

INSPECTION REPORT

**ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND
TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE**

Wood Lane, Dagenham

LEA area: Barking and Dagenham

Unique reference number: 101247

Headteacher: Mr D Smith

Reporting inspector: Terence Parish
15465

Dates of inspection: 31 March – 4 April 2003

Inspection number: 251012

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Comprehensive

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 11 to 18 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Terling Road
Wood Lane
Dagenham

Postcode: RM8 1JT

Telephone number: 020 8270 4242

Fax number: 020 8595 4024

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Dominic Savage

Date of previous inspection: 3 February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|-------------------|----------------------|--|---|
| 15465 | Terence Parish | Registered inspector | | <p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>How high are standards?</p> <p>a) The school's results and achievements</p> <p>How well are pupils or students taught?</p> <p>How well is the school led and managed?</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p> |
| 9499 | Phiroze Daruwala | Lay inspector | Educational inclusion | <p>How high are standards?</p> <p>b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</p> <p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p> |
| 4351 | Jeanne Strickland | Team inspector | Drama English | |
| 17404 | Judith Tolley | Team inspector | Modern foreign languages | Sixth form co-ordinator |
| 15051 | Lynne Kaufmann | Team inspector | English as an additional language Special educational needs Information communication technology (ICT) | |
| 10666 | Patricia Wheeler | Team inspector | Citizenship History | |
| 18638 | Christopher Shaw | Team inspector | Art and design | |
| 10759 | Lynn Bappa | Team inspector | History (sixth form) | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students? |
| 20497 | Vernon Williams | Team inspector | Geography Leisure and tourism | |
| 30825 | Keith Hayton | Team inspector | Science | |
| 30675 | Helen Rudeforth | Team inspector | Music | |

| | | | | |
|-------|---------------------|----------------|---|--|
| 12121 | Jack Mallinson | Team inspector | English (sixth form) | |
| 8361 | Malcolm Burley | Team inspector | Biology | |
| 10679 | Michael Aston | Team inspector | Information communication technology (ICT) (sixth form) | |
| 20527 | Brian King | Team inspector | Mathematics | |
| 21806 | Patricia Swinnerton | Team inspector | Design and technology | |
| 30996 | Anne Higginbotham | Team inspector | Mathematics (sixth form) | |
| 23268 | Kevin Corrigan | Team inspector | Physical education | |
| 20847 | Kelvin Wilson | Team inspector | Business (sixth form) | |

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd

Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|-----------|
| PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT | 7 |
| Information about the school | |
| How good the school is | |
| What the school does well | |
| What could be improved | |
| How the school has improved since its last inspection | |
| Standards | |
| Pupils' attitudes and values | |
| Teaching and learning | |
| Other aspects of the school | |
| How well the school is led and managed | |
| Parents' and carers' views of the school | |
| ANNEX: THE SIXTH FORM | 12 |
| PART B: COMMENTARY | |
| HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS? | 15 |
| The school's results and pupils' achievements | |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development | |
| HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT? | 19 |
| HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS? | 21 |
| HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS? | 24 |
| HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS? | 26 |
| HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED? | 27 |
| WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER? | 32 |
| THE LEARNING ENHANCEMENT CENTRE | 33 |
| PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS | 34 |
| PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4 | 39 |
| PART E: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM | 64 |

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

All Saints Catholic School and Technology College is a comprehensive school for 11-18 year olds. Though mixed, there are more boys than girls, about 10 per cent more, overall, though this increases to around 20 per cent in Years 7 and 9. With 1,107 pupils and students on roll it is larger than average. Pupils enter in Year 7 from almost 30 primary schools and just over a third come from outside the local borough. The attainment of pupils when they start in Year 7 is below average, with fewer pupils at higher levels in English and in mathematics at the end of Year 6 than is most often found. Pupils' social circumstances are mixed but are broadly average and they are well cared for by parents. The proportion of pupils having special educational needs is below average, whilst the proportion with Statements of Special Educational Need is broadly average. The nature of special educational needs is predominantly moderate learning difficulties, some pupils have emotional and behavioural difficulties, and a few have physical or other impairments. The proportion of pupils whose mother tongue is believed not to be English is higher than average but very few pupils are at an early stage of acquiring the use of English. The sixth form is run as a consortium with three other local secondary schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school has many very good features. Strategies adopted by the headteacher and governors have led to overall GCSE results rising faster than the national trend for some years, culminating in well above average results in 2002. Teaching is good, overall, pupils achieve well, and standards of work in the subjects they pursue are most often average or better. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are consistently very good; pupils want to learn. This desire to do well extends to boys who, contrary to the national picture, often reach higher standards than girls, though both do better than might be expected. Pupils also develop very well spiritually and morally; they are good citizens. However, the path followed by the headteacher and governors has also led to several subjects of the National Curriculum not being taught to all pupils in Years 10 and 11. In addition, National Curriculum music provision now, remains much as it was six years ago, poor. There is also some teaching which is less than satisfactory. Consequently, despite all the very good features of the school, as significant statutory requirements are not met at all or not met well enough, the school is satisfactory, overall, and gives satisfactory value for money. Similarly, though leadership by the headteacher has been clear and focused on raising standards through staff development, excellent recruitment strategies, and the pursuit of new buildings to house science, music and drama, leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The sixth form is reported on later in this report; overall, it is good and is cost-effective.

What the school does well

- GCSE results have risen sharply and were very high, compared with similar schools, in 2002
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good
- Overall provision in science, art and design, geography, and ICT (lessons) is very good
- Standards of work in English, science, art and design, and ICT (lessons) are above average.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- Provision for personal, social and health education is very good
- Provision for spiritual and moral development is very good
- Recruitment and induction of teachers is excellent; arrangements for staff development and performance management are very good

What could be improved

- Unsatisfactory teaching; there is room for improvement in some subjects
- Statutory requirements for physical education and for modern foreign languages are not met; too few pupils experience either or both in Years 10 and 11
- The provision for music is very poor; teaching is very poor and leadership is inadequate
- Teaching of French is unsatisfactory and leadership and management of modern foreign languages is unsatisfactory
- Information Communication Technology (ICT) is not used well enough to aid teaching and learning in many subjects and national expectations of the use of ICT are not met in some
- Not all statutory requirements for design and technology are met; some pupils still pursue art and design courses instead

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1997. Since then standards in GCSE examinations have risen faster than in most schools, with a significant leap in 2002, largely due to GNVQ results in ICT. Teaching and learning have improved a great deal; the proportion of unsatisfactory lessons is now less than half of the proportion then. However, more remains to be done. Assessment procedures are certainly better but need to be used more incisively by teachers. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very much better. A new science building has recently opened and a new drama and music building will open in September 2003. Provision for modern foreign languages still does not meet statutory requirements; music provision is now very poor, and physical education provision appears to be worse. Balancing significant improvements in standards against curricular weaknesses, improvement is satisfactory.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

GCSE/GNVQ results have been improving faster than the national trend of improvement since 1998, from when current progress is measured. In 2002 the average 'points' earned by each Year 11 pupil rose significantly from the 2001 figure and met the school's target. The proportion of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C grades rose hugely from 51.2 per cent in 2001 to 67.6 per cent in 2002, well exceeding the target. The school correspondingly earned the A* rating in the table above, placing it in the top five per cent of similar schools. The most significant reason for this sudden leap in standards is the success of pupils in GNVQ ICT. Over the last three years, the proportion of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C grades has been above the national average, the proportion achieving 5+ A*-G grades, well above the national average, and pupils' average point scores above the national average. Overall, pupils have achieved very well. In most examinations they achieved well. In 2002, based on their prior attainment two years earlier in national tests, pupils achieved very well, overall, and well, if the GNVQ ICT influence is tempered. Over three years, boys' GCSE/GNVQ results are significantly better than girls' results. There is a significantly higher proportion of boys in the school and girls' prior attainment is lower.

