjects within the college, history results have been below the average although they matched it in 2002.
147. Standards of work are below the national average by Year 9. Students' achievements in Years 7 to 9 are satisfactory. Students in Years 7 and 8 have higher entry standard and are making similar progress that if continued will be at or above the average by Year 9. However, standards would be higher if the teaching time in Years 7 to 9 was adequate. It is only two thirds of that provided for teaching the subject nationally and well below the minimum nationally recommended time. By the end of Year 9 students have a sound grounding in historical skills. Most have fairly good knowledge and understanding of the events and the main people of the periods studied. Documentary, pictorial and other sources are not used enough. Knowledge of chronology is suitably developed especially in Years 8 and 9. There is generally a good variety of study but more needs to be made of local and regional history with students given opportunities to visit and investigate sites. Students with special educational needs progress satisfactorily when provided with specialist support but not enough is provided.
148. Standards of work produced are below the national average at the end of Year 11. Achievement over Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory for most average and lower attainers but higher attainers show good achievement, as they are well motivated and challenged with appropriate work. Students in Year 10 are making good progress.

There is low motivation and reluctance to produce written work amongst some boys in Years 10 and 11 and this seriously affects their progress over time. By the end of Year 11 students have further developed their skills in using historical evidence and can analyse the reasons for and the results of events studied. For example, why Nazi beliefs were attractive to many Germans between 1920 and 1940 and how the suffragettes helped to win the vote for women in Britain. Coursework assignments for the GCSE examinations are of good quality but low motivation prevents some students, mainly boys, producing the work of which they are capable. More rigorous checking of deadlines for GCSE coursework and more examination test materials used in Year 10 would added to the current good provision of structured revision material.

149. Students' attitudes to learning are positive and many display a real interest and enjoyment in their studies. Most are attentive and work at a good pace, with many, particularly girls, showing a real pride in their work. Students have very good relationships with their teachers and students work harmoniously with their peers when undertaking paired or group work. This strength is not always used as much as it could be. Oral response by individuals, both boys and girls, is often good but rarely do more than a few students participate.
150. Teaching is good overall and there was some very good teaching in Years 8 and 9. Lessons are very well planned and underpinned by the teachers' detailed knowledge and understanding of the subject matter taught. In most lessons there are good opportunities for students to investigate situations and raise issues and historical questions for themselves. The best learning occurs in lessons that have a variety of practical activities that sustain and develop students' interest. When stimulus material, particularly film, video, computer, posters, pictures and other visual aids are used, learning is noticeably better. Where there is good dialogue between the teacher and students that extends the students' knowledge, there is greater understanding of the topic. Materials and teaching resources are of a very high quality and usually match the needs of students. Lessons develop historical enquiry and investigative skills well. These skills were shown in a Year 8 lesson using a video *PowerPoint* presentation of the trial of Charles 1 and a Year 9 lesson where students used ICT skills from a spreadsheet of census data for 1851 and 1871. Relationships are very productive and classroom management built on this trust is good. Learning is sound overall. It would be further improved if lesson aims were tested for the effectiveness of learning at the end of the lesson. More regular reinforcement and consolidation of learning, visually on the board, would help ensure that the lessons focus on points to be emphasised with the whole class. Literacy skills are well developed and numeracy skills are satisfactory. There is some very good teaching of ICT but a coherent programme of ICT skills linked to curriculum themes is needed. There is a good spiritual, moral, social and cultural focus within the curriculum.
151. The department is well led and competently managed. Documentation is thorough and curriculum planning imaginative. Strategic management is sound. Effective changes have been made in the teaching and learning practice, and the work of the department is suitably monitored. Assessment overall and day to day is satisfactory but there is need to develop student self-assessment by links to agreed targets for action. Accommodation is good. Resources are good overall with recently acquired very good *PowerPoint* whiteboard facilities. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection. There is very good capacity to meet the points raised in this report.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

Strengths

- Good teaching leads to students achieving well.
- Students make good progress because they are interested in the subject.

Areas for improvement

- The use of assessment information to monitor student progress is not yet fully developed.
- There is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning in order to share good practice between all the teachers.

152. Teacher assessment of student attainment at the end of Year 9 in 2002 indicated below average standards. No comparison can be made with national standards at GCSE as only a very small number of students took ICT examinations in 2002.
153. The standards of work in Year 9 are average. The achievement of most students is good as they entered the college with below average standards. There is no significant difference between the achievement of girls and boys. Particular improvement has taken place in the work of Year 9 students in recent months. The development of students' ICT skills to carry out an increasing range of complex tasks is good because the courses are well planned and students' skills are built up in sequence. Students in Year 7 are making particularly good progress as a result of the effective use of materials that are part of the national strategy to improve attainment in ICT. Higher attaining students' presentations show a good understanding of the needs of a specific audience in the development of their web sites. The web sites of gifted students in Year 9 are particularly impressive. Their evaluation of their sites is well above average and they use this well to further refine their presentations. Middle attaining students do not analyse their work in depth, as their skills of extended writing are limited. However, they understand how to use spreadsheets to calculate income for a college stationery shop. Lower attaining students use ICT well for presentations. However, their design skills are below average so that their presentations do not have sufficient quality. Most students' numerical skills are good when applied to ICT problems. This is especially evident in their good use of spreadsheets to graph data. Students with special educational needs make good progress as they are well supported by teachers and support staff.
154. Standards of work in Year 11 are below average. These students were entered for inappropriate General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) levels at the beginning of Year 9. This restricted the extent to which many students could be successful in examinations. The lack of teaching time for these courses and staffing changes also contributed to the limited progress made. Most students in Year 11 have improved their standards of their work well from what it was at the beginning of Year 10 because of the supportive teaching they now receive. As a result the achievement of these students is now good. Most students' folders of work for GNVQ contain detailed evidence of their good progress. For example, higher and middle attaining students have above average understanding of how to identify commands using the computer language used on web sites. Students use presentation software well to draw diagrams to illustrate their work on designing a computer system. They can produce straightforward descriptive reports on the advantages and disadvantages of computer hardware. The reports written by higher attaining students are more developed and analytical. For example, they include copies of what is seen on the computer screen that are well integrated into the text. Most students use the Internet well. They have a good awareness of its potential pitfalls and can, therefore, find information efficiently.