Pupils' results in end of Year 9 National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science, in 2002, were average, overall; above average in English and science, average in mathematics. Based on pupils' prior attainment three years earlier, at the end of Year 6, these results represent good achievement, overall; good in English, satisfactory in mathematics and very good in science. Compared with similar schools, results are, overall, well above average. The school's trend in end of Year 9 test results has been in line with the national trend of improvement since 1998. English and mathematics test results in 2002 improved significantly upon those in 2001. Over three years, boys' test results are significantly better than girls' results in English and in mathematics. There is a significantly higher proportion of boys in the school and girls' prior attainment is lower.

Taking all subjects into consideration, and ignoring statutory areas of the curriculum in which most pupils achieve little, as they are not taught them, pupils are currently achieving well in Years 7 to 9 and in Years 10 and 11. They achieve well in English and in science in all years, and in mathematics in Years 7 to 9. They achieve satisfactorily in mathematics in Years 10 and 11. In art and design and in ICT lessons pupils achieve very well in all years. Pupils who opt for drama in Years 10 and 11 also achieve very well. In design and technology, pupils' achievement is good in Years 7 to 9 and satisfactory

in Years 10 and 11. Pupils achieve well in history and in geography in all years. They also achieve well in physical education; though, in Years 10 and 11, this is restricted to the minority who opt for the subject. Pupils achieve unsatisfactorily in modern foreign languages in all years, and in music in Years 7 to 9. Music is not offered in Years 10 and 11. Standards of work are most often average or better. They are above average in English in Years 10 and 11, above average in mathematics in Years 7 to 9, and above average in science in all years; though standards in practical work may well be lower, little was seen and there is too little scientific equipment. Standards are above average in art and design in all years, and in history in the GCSE option. Boys' standards in ICT are above average in Years 10 and 11, whilst girls' are well above average. This is the only significant difference in standards between genders noted in work seen. Standards are below average in modern foreign languages and music.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Very good. Pupils are attentive to teachers and work well together. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Very good. In classrooms this is often exemplary. In corridors and the dining area, life is civilised. The number of temporary exclusions is in line with about half of schools of this size. |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities that come their way and the school council operates well. Relationships between pupils are friendly and helpful and between pupils and most teachers there is mutual respect. |
| Attendance | Satisfactory. Attendance is in line with the national average. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils: | Years 7 – 9 | Years 10 – 11 | Years 12 – 13 |
|---------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Quality of teaching | Satisfactory | 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 quality of teaching and learning in English is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 and 11, whilst in mathematics the quality is good in Years 7 to 9 and satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. In science, teaching and learning are good in Years 7 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11, though inadequate resources are undermining this provision; pupils are doing too few experiments, so the learning of practical skills is weak.

Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the work in hand are consistently good across all years, as is their management of pupils to ensure very good behaviour and an atmosphere in which learning can go on. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are also taught satisfactorily, though the reinforcement and development of ICT skills are variable, for example, ranging from very poor in music, through unsatisfactory in mathematics to very good in design and technology. Teachers' expectations of standards of work, and their use of assessment to establish how well pupils are doing and help them do better, are a shade better in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7 to 9. This is partly why teaching is better for older pupils. However, there are also significantly more unsatisfactory lessons in Years 7 to 9 than in Years 10 and 11, largely because weaker teachers do not teach older pupils at all, or have a limited effect on provision in Years 10 and 11.

Teaching is unsatisfactory in modern foreign languages because insufficient attention is given to developing pupils' practical language skills, and assessment, monitoring and supporting pupils' progress are all unsatisfactory. These judgements are similar to those made at the last inspection. In music, teaching is very poor because of low expectations, a limited range of teaching styles and the needs of

individual pupils not being met. These judgements are also the same as at the time of the last inspection. No progress has been made. Teaching in all other subjects is most often good, very good in art and design, in geography, and in ICT lessons. Art and design has an edge because pupils are very involved in their own learning; they are challenged, excited and encouraged. Geography lessons are planned imaginatively and use a wide range of visual aids to support learning, particularly of enquiry and investigative skills. ICT teachers provide pupils with well-crafted targets for them to reach, with many opportunities for independent learning and research; pupils find the work fun.

The needs of pupils with special educational needs are very well met through very careful planning, support and tracking by special educational needs staff. Gifted and talented pupils are identified but additional challenges either for them, or more able pupils, in lessons are few. Free peripatetic music teaching – the learning of an instrument – and many opportunities to join sports teams cater for the keen and talented but such opportunities are not fully inclusive. The needs of the few pupils who may use a language other than English at home are met satisfactorily.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | The quality and range are unsatisfactory. In Years 10 and 11 statutory requirements are not met for physical education, modern foreign languages, and design and technology. The use of ICT in some subjects does not meet national expectations. The provision for music is very poor. GNVQ ICT is successful. A small number of pupils benefit from work-related courses in conjunction with a local college. There is a good range of extra-curricular opportunities. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | This is very good and these pupils achieve very well. Exemplary work goes on in the Learning Enhancement Centre (LEC). |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | There are few pupils who may not use a language other than English at home. With appropriate support, they achieve as well as their peers. The school is working closely with the LEA to improve procedures. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Very good, overall. Provisions for spiritual and moral development are particularly strong; the chaplaincy, and subjects like geography and art and design make very good contributions. Citizenship education is developing and has good elements. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Pastorally, the school cares very well for pupils. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic progress are very good but the use of assessment information to help pupils do better, though satisfactory overall, is inconsistent and not always effective. The school works well with parents but has not told them clearly which areas of the National Curriculum it has chosen not to follow. |

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Satisfactory, overall. Leadership has driven examination standards up but significant National Curriculum requirements have been ignored and some shortcomings have been tackled too slowly. Issues arising from this imbalance need attention now. Middle management varies from very good to unsatisfactory and is good, overall. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Owing to the inattention to statutory curriculum responsibilities over some years this can only be satisfactory, though other features of their work, including financial, staffing, performance management, and |

| | |
|--|---|
| | accommodation improvements, are very good, and sometimes exemplary. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Satisfactory. Standards have risen and teaching has improved. However, some teaching is unsatisfactory, and some weaknesses remain from the time of the last inspection. The school is aware of the weaknesses but has taken insufficient action to address them. |

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| The strategic use of resources | Satisfactory. Where money has been directed it has been spent well. Too little money has been directed towards areas that need developing. Judgements about best value need to be more balanced so that curricular provision is more even. Staffing, accommodation and resources are good, overall, though inadequate accommodation is given as one reason for not providing an adequate curriculum. There is far too little laboratory equipment in science and too few computers to meet the needs of all subjects. |
|--------------------------------|---|

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children make good progress and they are helped to become mature and responsible • Behaviour is good • Teaching is good • The school is well led | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information they receive about their children's progress • Homework – too much sometimes |