155. Teaching is good overall and students learn well as a result. Teachers set tasks that are clearly explained so that all students are included and able to make progress with their learning without confusion. Good demonstrations, using very good presentation technology, also make the tasks clear to the students. Students' skills and knowledge are built up in sequence because of the good planning by their teachers. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. As a result they respond well to student questions and give more detailed answers and tasks to those of higher attainment. All students, but especially those with special educational needs, learn well because of the very effective support from their teachers and support staff. However, in a minority of lessons some of the materials and tasks used with these students are too difficult for them to learn effectively. Students' understand basic ICT terminology because of the emphasis that their teachers put on this in their questioning. Generally teachers use appropriate techniques that make the students think. The answers are not provided for them. As a result most students are actively engaged in their learning. Teachers are very careful to clarify points and to ensure that all students understand. Lessons move at a good pace and contain a variety of activities that maintain student interest. Many lessons include good advice for students to improve their work against national standards. In some lessons there is not enough emphasis on evaluating skills that would enable students to reach the higher levels. Teachers manage students' behaviour well so that learning proceeds without interruption. Good opportunities for gifted and talented students to extend their learning are provided by the open-ended projects devised by the teachers. Marking is thorough and good specific points about ICT are given for students to improve. Appropriate homework is set regularly. Good opportunities are given for students to use ICT for this purpose, and to improve their ICT skills, outside lesson times. Students' take-up of this is very good.
156. Students have a good attitude towards ICT lessons; this greatly assists their learning. They like the subject and find it interesting so they work hard and behave well. Students are encouraged to work together and to help each other. This is a particular strength in students' social development.
157. The overall quality of leadership and management in the subject is good. The leadership of ICT is very good. In particular there is a very good vision for its future development as a means of improving student attainment throughout the college. Management is good. As a result the provision of ICT has improved markedly. Computer resources are good and there are good plans to improve them still further. Technical support is also good so that resources are invariably available for students to use. Good evaluation of the courses students follow has meant that those taken by students in Year 10 are now appropriate. As a result their standards are close to the national average and they are achieving well. The use of assessment information to monitor student progress across the college is not yet fully developed. The monitoring of teaching and learning is too informal and does not give enough opportunity for good practice to be shared between all the teachers.
158. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. National Curriculum requirements are met and students have ample opportunity to develop their ICT skills. The management of the subject is now more effective. The department has the capability to improve still further.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

The overall provision in modern languages is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- Students make satisfactory progress in lessons in German.
- Attainment in writing in Year 7 is average in both French and German.
- Assessment procedures are satisfactory.
- Resources are of good quality and accommodation is good.

Areas for improvement

- Standards attained in both French and German are too low.
- The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory and leads to significant underachievement in both languages.
- Most students' attitudes towards learning languages are negative.
- Poor behaviour in French lessons severely hampers students' progress.
- Assessment is not used effectively to ensure all students make appropriate progress in lessons.
- The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.

159. The modern foreign languages department has suffered in recent years from difficulties in staffing. This has taken its toll on standards which have been consistently lower than those of most other subjects in the college, and well below the national average. Currently, standards attained in both French and German by the end of Year 9 and Year 11 are well below average. In French they are very low. This represents significant underachievement in both languages. At the end of both Years 9 and 11, students have a reasonable idea of grammar rules in both French and German, and how to express their opinions and describe events in the past, present and future but are not confident applying them independently to communicate their ideas in writing or in speech. They have poor recall of previously learned language and are not confident in using it themselves without reference to notes, models or help from the teacher. Standards in writing are below average in both languages; students have a very limited range of vocabulary and structures. The lack of practice in speaking and listening leaves the majority of students hesitant and lacking in confidence; most respond very briefly to questioning, guess wildly at what they hear and read and are too dependent upon models in writing. Reading skills are stronger but still below average. Some higher attaining students are able to work out how to express their ideas in detail but most are not confident linguists in either language. In French in particular, most students lack secure knowledge of basic vocabulary and structures. Progress is too slow.
160. Over the past four years the proportion of students attaining A*-C grades at GCSE has declined sharply in both French and German. In German they slipped from above average in 2000 to well below average in 2002, and in French from average in 1998 to very low in 2001. In teacher assessments in 2002 the proportion of students achieving level 5 and above was very low compared to the national average. Work seen during the inspection confirmed this. All students entered for examination in 2002 gained a grade but the majority fell short of their predicted performance by at least one grade at GCSE.
161. Students' attitudes towards language learning are negative. In German, students have satisfactory relationships with their teacher, are well behaved and are concerned to do well. Most students settle quickly, listen attentively and, when given the chance, work sensibly in pairs. However, in French there are often instances of poor behaviour which adversely affect both the progress of students involved and that of others. It is usually the higher attaining students who contribute to class oral work but this is not always the case; a significant number show little interest in activities in French, fail to complete class or homework tasks and are intent upon disrupting lessons. However,

in both languages when students find tasks too difficult or too easy or they are not directly involved in activities they lose interest and fail to complete tasks.

162. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall. Although progress in most individual lessons is satisfactory, teaching overall is unsatisfactory because expectations are too low and individual needs are not adequately addressed. Long-term lesson planning and the methods employed do not ensure all students achieve as well as they should and standards achieved are too low.
163. In German, there is good management and control, resulting in a good learning atmosphere in lessons; students settle quickly, listen attentively and are willing to participate in activities. However, in some lessons, particularly in French, disruptive behaviour is not checked quickly enough or effectively enough and the progress of all students is affected. Teachers have an excellent command of the languages they teach and good subject knowledge. In the more effective lessons they use this well to provide students with excellent role models and develop students' listening skills effectively. Activities are generally well sequenced and presentations are clear, using flashcards and the board. For example, in a Year 8 German lesson students rapidly understood the effect of the dative case on prepositions because of a clear explanation backed up by examples on the board. In French, students rapidly understood new language to describe part-time jobs because of the effective use of visual cues. However, in too many lessons activities lack focus, steps in learning are missed and students are not given enough opportunity to practise new language to feel confident and build effectively on previous learning. In German, explanations are sometimes unclear because they are done orally without reference to specific examples or activities are difficult to follow because they rely too heavily on all students being able to follow an activity in the textbook. Lower attaining students with special educational needs are not supported well enough to enable them to succeed and higher attaining students are not always sufficiently challenged. In French, in particular, students are left too much to their own devices to progress beyond single words and set phrases. For example, in a Year 11 lesson, students found difficulty describing the details required to report lost property because although they were given the names of items that may be lost and the structure to report loss, it was assumed they remembered how to describe place, time and physical details such as colour and material. As a result they were ill prepared for the task and many did not attempt it at all. Students make the best progress when they are given the opportunity to work informally in pairs and the teacher is able to monitor their progress and give help, for example in a Year 8 French lesson where students were successful in giving directions to each other and in a Year 9 German lesson where they were practising saying what was wrong.
164. Opportunities are frequently missed to develop listening and reading skills by, for example, asking students to predict what they are going to hear or read and afterwards highlighting how the answers were arrived at. As a result these activities become tests, the opportunity for students to develop their skills is lost and too many students experience failure rather than success in language learning. A proportion of students of all abilities are determined to succeed and use their initiative to do so; however, the teacher does not always plan this. There are some signs of improvement in Year 7 where the positive impact of the new course materials can be seen in students' standard of writing, which is close to average.
165. The leadership and management of the department are unsatisfactory overall. There has been unsatisfactory improvement since the previous report, there is no clear vision of the way forward and standards have declined sharply in both languages.

Teachers work independently of one another and the steps taken to evaluate and develop effective teaching strategies and raise standards, in particular to raise the attainment of boys, have been largely ineffective. Department policies are clear but they are not consistently applied. Course materials are appropriate and provide students with a good foundation in both languages in reading and writing skills and accommodation is good. Schemes of work indicate a good variety of activities and an appropriate range of learning opportunities. However, these are not implemented effectively in teaching. Procedures for assessing students' progress are satisfactory, based on commercial materials, and their progress is monitored using data provided for each student. However, teachers do not use this information effectively to meet students' needs or plan for their progress in lessons. Urgent action is required if the department is to be successful in the future.

MUSIC

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

Strengths

- Very good teaching results in students learning very well.
- The leadership and management of the department are very good.
- The very good contribution to students' personal development is the result of opportunities provided in lessons and in extra-curricular activities.
- Students show very good attitudes to learning and are very well behaved in lessons.
- The very good range of instrumental and ICT resources enables students to develop their musical learning effectively.

Areas for improvement

- The quality of accommodation is unsatisfactory.
- Learning resources in the resource centre are inadequate to support the music curriculum.

166. Overall, the standard of students' attainment in music is average and improving. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and is the result of very good teaching and very effective leadership and management. The department has met in full the requirements of the previous inspection: to provide the full National Curriculum programme of study in Years 7 to 9 and improve the quality of teaching.
167. The teacher assessments for 2002 show that, by the end of Year 9, the attainment of students is above the national average. However, these results are unreliable because national exemplification materials were not available in the college to support standardisation. Most students enter the college with musical skills which are well below average but by the end of Year 9 standards are in line with national expectations – reflecting very good achievement. Year 9 students compose successful 'rap' songs and perform them with an awareness of their own contribution to the group. Students can create appropriate samba rhythm patterns and know how to record and save them using the multi-track sequencers on the keyboards. Higher attaining students can create effective compositions in several layers and use suitable computer software to notate their pieces.
168. Too few students took GCSE in 2002 to make comparisons with national figures valid and comparisons with previous years must be treated with caution because of the small numbers involved. However, the proportion of students achieving the higher grades A*-C greatly improved in 2002. There is no GCSE music group in the current Year 11 but two students are studying the course in their own time. Students in Year

10 have well-developed ensemble skills and they can use their knowledge and understanding of musical elements effectively when comparing listening extracts.

169. The quality of teaching is very good overall and results in students learning very well. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. The teacher makes very good use of demonstration by singing, by playing an instrument or by using ICT, and this leads to students gaining a very clear understanding of a musical concept or of what they have to do and how. In a Year 9 lesson the teacher had prepared on keyboard a backing track made up of several different samba rhythms which was played to students. As a result the students clearly understood what was expected of them and how to structure their own pieces. High expectations, very good management of students, lively pace and enthusiasm result in students showing very good attitudes, behaving very well and enjoying their learning. All students are valued for their individual contributions to discussion or a performance, which means there are very good relationships between the teacher and the students. Lessons are very well planned with varied musical activities that enable all students, including those with special educational needs, to develop their musical skills and understanding very effectively. Questioning techniques are used very effectively and result in students developing their thinking skills by applying previous musical knowledge or understanding to new learning. In Years 7 to 9, routines that have been established at the beginning of each lesson are contributing to the development of students' numeracy skills very well. The teacher makes appropriate use of a range of resources, including the expertise of other musicians, which in a Year 8 lesson led to students gaining a very good understanding of British folk music.
170. The leadership and management of the department are very good. The head of department has a very clear vision for developing the department and a strong commitment to improvement. Teaching and learning are effectively monitored, including instrumental lessons. Resources, including ICT, are very good overall, but those in the learning resource centre are inadequate to support the music curriculum. The music accommodation is unsatisfactory because there are insufficient spaces for group work and instrumental lessons, and the sound-proofing is poor. Since the previous inspection there has been a significant increase in the opportunities for students to take part in musical activities outside lessons. Students can learn to sing and to play a wide range of instruments. They can also take part in a range of activities, including samba band, orchestra, concert band and workshops on African music and Gospel singing. Students have opportunities to perform in the school pantomime, at achievement evenings, open evenings, assemblies and Brigg Festival. All these make a significant contribution to the personal development of students as well as their musical development. Overall, improvement since the previous inspection is very good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