The inspection team broadly agrees with parents' views. Some teaching is not good enough. There are omissions in the curriculum provided, touched on by parents in the meeting; principally, few pupils are able to pursue physical education and a modern foreign language in Years 10 and 11; currently, both are an entitlement for all pupils.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SIXTH FORM

One hundred and eighty-five students give this school an average sized sixth form, but it is part of the much larger North East Sixth Form Consortium, which is an alliance of four secondary schools. Students from All Saints attend a range of courses across the consortium. Most courses are of an advanced standard, either AS and A-level, or AVCE. The exceptions are GNVQ business, health and social care, leisure and tourism, and art and design, all at Intermediate and Foundation levels. Students' attainment on entry to the sixth form has been below average, overall, though this is changing as GCSE results improve at the end of Year 11. There is a fairly open requirement for entry to courses. Standards required depend upon demand. The attainment of female students on entry is typically below that of males, reflecting patterns in the main school. Students are predominantly from the consortium schools. The number of students staying on after Year 11 from All Saints is growing; the current Year 12 is about 70 per cent of a typical Year 11, whereas Year 13 is just 40 per cent. Some of this difference is due to students not completing a second post-16 year. There are predominantly more males in Year 13 than females. Year 12 is balanced. This is most likely due to the imbalance of males to females in the main school; some years are very imbalanced. The proportions of pupils from various ethnic groups broadly reflect numbers in the main school.

HOW GOOD THE SIXTH FORM IS

The sixth form is good and, owing partly to the large number of students within the consortium, cost-effective. The detailed financial costs, under new funding arrangements, cannot be established. The curriculum offers a very broad range of A-level courses, through provision being shared across the consortium. Work experience arrangements are very good. Standards in examinations vary and were below average, overall, in 2001. Standards of current work, for those subjects inspected, are broadly average. Teaching and learning are good and students achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Leadership is satisfactory and management is good. Subject teachers say that students are good at staying on courses they have started; information held about 'retention' centrally is not clear. This lack of clarity applies to students' attendance; figures for Year 12 indicate very good attendance but no information about Year 13 attendance was seen.

Strengths

- Teaching and learning are good and enable students to achieve well
- Students have positive attitudes to work
- The wide range of courses available gives students a good choice

What could be improved

- Leadership does not yet ensure effective evaluation of teaching, learning, and achievement, or provide significant long-term planning
- The use of assessment information to help students do better is inconsistent
- Procedures for monitoring attendance and retention across the consortium are not consistently applied

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

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION IN INDIVIDUAL CURRICULUM AREAS

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

| Curriculum area | Overall judgement about provision, with comment |
|-----------------|---|
|-----------------|---|

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Mathematics | Good. Standards are average. Good teaching and a well-planned curriculum enable students to achieve as expected. Students are well motivated and work hard. |
| Biology | Good. Standards are average. Good teaching enables students to make good progress in lessons. There is a lack of clarity in the co-ordination of the subject across the consortium. |
| Business Studies | Good. Standards are above average. Achievement is improving as a result of good teaching and a strong focus on individual support. |
| ICT | Good. Students achieve well as a result of good teaching. Standards are average. |
| Leisure and Tourism | Good. Standards are close to average. Students' achieve well due to good teaching and learning. |
| Art | Good. Standards are average. Good teaching and an imaginative curriculum lead to good achievement. |
| Geography | Good. Attainment in lessons is broadly average. Students are well motivated and achieve well. Teaching and learning are consistently good. |
| History | Good. Standards are above average. Good teaching enables students to achieve well. |
| English | Satisfactory. Standards are average. Most students achieve as expected as a result of satisfactory teaching. |

Work was sampled in physics, chemistry and psychology. In these lessons teaching was good and students achieved well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SIXTH FORM

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| How well students are guided and supported | Satisfactory educational support and guidance are given to students. Regular reviews with their tutors ensure that students are making appropriate progress. Students get good support from individual subject teachers that enables them to achieve well. However, better use could be made of assessment information to raise standards further. Students with special educational needs get good support and achieve well. |
| Effectiveness of the leadership and management of the sixth form | Management is satisfactory. Day-to-day management is good and mostly ensures the smooth running of the sixth form as well as support for individual students. However, overall leadership of the sixth form does not ensure consistency of provision, effective monitoring and evaluation, or significant long-term planning. |

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 wide range of courses available • Opportunities to meet and work alongside students from other schools • The help and support given by teachers • The atmosphere and the sense of family in the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistency across the consortium – opportunities and practice vary from school to school • They could be treated more as adults • The range of extra-curricular activities is too |

| | |
|------------|--|
| sixth form | narrow • Sixth form facilities are inadequate |
|------------|--|

Inspectors agree with students' positive views. The range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities and sixth form facilities is satisfactory, overall, but inspectors agree that it could be better. Inspectors also agree that there could be greater consistency across the consortium, including the way students are treated.

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?

Part B of the report should be read in conjunction with the summary report, as judgments made there are not necessarily repeated in Part B.

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In recent years pupils have entered the school with below average attainment, though this has improved and current Year 7 are close to average as indicated by national tests at the end of Year 6. This is due, in part, to the effort this school has made to help Year 6 pupils, for example, in 'master classes' in science. Some pupils are also helped to start this school with better standards in, for example, art and design and in physical education than they might have done without support.
2. The proportion of males to females varies considerably across the years and there are 10 per cent more males than females, overall. In Years 7 and 9 this difference increases to around 20 per cent, whilst in Year 11 it is eight per cent. As boys, nationally, tend to do less well than girls this could have implications for standards of work. However, two factors lead to boys' standards often being better than girls'. Boys in this school mostly want to learn and have very good attitudes to work, and boys' prior attainment is better than girls' prior attainment, overall. The reason for the boy/girl imbalance is that parents have more choices of school for girls and for more able Year 6 girls, in particular; consequently, the academic profile of girls entering the school is 'creamed off'. This is historical, as the school on this site began as a boys' school, which later merged with a smaller girls' school.
3. The difference between pupils' prior attainment and their attainment at the ends of Years 9 and 11 is a better indicator of their achievement, in this school, than is comparison with performance in similar schools, based on the proportion of pupils taking free school meals. This is because of the boy/girl imbalance, which is not a typical pattern, and the positive social background of pupils. Though the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly typical, these pupils are well looked after by parents. The overall 'value' added to standards between the beginning of Year 7 and the end of Year 9 is good. This is broadly supported by all analyses of data and certainly by inspectors' judgments about pupils' work.
4. Standards in GCSE examinations in 2002 were broadly average, significantly above average in art and design and in English literature, significantly below average in design and technology. Pupils started at the school broadly below average, so they have improved academically and achieved well. Analysis of 'value' added between pupils' prior attainment in national tests in 2000 and their corresponding overall GCSE results in 2002 produces a judgment of either 'very good' or 'excellent' depending upon interpretation. However, this is skewed by GNVQ ICT results. If this skew is redressed, then 'value' added is 'good'. This is reflected in the good achievement judgments for English and science and the satisfactory achievement in mathematics. Achievement in other subjects is broadly good too, though this ignores the lack of achievement by most pupils in physical education or in modern foreign languages. Though a legal entitlement for all pupils, only a minority are taught either. Though overall GCSE results in French were in line with national results and the proportion achieving an A*-C grade was higher than average, most pupils taking it were not expected, when they started the course, to get less than a C grade, and about a quarter did.
5. Standards in literacy are generally below average when pupils start in Year 7. Pupils with particularly low standards by the end of Year 6 are helped to improve in summer schools and 'catch-up' lessons. By Year 11 standards are better but vary in subjects, depending on the emphasis placed on them. In science, geography and history, standards are generally higher because teachers expect accuracy and correct mistakes, and provide more opportunities for pupils to read, write and talk. Pupils' writing and use of technical vocabulary are poor in music, and writing skills are also variable in design and technology, with some weaknesses in spelling

noted in this and in other subjects. Pupils in physical education produce a lively sports magazine, with excellent content and presentation and good use of ICT.