Strengths

- In 2002 the proportion of students attaining A*-C grade passes was above the national average.
- Good quality teaching results in effective learning by all groups of students.
- The majority of students behave well; their positive attitudes promote their learning.
- The very good extra-curricular provision extends and enriches students' personal development.

Areas for improvement

- There are insufficient opportunities in practical lessons for students to be involved in peer evaluation and the analysis of performance.
- The moderation of students' performances needs to improve to ensure greater accuracy of levels at the end of Year 9.

171. GCSE physical education is a popular option for students. Though the proportion of students attaining A*-C grade passes declined after the last inspection, results in 2002 were above the national average in this respect and amongst the best in the college. Small numbers of girls took the course thus it is not possible to comment realistically on any differences between the attainment of boys and girls. No practical lessons were seen in Year 11 but a scrutiny of a sample of students' exercise books showed they are developing good knowledge and understanding of the relationship between health, fitness and physical activity. In practical lessons seen, Year 10 students are developing well their skills and techniques of badminton, for example variety of stroke play in singles games. A scrutiny of a sample of their exercise books showed they are developing well their knowledge and understanding of anatomy, physiology and theories of skills' development.
172. In lessons seen, standards are average by the end of Year 9; most students achieve well. In basketball, for example, students use a range of different passes but some are still not moving into the passes to provide further momentum and help accuracy. The more physically capable apply the basic skills and techniques well in games but accuracy of shooting is an area for development for many. In hockey, the more physically capable boys use the flick pass well to compensate for the long grass. The use of the block tackle is secure for both boys and girls but some students are not yet using the reverse stick very well. Students continue to refine their skills and techniques throughout Years 10 and 11. By the end of Year 11, standards in lessons seen are average; most students achieve well. In association football, boys have a secure range of individual skills. The more physically capable, for example, use effectively weighted passes to ensure accuracy over distance. A lack of effective control prior to shooting by the less physically capable impairs accuracy. Though the more physically capable read the game well, communication skills are lacking for many. In their health-related fitness lessons, most girls have a secure understanding of the effects of exercise on their bodies and are aware of their own training zones.
173. Across all years students have a secure grasp of the principles and procedures from warm-up activity and the importance of practice to improve skills and techniques. Students with special educational needs are well supported and integrated and make good progress. Physically talented students make good progress in lessons and are provided with further opportunities through extra-curricular activities and by taking part in college teams. As a result of this, ten individuals have achieved district and/or county representative honours and two have run at national level; a further two are national golfers.
174. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and results in good progress by all students. Lessons are well planned and provide for a variety of structured and progressive activities that help ensure they remain motivated. Consistent routines at the start of lessons set a positive tone and are indicative of teachers' high expectations in terms of discipline and behaviour. Prompt starts to lessons result in all being quickly involved. Students are made aware of what is expected of them because the teachers generally use the whiteboards effectively to make clear what learning objectives are. There could, though, be more use of the whiteboard to

highlight the key terminology being used, thus supporting students' literacy development further.

175. The great majority of students' attitudes and behaviour are good. This helps enhance further the quality of the learning atmosphere; consequently all groups of students are enabled to make progress. They work well together and show clear respect for the capabilities of one another whilst involved in planning and performing. There are, though, occasions when students should be encouraged more to observe the good practice of other pairs or small groups. In a Year 9 basketball lesson and a Year 10 GCSE badminton lesson, for example, this would have helped them to adapt, refine and improve their own performance even further. Effective use of questioning during activities enables teachers to gauge the extent of students' learning as well as enhancing their speaking and listening skills. Effective use is also made of ICT to support students' learning. In a Year 11 health-related fitness lesson, for example, students used heart-rate monitors as a basis for helping them understand the effects of exercise on the body. There is some very good use of student groupings; this ensures the whole ability range is challenged and involved and is indicative of teachers' good classroom management skills. Students are then made aware of their capabilities because teachers circulate well, offering constructive praise and criticism.
176. The few non-participants in practical lessons, however, are not always as fully involved as they should be. For example, they are not drawn into whole group introductions nor encouraged to observe the breakdown and demonstration of skills by the teachers. Homework is set for GCSE groups and extends students' learning. Work is marked consistently but, sometimes, comments are not always followed up about missing work. At the end of lessons, students are asked questions to help them consolidate their learning. On occasion, though, the teacher provides all the evaluation as to what students have learned rather than also asking for their views.
177. Schemes of work are fully in place for Years 7 to 9 to help teachers plan their lessons. In Years 10 and 11, however, they do not yet all fully reflect the requirements of the National Curriculum for the general physical education course. A very good range of extra-curricular provision provides good opportunities for students to extend their learning and contributes well to their personal development. These activities include matches against other schools, tournaments and recreational activities. The new physical education assessment levels have been introduced and students are made well aware of what they need to do to attain these. The accuracy of these in the past is questionable because of lack of formal moderation procedures. The quality and range of accommodation are very good and allow for a good range of games and activities to be taught throughout the year. The department was without a head of department for a term, until the appointment of a new one in January. Leadership and management are now good. The new head of department has a clear vision for improvement of provision and the department has the capacity to succeed in this respect. Improvement since the previous inspection has been sound.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

Strengths

- The majority of teaching is excellent.
- A GCSE short course has been introduced in Year 10.