6. Standards of numeracy are broadly average by Year 11 and actively developed within mathematics, where numeracy is embedded in schemes of work. Standards of higher- and middle-attaining pupils are good overall. Lower-attainers do much numerical work, including calculation of area and use of tally charts and simple graphs, enabling them to make satisfactory progress. Pupils are familiar with decimal calculations, can use calculators confidently, and can deal with most numerical problems at an appropriate level. Pupils have weaknesses in operating with fractions over all ability levels. In work on probability this slowed progress. Pupils' ability to convert between various metric units is also shaky.
7. Standards of attainment for pupils with special educational needs are better than expected and they achieve very well. There are 139 pupils with a special educational needs profile. All are academically monitored and tracked individually, which ensures that their progress is recorded and that they are more likely to meet their academic targets. Teachers are well informed about pupils' needs and can 'bid' for special educational needs support. Some departments, such as history and art and design, still find difficulties with matching teaching materials to individual pupils' needs. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need use an excellent bank of tested resources that challenge and advance their learning, resulting in their very good progress.
8. There are a few pupils who may use a language other than English at home (EAL designation). The school's system for identification and support of these pupils is at an early stage of development, but through the work of the teacher assistants and the work of the local advisory service these pupils achieve well and the standard of their work is appropriate.
9. Gifted and talented pupils are identified as a group but both they and more able pupils are too often insufficiently challenged in lessons. Art and design is the best exception to this. Developments of other talents pupils might have are impeded to an extent because of deficiencies in the curriculum; for example, provision for music is poor and there is no provision of physical education for most pupils in Years 10 and 11. These deficiencies are offset for some through free peripatetic music teaching and opportunities to join sports teams but these are not sufficient replacements for planned lessons that meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Sixth form

10. Because of the consortium arrangements, little other than the work in the nine focus subjects was seen. Details of students' standards of work and achievement can be found in the relevant subject paragraphs.
11. Students from All Saints have a very wide range of courses to choose from spread across four secondary schools that form a consortium. Students are registered at the school from which they originate and results of examinations are allocated to those schools wherever the course has been taught or examination sat. However, any assessment information held on particular courses and examinations is largely held at the school where the course is taught. Little information on result trends, students' achievements, or course academic targets (if any) is held at All Saints in any significant form. The diversity of courses means, that although the total number of students taking them might be average or more, the number of All Saints' students is often small; nine out of 20 courses taken in 2001 could not be interpreted statistically, as the number of students was too small. As the popularity of courses changes from year to year, trends are lost.
12. All Saints has significant imbalances between boys and girls in different years and these feed through to the sixth form, so All Saints' students may be predominantly male or female in particular years and this contributes to imbalance on courses. Historically, more able females have been less well represented at All Saints than more able males. Combined with the gender imbalances, this can lead to a lower proportion of more able female students than male students in the sixth form. Consequently, in 2001, male student attainment post-16 was below average and female student attainment well below average. Overall, attainment was below average. A similar but better picture emerges in 2002, albeit with some different courses being taught elsewhere.

The average **point** scores in all four schools of the consortium were below the national average. All Saints' scores ranked second in the consortium. However, if the prior

attainment of All Saints' students is taken into account, their earlier performance in GCSE examinations, both male and female students achieved well in 2002. Those of middle prior attainment achieved very well.

| Subject | Standards of work seen | | How well students achieve overall |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | Female students | Male students | |
| Mathematics | Above average | Above average | Satisfactory |
| Biology | Above average Y12 Average Y13 | Above average Y12 Average Y13 | Good |
| Business studies | Above average Y12 Average Y13 | Above average | Good |
| ICT | Above average Y12 None in Y13 | Above average Y12 Average Y13 | Very good Y12 Satisfactory Y13 |
| Leisure and tourism | Average | Average | Good |
| Art and design | Above average | Average | Good Y12 Satisfactory Y13 |
| Geography | Average | Average | Good |
| History | Average Y12 Just above Y13 | Average Y12 Just above Y13 | Satisfactory Y12 Good Y13 |
| English | Average | Average | Satisfactory |

13. From subject evidence, retention rates are good; students stay on their courses. However, this information is not immediately available in the school so it is not possible to report on patterns.
14. Key skills of communication, application of number and ICT are not taught as a unit of work to all students. Students are expected to have at least a GCSE C grade in English and in mathematics or be retaking either or both as part of their sixth form studies. A small number of students do follow a course to support their numeracy. This was not seen. Standards in key skills appear appropriate to allow most students to get on with their course work appropriately.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Pupils show a high standard of behaviour and courtesy and demonstrate a high degree of self-discipline and confidence. Their attitudes and values are very good. In lessons, pupils are attentive, follow teachers' instructions and apply themselves to their work. They work well on their own and in small groups, and co-operate enthusiastically with one another. Movement around the school is orderly. Only one pupil has been permanently excluded in recent years. The number of pupils excluded temporarily is about average.
16. Relationships between pupils, teachers and other support staff are very good. Pupils with special educational needs respond with enthusiasm, taking full advantage of additional help within lessons. The positive attitudes and determination on the part of pupils help them to learn well and make progress and reflect the school's high expectations of courtesy and respect.
17. Pupils show respect for property, equipment and displays in the school. They conduct themselves responsibly when using the computers and other equipment. Although opportunities for pupils to show initiative in lessons are limited, they are keen to take responsibilities in other ways. A peer reading mentoring scheme involves a small, carefully selected group of Year 11

pupils who are trained to become mentors to Year 7 pupils. Year 11 prefects welcome parents, who come to the school to collect the annual reports of their children.

18. Year council and school council meetings are held twice each term. Year council representatives bring issues to the attention of the school council representatives. They, in turn, bring suggestions and concerns to the council meeting. This effective process of consultation and discussion encourages pupils to contribute ideas towards the further improvement of the school and also to set high standards for themselves in presenting their point of views. At the suggestion of the school council, an incident box was installed in the learning resource centre last term. It has proved to be a success for pupils, who feel free to report incidents, such as bullying. Elected pupils from Years 7 to 11 represent the school on the Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum.
19. Pupils play well together in the playground and their behaviour in the dining-hall is equally good. This creates a pleasant atmosphere during lunch. Lunch-time supervisors emphasise good discipline and help in creating a friendly ambience in the dining-hall. There were no incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour observed during the period of inspection.
20. Pupils with special educational needs respond with enthusiasm, taking the full advantage of additional help during lessons. They are fully integrated in the main stream of the school, showing a positive approach to all areas of the curriculum, and usually work with dedication and commitment. They are capable of working independently and in collaboration with others. Concerns about these pupils' integration were raised in the previous inspection report and there has been very good progress in addressing them.
21. Pupils show concern for the needs of people less fortunate than themselves and contribute willingly to local and national charities, such as Brentwood Catholic Children's Society and CAFOD, through sponsored silence and during special collection at Advent and Easter. Each form group produces Christmas hampers, which are distributed to elderly and needy members of the local community.
22. There are various school visits, including residential stays and retreats in this country and short educational trips overseas. Work experience opportunities are provided in Year 10. Some pupils from the school excel in sports. For instance, the Year 7 football team won the local borough cup. The Year 8 rugby team won the borough's Grand Slam Championship. Extra-curricular activities offer pupils an opportunity to raise self-esteem and to develop aptitudes to co-operate and collaborate with their peers.
23. The rate of attendance for the academic year 2001-2002 was broadly in line with the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence at the school, during the same period, was better than the national picture. Most pupils are punctual in terms of arriving at school each morning and returning to classrooms after the morning and lunch breaks.