- The subject makes a major contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students.
- An emphasis on experiential activities, and strong links with the creative and expressive arts, enhance students' learning.
- The department benefits from inspirational leadership.

Areas for improvement

- There is insufficient time allocation for the subject, particularly in Years 10 and 11.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching need further development.

178. No students have been entered for either the short or full course for religious education for some years. The current Year 10 is being entered for the short course, which represents a key development for the college. Standards being achieved by these students are above average; however, the time allocation is not sufficient to deliver elements of the syllabus in depth. Standards seen in Year 11 are good.
179. Overall, standards are well above average. In lessons and work seen by Year 9, students are able to explore questions of suffering, meaning and purpose through a study of Buddhism, and are able to understand and explain the practice of meditation as a means of diminishing craving. Students are able to apply religious concepts to their own lives, and there is an excellent balance between reflection and response, and knowledge and understanding, as expressed in the North Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus. In Year 8, students achieve a very good standard in their understanding of the importance of celebrations, for example the Passover. Their understanding of the significance of tradition reflects the progress of students' knowledge of Judaism. They are also able to consider the significance of passing on their own wisdom to future generations. In written work seen, Year 8 students are making very good progress in the development of skills; for example, they are using key questions to analyse religious founders and their teachings. Standards in Year 10 are good, and in work on marriage and divorce, students are able to explain Christian viewpoints and express their own views.
180. The overall quality of teaching is very good. It is never less than satisfactory, with the majority of lessons being very good or excellent. In many lessons, the subject knowledge of the teacher has a very positive impact on learning. Learning is enhanced by appropriate anecdotes, based on world-wide experiences, particularly enabling students to understand religious and cultural beliefs and practices, for example in a Year 9 lesson on Judaism. In all years, students are gaining experiences of what it means to be a person of faith. In line with the flexibility of the North Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus, the department chooses to use an experiential approach. These teaching opportunities are carefully planned and are a strength of the department. In Year 11, there are excellent links made with ICT, where teaching about mosques and their characteristics in Islam, is aided by the use of the Internet.
181. Students' learning is of a very good standard and is frequently enriched by first-hand experiences, which include an emphasis on creativity. Students in Year 9 participate in a collaborative production between religious education and expressive arts on the 'Ramayana', with a future production planned on a theme of 'Journeys'. Other excellent opportunities include a visit to Beverley Minster and the re-creation of the inside of a Coptic Church, painted by Year 9 students. The regular use of thinking skills in Year 9, and other creative stimulus such as body sculpture in Year 7, all result in a very good level of student involvement in their own learning. Homework is used effectively to reinforce learning as seen in Year 9, in the creation of mandalas. Excellent examples of opportunities for spiritual development are seen in Year 9,

through the use of a guided fantasy, in the context of learning about Buddhism. In Year 7, they are seen in the use of body sculpture, in the context of empathising with the father and his sons in 'The Prodigal Son'. In Year 7, good challenge is provided for higher attainers in their understanding of the Christian concept of God. Students with special educational needs are making very good progress. They are supported by key vocabulary lists and, as seen in Year 11, with differentiated explanations of tasks, for a project on mosques, using ICT.

182. The attitudes and behaviour of students in all years are very good. Students are very well motivated and enthusiastic and enjoy the subject. In Years 7 to 11, the quality of the relationships between staff and students contributes significantly to the progress made in lessons. This means that experiential techniques take place in an atmosphere of mutual trust. This has a direct impact on the quality of reflective writing, as seen in Year 9. The presentation of the main teaching area also contributes greatly to the learning of students, in that it reflects the value given to students' creativity.
183. The subject benefits from inspirational leadership and there are clearly identified short and long-term aims for the department. These include the introduction of a GCSE full course, meeting the statutory requirements for religious education in the sixth form, and assessment. There are excellent medium and short-term plans; a key stage plan would help to develop long-term planning. Monitoring and evaluation of the subject have been identified by the college and the department as a short-term goal, and assessment, using the eight-level scale, is being introduced in line with locally agreed guidelines. These aspects of management indicate the rapid progress being made by the department. Enthusiasm, commitment and excellent subject knowledge characterise the department, and these factors, coupled with excellent relationships between teachers and students, result in the very good and improving standards.
184. There have been major improvements since the previous inspection. The status of religious education has improved amongst the students and parents. Standards in Years 7 to 11 have improved and students are making very good progress. The overall quality of teaching has improved to very good; teaching now provides students with a variety of learning styles, with a focus on experiential learning. Relationships with students have improved and religious education now makes a major contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. Resources have been reviewed and updated, although more are still needed to support the new GCSE short course. There is a growing demand by the students and parents for a full GCSE option. However, the college still does not meet the statutory requirements to provide religious education in the sixth form.

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

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

The table below shows entry and performance information for courses completed in 2002.

GCE AS level courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	BSFC	Vale
Art and design	6	66.7	*	16.7	*	1.5	1.0
Biology	16	43.8		25.0		1.5	1.17
Business studies	4	100.0		75.0		3.5	2.0
Chemistry	5	100.0		60.0		3.6	4.0
Drama	6	83.3		0.0		1.67	1.6
English literature	18	94.4		16.7		2.28	1.43
French	1	100.0		100.0		5.0	
Geography	6	83.3		33.3		2.67	1.5
German	2	100.0		100.0		5.0	
History	10	100.0		30.0		3.2	3.0
Mathematics	11	81.8		63.6		2.8	1.67
Music	2	100.0		0.0		2.0	
Physical education	8	87.5		0.0		1.13	1.5
Physics	5	60.0		40.0		2.2	1.67
Psychology	11	45.5		9.1		1.09	0

*No national data is available.

GCE A level and AVCE courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	BSFC	Vale
Art and design	3	100.0	*	33.3	*	7.3	6.0
Biology	16	93.8		31.3		5.25	3.5
Business studies	7	100.0		28.6		6.0	4.0
Chemistry	4	100.0		25.0		5.5	
Drama	5	100.0		20.0		5.6	5.6
English literature	18	100.0		44.4		6.67	5.2

French	5	100.0		40.0		6.8	
Further mathematics	2	100.0		50.0		7.0	4.0
General studies	14	100.0		50.0		6.29	4.67
Geography	9	100.0		44.4		5.56	4.0
German	4	100.0		0.0		5.3	
History	9	100.0		11.1		5.56	6.0
Mathematics	12	100.0		50.0		6.5	10.0
Music	1	100.0		0.0		2.0	
Physical education	9	77.8		0.0		2.67	2.0
Physics	9	88.9		55.6		6.67	6.0
Psychology	11	45.5		0.0		1.8	1.33
Technology	5	100.0		20.0		4.0	4.0
Art VCE	14	100.0		28.6		6.14	5.0
Business VCE	8	100.0		12.5		5.0	3.0
Health and Social Care VCE	10	100.0		40.0		6.0	

*No national data is available.

SUBJECTS AND COURSES GROUPED IN CURRICULUM AREAS

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCES

185. The college offers courses in biology at AS and A2 levels and chemistry at A2 level. Courses in other science subjects are available to students at Brigg Sixth Form College, but are managed by the other consortium partner. Biology was fully inspected and chemistry was sampled.

Biology

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

Strengths

- Students build well on their existing knowledge because previous learning is reviewed before moving on.
- Teachers encourage students to think through problems for themselves; this leads to good understanding.

Area for improvement

- Teachers do not always match work closely enough to the full range of students' prior attainment.

186. Four Vale of Ancholme students were entered for biology at A2 level in 2002. Three gained passes in the B to E grade range, while the fourth failed to gain an A2 grade. At AS level, two students were entered; both passed, gaining A and D grades. Students did about as well as expected at both levels. Numbers are too small to make meaningful comparisons with national averages or with performances in previous years.
187. Students currently in Year 13 reach standards that are above the average nationally for A2 level. They achieve well in their lessons because teachers ensure that previous work has been thoroughly understood before building on it. In one lesson, the teacher reviewed students' existing knowledge about photosynthesis before helping them learn the biochemical pathways involved. Students found the work difficult, but they quickly gained confidence because the teacher provided tips to help them remember key points.
188. At AS level, standards reached by students currently in Year 12 are above average. Students achieve well because teachers encourage them to think through their ideas for themselves. The teacher provided students with graphs showing variation in photosynthesis rates as external conditions change; students quickly interpreted these and found that rates do not increase indefinitely, for example with increasing temperature. However, students' wide-ranging learning needs at AS level are not always fully addressed and a few could achieve more than they do.
189. Teaching and learning in biology are good. Lessons are well structured with appropriate 'help' sheets to focus students' attention on key learning points. This was the case when learning about enzyme action and the control of gastric juices during digestion; students wasted no time drawing diagrams that they already knew, but concentrated on learning the processes. Students appreciate opportunities to make their own input to lessons during revision sessions or through opportunities to learn from each other during paired discussion. Work is marked thoroughly; where appropriate, detailed annotations show students how to improve. All participate in

fieldwork at a residential centre in Yorkshire where they are helped to carry out an original piece of research. Students produce good quality reports, for example speculating about the effect of temperature and turbidity on the results of investigations into species found in different parts of a fast-flowing river.

190. Students say that they enjoy biology, particularly fieldwork and experimental work. Relationships are good and students feel that teachers are approachable when they need help. In particular, they appreciate teachers' willingness to give up time to help individuals or in running revision sessions outside lessons.
191. The subject is well led and managed. Co-operation in providing courses between the two consortium partners is good. Students have clear target grades and know what they need to do to achieve them.
192. Biology was not specifically mentioned in the last report, but teaching was good in sixth form science subjects and students mostly made good progress. Teaching and learning are similar now. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

Chemistry

193. In 2002, one Vale of Ancholme student was entered for chemistry at AS level, gaining a B grade. There were no entries at A2 level. Teaching and learning were satisfactory in the Year 13 lesson sampled and standards were above average. Students understood why some metals are better catalysts than others and could suggest reasons why powdered catalysts are frequently used in industrial processes.

Mathematics

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

Strengths

- Students have very positive attitudes and work well with their teachers.
- The overall quality of teaching is good.

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient opportunities for students to be involved in the discussion and elaboration of ideas.
- The co-ordination of development issues within the consortium.

194. AS modules are taught at the other consortium college while A level modules are shared between teachers at both schools. Standards are variable, and examination results of Vale students in recent years show more high grades and ungraded results than average grades. However, the discernible rising trend needs to be treated with caution because of the small numbers involved. The average points score is broadly in line with the national average.
195. Overall, standards of work seen during the inspection were average. Year 12 students could calculate standard deviations from discrete data sets but few could distinguish binomial from geometric distributions without help, and the work in files was often poorly organised, lacking the coherence needed for effective revision. In Year 13, the rules of integration were applied with confidence and agility to solving problems involving differential equations, and accurate force diagrams were drawn to solve conical pendulum problems using Newton's Law. Generally students work hard, and

most now make good progress in the sixth form, particularly those with higher standards of attainment on entry.

196. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. The well-qualified staff design good quality lesson plans with clear objectives, and they use question and answer techniques purposefully. The brisk pace and high level of challenge that distinguishes most lessons suit higher attaining students best; occasionally there are insufficient opportunities for students to discuss, apply and clarify their understanding. For example, in a Year 12 statistics lesson, some students had difficulty in understanding the difference between mutually exclusive and independent events because the concept was not elaborated enough. In the best lessons, however, teaching methods are adapted to different learning needs and students learn to use their initiative. For example, in a Year 13 lesson on the applications of calculus, the teacher skilfully used the interactive whiteboard to develop ideas to ensure all students grasped the solution to a complex problem. As a result, the students' confidence grew as the problems associated with their understanding were resolved collaboratively.
197. Students appreciate the support and guidance they receive when in difficulty. Their progress is monitored effectively. A real strength of the provision is the way in which the course modules are matched to the interests of the students.
198. Overall, the quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Examination results have improved since the previous inspection. However, there is insufficient co-ordination of the subject within the consortium beyond the teaching aspects. In particular, assessment data is not used strategically to identify priorities in curriculum planning.

ENGINEERING, DESIGN AND MANUFACTURING

Product design

199. One product design lesson was seen in Year 12; there are no Year 13 students. The standard of work seen was average overall. Most students achieve in line with their prior attainment at GCSE, but some project coursework folders are behind where they should be at this stage in their course. Standards of practical project work can vary, but are predominantly good. Some students make good use of *ProDesktop* CAD to develop designs, while others make little use of ICT in their folio work. Students illustrate their designs with a good quality of sketching and graphics, and design pages are full of ideas that are well developed and explained.
200. In the lesson seen in Year 12, teaching and learning were good. Subject knowledge and expertise are very good, and therefore widely varying individual needs are well catered for. Teachers provide good resources and encourage maximum use of time in lessons, but more regular written target setting, particularly about project management, is necessary. Teachers' expectations are high and this means that the project coursework completed is well organised. A wide range of materials and facilities is provided and utilised in product development.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

Art and design

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

Strengths

- Standards achieved are high.
- There is a good range of examination courses offered.
- Teaching is good and leads to students achieving well.
- ICT is effectively used for research purposes.

Area for improvement

- The accommodation provision is inadequate for students to work independently.

201. Standards in 'A' level have been above average over the past three years with all students gaining a pass grade. Approximately one third of the students gained A or B grades. Students' results in AS level have also been above the national average over the past three years. All students gained a pass grade with one third gaining A or B grades in 2002. All students on the Advanced Vocational course gained a pass. Retention rates are high. Only three students dropped the subject in the past two years. All these results represent good achievement.
202. There is only one student taking the A2 level course this year. From the work seen the standard is above average. Research work is good and coursework is done in good depth and detail. There is very good dramatic work in pen and ink.
203. Standards in AS level are also high. All students show good research skills and sketch their ideas well. They show good knowledge and understanding of art and can support their opinions logically. They have good skills in drawing and painting. The majority use tone and texture effectively. Some of this work is done with exquisite delicacy.
204. Year 12 and Year 13 students on the Advanced Vocational course are taught together. Some of these students are taking the single unit that is the equivalent of one A level and others are studying for the two units that are equivalent to two A levels. Generally standards are above average. Students show good knowledge and understanding of how the context in which artists work has an impact on their ideas. Students make astute comments when evaluating the work of a range of modern artists for the first time. The drawings and paintings of students are of a high quality. They show good imagination and understanding of composition, and use paint and other media very effectively. All students make good progress and develop their ideas in highly individual ways.
205. Teaching and learning are good. Students are given good guidance on how to research in order to gain inspiration for their own work. There is a very good use of *PowerPoint* presentations in teaching. This enables the students and teacher to evaluate the work of artists together and this leads to a greater depth of analysis. Students are interested in the subject and work hard.
206. A considerable amount of work has to be done outside of lessons. However, the students are not given the full syllabus at the start of the course and are therefore not able to use their spare time as efficiently and effectively as possible. There is no study space exclusively for sixth form students when they are working independently; this limits the opportunities for extended studies.
207. The subject makes a good contribution to student's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All these aspects are considered in the work of artists.

208. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Standards of work produced have improved. The vocational course is now well developed and is successful. ICT is now used well by the students.

HUMANITIES

History

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

Strengths

- The joint provision provides viable teaching groups in Years 12 and 13.
- Good relationships have been established with students and most have a committed attitude to their work.
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge and produce well-structured lessons.

Areas for improvement

- A clearer overall responsibility for the co-ordination and monitoring of students' progress on both courses is needed.
- A study skills programme is for the beginning of the Year 12.

209. Students from the college currently study only on the AS course. Student performance in GCE A level examinations over the past three years has varied from above to below the national average. Few students attain the higher A or B grades but the rate is above the national average. The subject average point scores, while below the national average, are close to the school average. The number of students completing the A level course is small and makes national comparisons somewhat unreliable. Of nine students studying on the AS level course in 2001 only one was a Vale student, who performed above the national average. There were no Vale students in the 2002 group. Results show most students achieved in line with expectation when compared with standards achieved at GCSE. The retention rates are well above the national average on both the AS and A level courses.
210. Standards of work seen confirm examination results and show attainment at the end of Year 12 and 13 to be broadly in line with the national average. Most students achieve satisfactorily on the AS and A level courses. Some students do, however, make good progress in certain elements of the courses. Students have a good subject introduction to the AS course but would gain from more detailed information on the overall syllabus and a study skills programme early in Year 12. Students obtain a very strong knowledge base and generally have a sound understanding of the topics studied. Most students in Year 12 show a satisfactory level of analytical skills and use historical source materials quite well as supportive evidence. They make at least sound progress in lessons. In lesson and short test answers sampled it was clear that some students in Year 12 need much more practice in structuring essays, in assembling researched material in a focused way and in applying a wider spectrum of evidence to the questions posed. While a few read more widely around the subject, many rely too much on course texts and notes. In Year 13 there is further development of critical analyses of historical sources and the best students evaluate a range of evidence effectively to produce well-balanced and convincing arguments. However, for others the level of evaluation and syntheses is underdeveloped. Students show good standards in the application of key skills.
211. Most students' attitude to their studies is good; they show interest and work well. However, a minority do not prepare themselves well enough for lessons and