Sixth form

24. Overall, students' attitudes are positive. They enjoy the privileges of being in the sixth form and make good use of their common room. They appreciate the atmosphere and sense of family in the sixth form and the time and help they are given by their subject teachers. Students in All Saints particularly appreciate the opportunities they are given to work alongside students from other schools and the wide range of courses available to them through the consortium arrangements. However, they feel that there could be more consistency across the consortium, for example, as regards what is acceptable in terms of dress and behaviour. They also feel that the school could treat them more as adults by approaching them in the first instance with any problems rather than going directly to their parents.
25. In lessons students respond positively, and co-operate well with their teachers and fellow students in group work. They listen quietly, are confident to answer and ask questions and are not afraid to make a mistake. They display very good levels of concentration and participate in discussions. When working in groups, their social interaction and collaborative skills develop well, seen, for example, in a Year 12 history lesson where groups of students were working on

producing a 'role-play' that involved putting Charles I on trial. Students usually meet deadlines and organise their work well. There are some difficulties with punctuality in ICT lessons and meeting deadlines in art but, overall, students are well motivated and display interest in their studies. This is a major factor in their good progress in lessons and good achievement, overall. Retention rates in the courses inspected are good and most students seem to complete the courses they begin.

26. Students are encouraged to involve themselves fully in the life of the school and to express their views through the sixth form council. The retreat programme, organised by the Catholic Church, is available to Year 13 students and provides an opportunity for them to reflect on their relationships with each other and with God. A number of Year 12 and 13 students participate in a local education authority 'Reading Partnership Programme' and have been trained to spend time every week in a local primary school supporting young pupils with their reading.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

27. In Years 7 to 9, teaching in 17 out of 20 lessons was satisfactory or better, in two-thirds it was good or better and in one third very good or excellent. Teaching in six lessons was unsatisfactory, in three lessons poor and in three lessons very poor. Teaching in seven lessons was excellent. Unsatisfactory lessons were seen in English, mathematics and modern foreign languages, poor and very poor lessons were seen in design and technology and in music. Excellent lessons were seen in mathematics, science, geography, ICT, and PSHE.
28. In Years 10 and 11, teaching in most lessons was satisfactory or better. In three-quarters of lessons it was good or better and in four out of ten lessons teaching was very good or excellent. Teaching in three lessons was unsatisfactory. Teaching was also excellent in two lessons. Unsatisfactory lessons were seen in English, mathematics, and in modern foreign languages.
29. Overall, in almost nine out of ten lessons, teaching was satisfactory or better. In seven out of ten lessons it was good or better and in over a third teaching was very good or excellent. These figures represent very significant improvements since the time of the last report, when over a fifth of teaching, overall, was unsatisfactory or worse, four lessons in ten in Years 7 to 9. Lesson observations are only part of the evidence by which teaching is judged. Evidence about teaching revealed by the scrutiny of pupils' work is also significant, and how well pupils achieve in accredited tests and examinations is also taken into account. This inspection also noted the findings of the parallel inspection of religious education, which were very positive about the teaching of a significant subject in the school. Consequently, teaching, overall, in Years 7 to 9 is deemed satisfactory, with the teaching of music and of modern foreign languages unsatisfactory. Teaching in Years 10 and 11 is deemed good, with the teaching of modern foreign languages unsatisfactory. Music is not taught in Years 10 and 11.
30. Teachers provide early support for pupils' weak literacy skills through summer schools at the end of Year 6 and 'catch-up' lessons after school in Year 7. Teachers are also developing pupils' literacy skills through a scheme called 'Words in Sustained Excellence' (WISE), which has related assessments. Teachers in history are particularly good at incorporating WISE assessments in their work and encouraging pupils to write in a variety of styles. The good school library (LRC) helps 'The Reading Quest Scheme', initiated by the English department, which encourages pupils' reading. Careful marking in science encourages pupils to be more accurate in their writing. Excellent research for and presentation of projects with sporting themes make a valuable contribution to developing pupils' literacy skills in physical education.
31. In mathematics, in work related to numeracy skills, where pupils are taught to set out each stage of a calculation clearly, and teachers check their written work accordingly, pupils make good progress. However, too many pupils, especially lower-attainers, omit key lines of calculations, show insufficient information and frequently make errors. Pupils' mental recall of tables and of simple calculations forms an increasing part of mathematics lessons 'starter' activities and these are helping their numerical skills improve. Good numeracy teaching and learning are evident in geography when pupils compile hydrographs from tabulated rainfall data; in ICT in the redesigning

of the livery of a bus company; in pupils' use of scale and perspective in art and design, and in velocity/acceleration calculations in science. Many other instances of good use of numeracy, with or without a calculator, were seen across the school, as too was the use of statistical methods in bar, line and pie charts. A very good numeracy resource book is supplied to pupils within the Learning Enhancement Centre and helps basic skills be learnt well.

32. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs and Statements of Special Educational Need is very good and they learn very well. Setting (putting pupils in classes according to their ability) has enabled classes of lower-attainers to be kept small, and for teachers to plan with the teacher assistants how to meet the academic and personal needs of pupils with special educational needs. The partnership between teachers and teacher assistants is very good and promotes the sharing of skills and of knowledge about individual pupils' needs. Assessment is very efficient and collaborative; it identifies solutions to learning problems and has a positive effect on learners. Pupils with special educational needs in Year 9 described themselves as 'serious learners' as they prepared for their end of year national tests, because they understand the techniques needed to answer test questions. Pupils' behaviour and personal development are excellent because of the introduction of the 'learning to learn' programme, which is having a very positive effect on pupils' knowledge about how they learn. Pupils are challenged by a very participative style of teaching and learning that begins with a physical, energising activity (called 'brain gym') where all take an active part. Pupils explained how their knowledge of how the left and right hand side of the brain work has helped their learning and interested their parents.
33. There are pupils from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. The local advisory service is helping to target pupils in this group who have English language difficulties and to give initial assessment and support. This external agency is helping the school to further improve provision for pupils with language difficulties.

Sixth form

34. Forty lessons were seen. All but one, in English, were satisfactory or better. Almost two-thirds were good or better and just over a quarter very good. Some teachers seen were not employed by All Saints, but were on the staff of the other consortium schools. Students make good progress, overall, in their lessons.

| Subject | Quality of teaching and learning | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| | Year 12 | Year 13 |
| Mathematics | Good | Good |
| Biology | Very good teaching Good learning | Good |
| Business studies | Good | Good |
| ICT | Very good | Satisfactory |
| Leisure and tourism | Good | Good |
| Art and design | Good | Good |
| Geography | Good | Good |
| History | Good | Good |
| English | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |

35. Teachers generally show good subject knowledge and understanding of examination board requirements so students acquire the correct new knowledge and skills and improve their understanding of the work in hand. Lessons are mostly well planned and time is used effectively. Students are receptive and well-behaved. Consequently, they tend to accept what they are given and effort is needed to make them think and learn for themselves. Students themselves commented on the 'big jump' between GCSE and A-level. Art and design, business studies and

geography teachers are particularly adept at challenging pupils and making them think. Different teachers in different schools use ICT resources variably and students' access to such resources also varies. Access tends to be good at All Saints but depends on the use of computers by others, how many students are 'in' and how many students have returned from other schools to use facilities. Physics has too few practical resources for effective learning and virtual representation of experiments on a smartboard (computer linked whiteboard) is not a sufficiently effective replacement for 'hands on' practical experiments.