assignments are not always completed to meet course deadlines. Relationships between students and teachers and between themselves are constructive and provide the basis for productive learning. Students receive good guidance and support from their teacher but rely too heavily on him. Students expressed a high level of satisfaction with the AS course, the support given by teachers and the opportunity to study with other students in the consortium.

212. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall although there was good practice observed in an AS lesson where students debated the motion that “Peel was merely a self-serving opportunist”. Strengths of the teaching are the very secure subject knowledge of the teacher, good organisation and lessons that have a clear structure and are carefully planned and prepared. Learning benefits from a skilful questioning technique that extends students’ knowledge and understanding of topics taught, such as the nature of the German Constitution of 1871. In lessons students are given opportunities to contribute to discussion and develop their own ideas but some students, particularly on the A level course, do not respond well enough, often due to a lack of confidence. There is need for students to take more responsibility for their own learning; they rely too heavily on the teacher in some classes. Lessons would gain from the use of more visual materials and a broader range of teaching methods to add variety and consolidate learning. More student-based investigatory work and historical enquiry would help to further develop self-learning skills.
213. The courses are satisfactorily managed. The subject has a clear sense of direction and the joint provision is good. The consortium arrangement allows for viable teaching groups and extends the variety of teaching styles offered to students, which they appreciate. Courses are well planned. While both partners work together co-operatively the teachers who teach that element of the course manage the units and part-units. There is no overall co-ordinator formally identified for either the AS or the A level course so there is no one with the responsibility for the overview of the course and students’ performance and progress; this situation is unsatisfactory. Resources are generally good; ICT facilities to support the course and students’ independent learning are very good. Assessment, including day-to-day marking, is generally sound. Students are given useful advice on how to improve their work further but the work needs grading and targets set in line with AS and A level grades.

ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

English

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

Strengths

- In the many very good lessons there is a brisk pace, students are clearly motivated and a large amount of work is completed.
- The achievement of students whose first language is not English is very good.
- The very good leadership of the subject provides a clear vision for staff and students that reflects the college’s aims.

Area for improvement

- A few lessons are not as well paced and questions are not sufficiently probing.

214. English literature is offered at AS and A level.

215. Results in the 2001 GCE level English literature examinations indicate standards that were broadly in line with the national average. The small numbers of students are insufficient to make a comparison. Results in 2002 are similar to those in 2001. Results in AS examinations appear to continue the trend.
216. Students' attainment is average in both Year 12 and Year 13. This represents a very good level of achievement because attainment on entry was well below average. Students who are average attainers and those who are not native English speakers make the same very good progress as all other students because their needs are recognised and acted upon. All students have a good knowledge and understanding of their work and enjoy the subject. Their oral skills are good in classroom discussion and only falter when the teacher's questions are misunderstood and there is insufficient time for reflection. Students make valid and cogent observations and use technical vocabulary in their writing because teaching stresses skills in reading and writing. Extended writing is a strong feature of the students' work and their independent research skills are well developed. This is because students are expected to prepare texts for lessons and to research references. They read widely and choose challenging texts. Students sustain textual analysis because of close examination of the set texts in lessons. All students make good use of ICT to aid the presentation and drafting of their work.
217. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and outstanding in some lessons. In the very best lessons there is a brisk pace, students are clearly motivated and a large amount of work is completed. This is because of the teacher's high expectations, challenge and well-planned lessons to draw on students' views and contributions. Students enjoy their work with each other and their teacher in an atmosphere of achievement and respect. In an excellent Year 12 lesson analysing romantic poetry, students spoke confidently and accurately on contemporary attitudes to romantic love. This was just one aspect of a lesson that combined vigorous and rigorous teaching to further the learning of the students. A very good lesson in Year 13 on Keats's poetry was very well prepared using a methodical approach to ensure that students covered all aspects of the syllabus requirements. The teacher's and students' dramatic rendering of the poems brought to life the theme and structure of the poems and deepened students' understanding. The teacher's requirements for students to develop learning further to find links between the poems highlighted Keats's inspired use of language and illuminated the writer's context. High expectations created an undergraduate atmosphere and an intellectual response from the students. In a good lesson, students learnt less because of a more pedestrian pace and less skilful probing of students' knowledge. The teacher's questions were above the students' heads and so students' responses were short. The department makes very good use of assessment data for curriculum planning hence the introduction of new schemes of work that are targeted at individuals. Further development of schemes of work is required to cover all aspects of the course and to ensure consistency. The study of historical and multi-cultural texts deepens students' understanding of literature and their responsibilities as citizens. Sensitive planning of lessons ensures that students are given the opportunity to air their views in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Very good relationships are evident and students respond positively to their teacher and each other so producing very effective learning.
218. The very strong leadership of the department provides a clear vision for staff and students that reflects the college's aims. Teachers are mutually supportive and respect each other and the students. Teachers share the preparation of schemes of work, which encourages equality for the students, and the development of staff. A mutual observation of lessons is developing teaching, learning styles and classroom

management and maximising the learning of students. Teachers are aware of the particular needs of students whose first language is not English and plan work accordingly.