36. Students say that their work is marked thoroughly and they know how well they are doing and the analysis of work that was seen, somewhat limited by circumstances, seems to confirm this. However, there is no commonality in the strategic use of assessment to benefit individuals or groups of students, and what goes on in one school is not necessarily known in another. The use of a commercial package in Year 12 may start to address this, if information is pooled across schools and teachers. Homework is another communication issue; students can become burdened by different teachers in different places not fully understanding the 'big picture'. One female student was distressed that she was expected to revise for an important test and complete an assignment in the same week. The headteacher commented, "the inspector was probably the only (adult) person likely to know that".
37. Male and female students are treated equitably and female students probably benefit from the consortium – imbalances between the numbers of males and females at All Saints get smoothed out to an extent. Students of different ethnic groups are represented appropriately and supported if necessary. There are students with special educational needs and the very good provision within the school continues to support them, as do their peers; students' attitudes in this respect are excellent. The school pays for revision and masterclasses off-site for a number of students in order to cover any gaps in provision and to improve learning opportunities, including those for the more able.

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

38. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory in Years 7 to 9. The curriculum in these years is inclusive and provides a broad range of learning experiences that are well suited to the aspirations and aptitudes of most pupils, including those with special educational needs. However, the provision for music is very poor and similar to that at the time of the last inspection. There are no schemes of work, or recordings of pupils' work, to show that pupils in these years even receive their music entitlement. Time allocation in physical education is below the national average, which equates in this school to two hours per week; as most pupils have no physical education when older this shortfall is significant.
39. The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory in terms of the quality and range of learning opportunities offered to pupils. It is poor in terms of its breadth and relevance as it fails to meet statutory requirements in several significant areas. Although pupils are able to study physical education as an optional GCSE subject, the remaining two-thirds of pupils in the current Years 10 and 11 do not receive their legal entitlement to pursue the subject. This situation has existed for six, seven or ten years, depending upon who is asked in the school. The situation was implied but not stated in the previous inspection report. There are currently no plans for the entitlement of pupils to receive physical education to be met. Statutory requirements for all pupils to take a modern foreign language are also not met and this has been the case since the last inspection. Though National Curriculum changes may decree that a modern language is not a requirement in the future, this does not mean at least 1000 pupils should have been denied their rights in the past. Not all pupils study design and technology, another current requirement, though the situation is better in Year 10, compared with Year 11 and is still improving. This is at odds with the concept of a technology college; examination entries have confused the issue through several art-related subjects being described as technology options. The design and technology curriculum is also rather narrow; there is no food technology option, and timetabling difficulties have meant that systems and control engineering, for which teachers are trained and resources purchased,

cannot run. In science, despite major expenditure on a new science block, there is insufficient practical work because of the lack of much basic equipment.

40. The use of ICT by teachers and pupils within subjects is inconsistent. Some subjects are not meeting national expectations to teach appropriate aspects of ICT, for example, data capture and analysis in science. A recent change in the school co-ordinator's role has delayed progress in strengthening the use of ICT across the school. English and mathematics teachers have limited access to computers and there is no significant planning to integrate ICT into teaching and learning; the same is true of modern foreign languages and music. There is a lack of a clear management structure to involve departments in the National Key Stage 3 ICT Strategy. This adds to the problems experienced by teachers and managers of such subjects as geography, history and art and design, where teachers have planned to include ICT work in their schemes, but experience difficulties in booking the use of computers.
41. Business studies is offered as an option in Years 10 and 11 and pupils did well in 2002; almost all pupils on the course were girls. A small number of pupils benefit from the provision of work-related courses in conjunction with a local college.
42. The school attracts many pupils with relatively low attainment when they first enrol in Year 7. Pupils with specific learning difficulties, behavioural problems and/or disabilities are well integrated within the school community. As a part of the Excellence in Cities Initiative, the school has established a successful, specialised unit, called the Learning Enhancement Centre. The Centre provides a unique, distinctive and well-structured, short-term teaching and individual support programme appropriate to the needs of those pupils, who have been identified as underachieving or are likely to be excluded due to behavioural problems.
43. The school has been active and successful in promoting literacy across the curriculum, with a well-sustained whole-school action plan and good initiatives coming from the English, special educational needs and other departments. In collaboration with linked primary schools, the school has organised summer schools for pupils coming in who have not reached the expected standard in English by the end of Year 6. This work continues in the weekly 'catch-up' classes available after school for Year 7 pupils still at this level. Excellent work is also being done in the school's 'learning to learn' project. Numeracy is well provided for in many subjects, though policies mentioning it are undeveloped in some areas. Pupils, who, when starting school, are weak mathematically, have opportunities for improvement through summer school, catch-up classes, and teacher support outside of normal lessons.
44. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. This covers cultural, sporting, academic and leisure activities as well as study support. Pupils have opportunities to join a jazz club, junior and senior choirs, life-drawing club, a prayer group, and war games and computer clubs. There is an extra-curricular Spanish class available to all pupils. Pupils are able to benefit from free instrumental music tuition. However, though art and design benefits from extensive visits, including a regular trip to New York, and pupils taking drama in Years 10 and 11 enjoy opportunities for theatre visits, the range of extra-curricular activities in English is very limited and there is insufficient fieldwork in geography.
45. The provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good. It supports pupils' social development. The programme is closely monitored and evaluated. Sex education prepares pupils to deal responsibly with sexuality and relationships within the teaching of the Catholic Church. The misuse of drugs is treated appropriately. Citizenship is largely taught as a discrete module in the PSHE programme.
46. Careers education is good and is well supported by outside agencies and speakers. The careers library has networked computer facilities and a range of relevant software. All pupils complete a two-week work experience placement at the beginning of Year 11. Pupils complete a work experience portfolio and gain a Trident Work Experience Certificate. 'Ace Day', which highlights the benefits of further education, and the Insight into Industry course enhance the curriculum of Year 9 pupils.

47. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good. Links with the Catholic Church are very good. The Diocesan Youth Team, for example, leads days of retreat and reflection. There are very good links with the local primary schools, with their pupils attending for science and technology master classes. Eight pupils in Years 10 and 11 who are studying technology have the opportunity to attend the Ford Saturday school (a local industry).
48. The overall provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good. The school has successfully created an atmosphere in which the dignity and worth of each individual is safeguarded and one in which everyone is respected and valued. The core values statement emphasises human uniqueness and the provision of opportunities for pupils and staff to experience, express, celebrate and live out their faith.
49. Provision for spiritual development is very good. A strong sense of the spiritual is woven into the everyday life of the school, and pupils have regular opportunities for reflection on their own and other people's lives and beliefs. An act of collective worship takes place daily. Assembly themes are well planned and are used consistently. There are regular retreats and days of reflection. Opportunities are provided on Holy days of obligation for all pupils to express their faith. Regular class masses provide pupils with an opportunity to participate actively in their own liturgy with members of their form community. The school chapel is open all day for pupils and staff to use for quiet reflection and prayer during break times. The work of the chaplaincy also makes a strong contribution to the spiritual life of the school, promoting the school's Catholic ethos at all levels with pupils and their families and with staff. Further opportunities to deepen pupils' spiritual awareness and self-knowledge are provided in several areas of the curriculum. In geography, for example, pupils become aware of the beauty and variety of the natural world. In art and design, pupils are provided with a very good range of opportunities to explore and experience the spiritual aspects of art through both the work of other artists and designers and at first-hand. Classroom displays are uplifting and inspiring and pupils respond positively and enthusiastically.
50. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good and the impact is apparent upon pupils' behaviour. The school has a clear ethos in which teachers and other adults provide good role models and pupils show respect for them and for each other. Moral issues are discussed in many subjects, including English, science, design and technology, art and design and geography. There is clear moral teaching through the religious education and the personal, social and health education programmes. Pupils are encouraged to maintain the rules of fair play when involved in sporting activities.
51. Provision for social development is good. The school provides opportunities for pupils to exercise responsibilities, for example, through the year councils and the school council as well as the prefect system. Many lessons provide opportunities for pupils to work in teams, small groups or with a partner. Pupils raise considerable amounts of money for a variety of charitable causes. For example, there was a sponsored silence in aid of CAFOD.
52. The provision for cultural development is good, overall. Very good provision is made in art and design; pupils study a wide range of different types of art from different cultures. The art and design curriculum is also enhanced by visits to museums and galleries such as the Tate Modern in London and also by opportunities to visit New York and Venice. In geography, pupils were provided with opportunities to appreciate a wide range of cultures through an effective 'diversity week': some of the work resulting from this was displayed during the week of the inspection. Visiting authors to the school library have included Terry Pratchett and Jacqueline Wilson. In English, however, visits to the theatre are very limited and there is no tradition of a school play or dramatic production.

Sixth form

53. In the sixth form an increasingly large range of A-level/AS-level and vocational courses is offered. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided to students are therefore good. Provision is enhanced effectively by the consortium arrangements between the partner schools. Students appreciate this wide range of opportunities and feel they are given good guidance based on their prior attainment, hopes and aspirations. Twenty-five subjects are offered at AS and A-level,

including a range of subjects not studied in previous years, such as film studies and accounting. Vocational courses in art and design, business, health and social care and leisure and tourism are popular. Additionally, students may opt for a Certificate in Child Care in Education (CACHE) or a certificate in motor vehicle servicing. GCSE re-sit subjects offered include English and mathematics. There is provision for religious education through a number of 'RE days'. Provision for personal, social and health education is good.

54. The consortium schools are still developing their key skills programme. Currently, all sixth formers are expected to have A*-C grades in English and mathematics or to re-sit these subjects during Year 12. There is also a small numeracy group which targets Level 2 in key skills numeracy.
55. Provision for work experience is good. Sixth form A-level students have two weeks work experience, often with a subject focus, or follow an alternative scheme such as 'Insight into Management'. Sixth form students taking GNVQ courses have course-related placements of two or three weeks. Post-16 vocational students take part in the mini-enterprise scheme with the support of local employers. A Saturday school is provided at London University for students of economics, mathematics and the sciences.
56. Provision for extra-curricular activities and personal development mirrors the picture in the main school. In art, students visited museums and galleries in New York. The department of art and design hosted a one-day life-drawing workshop for a group of Italian students as part of a post-16 European exchange programme. Two Year 12 history students attended a 'lessons from Auschwitz' course organised by the Holocaust Trust, which involved attendance at two seminars in London and a trip to Auschwitz. Provision for spiritual and moral development continues to be very good. Sixth form students, for example, are able to participate in a 'Day of Reflection' and there is a planned programme of retreats and masses. Provision for social and cultural development is contained within a policy document but very much depends on the pattern of the courses students follow.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

57. The school is a happy and well-organised community, providing a safe, secure and very caring environment for its pupils. It makes a positive contribution to pupils' academic attainment and progress and combines with it the necessary provision for their welfare and well-being. The arrangements for child protection are very good and comply with statutory requirements.
58. The school is successful in fulfilling its stated aims to promote pupils' spiritual and social development and academic progress. These positive and explicit objectives are well defined in the published aims of the school and embedded in its distinctive philosophy and the teachings of the Catholic Church. All staff work hard to make the Mission Statement a reality. There is a strong ethos of care and consideration for others, and this pervades the whole school community. The school's ethos promotes a sense of fairness and justice, trust and friendship between teachers and pupils. The school's commitment to inclusive education is reflected by the positive impact engendered by the Learning Enhancement Centre on the attainment of underachieving pupils but is not reflected by various infringements of the National Curriculum. The school organises 'catch-up classes' in literacy and numeracy for Year 7 pupils, runs holiday revision programmes for Year 11 pupils, and a before and after school homework club for all pupils during term-time.
59. The school makes good provision for pupils' educational and personal support. The programme for personal, health and social education is given high priority. Weekly lessons throughout the year are in tutor groups, with two tutors assigned to each class in Years 7 to 11. The programme, which encompasses the teaching of the Catholic Church, is particularly sensitive to the social dangers of drug abuse, and includes work on relationships, and sex education. The retreat programme provides meaningful opportunities for pupils to reflect on their relationships with each other and with God. Two trained counsellors from the Brentwood Catholic Children's Society visit the school each week, advising pupils with personal or emotional problems. The Year

7 induction programme helps to integrate new pupils into the school, while that for Year 11 prepares them for work or further study, both academic and vocational. The school has initiated a pilot scheme, 'learning to learn' for Year 8 pupils, which entails teaching pupils skills necessary to access the curriculum effectively. Similarly, an 'Improvement Project' for Year 9 provides useful guidelines about planning revision for end of year national tests and stress management during examination. In order to highlight the benefits of further education, the school organises 'Ace Day' for pupils in Year 9, providing these pupils a good opportunity to chat with former pupils and a number of professional people from local industries.

60. The school is very successful in promoting high standards of behaviour. Parents support the school's approach to behaviour and discipline and indicate that swift and effective action is taken when incidents of unacceptable behaviour or harassment occur. The monitoring of behaviour is excellent and makes a positive contribution to the calm learning environment. The school's high expectations are made clear to pupils and are reinforced by a consistent approach taken by all staff. Serious incidents of unacceptable behaviour are duly recorded and, where appropriate, discussions are initiated with parents. Incidents of misbehaviour are monitored in terms of ethnicity of the pupils concerned. Exclusions, mostly fixed term, are dealt with following the clear policies and a strong emphasis is placed on anti-bullying measures. The number and frequency of permanent exclusions are very low. The number of temporary exclusions is about par for a school of this size.
61. Procedures for promoting, monitoring and improving levels of attendance in Years 7 to 11 are satisfactory, with some good features. There is a good policy statement and good overall co-ordination of efforts between curriculum co-ordinators, heads of years, form tutors and office staff. Registration and follow-up action are undertaken efficiently. The merit and awards system for good attendance provides a special incentive for younger pupils. The school has effective procedures to minimise lateness. Punctuality is closely monitored each morning and between lessons during the day. The school has good liaison with the local education authority's access and attendance team, and cases causing concern are discussed with them.

Assessment

62. Whole-school policies for assessment and related issues are in place, an improvement since the last inspection. Good attention is now paid to the analysis of examination and test results, at least at the end of Year 9 and at GCSE. A comprehensive database exists of pupils' attainment on entry, results of national tests taken at the end of Year 9 and of GCSE examination results. This is supplemented by data from other tests (for example, National Foundation for Educational Research, and Cognitive Ability Test scores) and from internal school records of progress in intermediate years between Years 7 to 11. These provide a large bank of information on which predictions for future pupil performance are based. Each teacher receives data on each pupil for each class, together with supportive information on those pupils with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language. Data are regularly updated, at least once per year. Examination data are reviewed, for boys and girls and ethnicity, and performance between subjects is compared. Mid-year and end of year reports inform parents of progress, whilst pupils are involved with subject teachers and form tutors during the year reviewing and developing their academic targets to improve their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are regularly and more closely monitored to very good effect. Pastoral and curriculum teams are therefore enabled to work closely together to support pupils' progress.
63. Use of all these data across departments is still variable, and assessment systems in modern foreign languages, for example, remain unsatisfactory, from the time of the last inspection report. Use of assessment information to inform curricular and lesson planning is good in English, mathematics, science, design technology and history, and satisfactory in most other subjects. Use of assessment information is poor in music. Where well used, assessment contributes to class setting arrangements, to course structure and organisation, to the matching of teaching to individual needs, and to specific target-setting for pupils. In many areas though, pupils are not fully aware of their actual academic performance, or of how their academic targets relate to National Curriculum levels, nor of what they must do to improve their work. Marking of pupils' work is very good in most subjects, notably in Years 10 and 11, where relevant and helpful advice is

given, but is inconsistent in English in Years 7 to 9 and unsatisfactory in modern foreign languages. Better communication of information to pupils and more consistent and effective monitoring of their performance are therefore areas for whole-school improvement, and would assist in driving up standards.

Sixth form

Assessment

64. Day-to-day assessment practice and procedures are good within subjects, with strengths in ICT, mathematics, business education and geography, as teachers know their students well, follow examination board requirements and make students aware of criteria for examinations. However, the strategic use of assessment to help teaching and learning improve, across the sixth form, is in the early stages of development.
65. Students feel that they are well informed by their subject teachers about their attainment and progress. They feel that marking is helpful, linked to examination criteria, and gives them good guidance about how to improve. Year 12 students receive regular reviews of their progress with tutors on the basis of information from subject teachers. The arrangements for Year 13 are less formal but students feel they are well supported by subject teachers. Students appreciate the accessibility of their subject teachers and the support they are given by them. The head of year tracks their progress in relation to their predicted grades and is available for students if they have difficulties. However, this support tends to be in response to difficulties identified either by subject teachers or by students themselves. The school does not offer this support to all students as a matter of course. The responsibility for seeking help lies largely with the students themselves and as such is not as effective as it might be.
66. The school has recently made use of ALIS, a commercial package that measures students' achievement based on their GCSE and post-16 examination results, to identify areas for development across subjects. Results were not available at the time of the inspection. Assessment data are not used as effectively as they might be to help all students to achieve their potential. The head of year does not have a clear overview of students' progress in relation to their prior attainment across all subjects. Assessment data about students appear to remain in the school where they are taught rather than feeding back to the school, All Saints, which has responsibility for them.

Advice, support and guidance

67. Support and guidance are satisfactory. The school reviews students' progress closely during their first term in the sixth form and is able to react quickly if students feel they are not on appropriate courses. Students are provided with good support and guidance in choosing university and college courses and they are helped with university applications in their tutor periods. Students appreciate the guidance they are given in this area but feel that they could be given better careers guidance if they are not aiming to continue into higher education. Students with English as an additional language are supported through the EAL service provided within the borough.
68. Students have the opportunity to attend master classes in English and art through the school's links with other institutions.
69. Students feel well informed about how they are progressing. They appreciate the advice and guidance they receive from individual subject teachers, the accessibility of their teachers and their willingness to give extra help. They feel that they receive good guidance from teachers about the standards they are achieving and how to improve.
70. Students' personal care is well provided for. They have their own sixth form common room and study area. Great care is taken to assist students in settling into the sixth form. This includes an induction programme where students can speak to any of their prospective teachers and a residential course to allow prospective students to meet at the end of Year 11. The school also takes care to consult students, through the sixth form council.

71. Health and safety provision is good, overall, within All Saints; consortium schools were not inspected. However, students travel regularly between schools within the consortium and procedures for recording and monitoring their attendance in lessons or at private study are unsatisfactory. There is at present no effective system for checking the attendance of All Saints' students at other sites within the consortium and communication between sites is too slow to be effective in ensuring that students are where they should be.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

72. Most parents are very pleased with the school. They value its Christian ethos and ideals, and its high expectations of pupils' achievements. Parents feel that the quality of teaching is good, overall, and the day-to-day running of the school is also good.
73. A few parents expressed concerns about the effectiveness and regularity of the marking of work; about the large amount of homework given to pupils, particularly in religious education, and a lack of adequate provision for physical education in the 'last years' of their children's schooling. Parents' understanding of the provision for modern foreign languages was confused. Inspectors found that there are a number of curricular deficiencies; the school does not provide the entitlements pupils have to physical education and to modern foreign languages, for example.

74. Parents are kept informed of pupils' progress through formal consultations with teachers and termly reviews and written annual reports. Curriculum co-ordinators maintain regular contact with parents of those pupils who are causing concern in respect of their academic work, or emotional or social development.
75. Parents recognise and appreciate the headteacher's 'Open Access' policy for the whole school community, which enables both parents and pupils to raise issues or concerns. The school listens to parents, inviting their views and responding promptly to them. The school issues an annual questionnaire to all parents, seeking their views on ways in which home-school links can be improved and on whole-school policies, such as sex and drugs education and the Healthy Schools Initiative.
76. Although some useful information about pupils' attitudes to learning, rather than what pupils can and cannot do, is provided in reviews issued each term, the written annual reports issued to parents towards the end of the spring term lack depth. The annual reports do not always indicate how pupils' performance and progress relate to their capabilities and prior attainment. These reports do not clearly identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses in each area of the curriculum. Fourteen per cent of parents who returned the questionnaire are not satisfied with the information they receive about their children's progress. The school says the amount that can be written on reports is limited by the advice given to teachers by their union representatives. However, most parents turn up at the parents' evening associated with annual reports and teachers provide detailed verbal information then. The relatively few parents who do not turn up are actively contacted to ensure they know enough.
77. Good advice is given to parents about the induction of pupils into Year 7 and the school also provides useful information in the form of two booklets for Year 7 pupils. Parents are also consulted about the courses to be studied from Year 10. A home-school agreement is in place that clearly shows the responsibilities and expectations of parents, pupils and school. Regular newsletters keep parents informed about the school developments and events. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to the life and work of the school, for example, through monitoring homework. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved fully in the initial and review processes in relation to registration. They are informed regularly about their children's targets and the progress made.
78. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report are informative, giving parents information about pupils' achievements and activities. However, the prospectus is not sufficiently clear in some of the messages it gives. For example, "Music is thriving at All Saints School" refers more to instrumental tuition and some other optional activities rather than what is provided in lessons. "Our multi-purpose sports hall is a dramatic setting and backdrop to our sporting achievements" is correct if success at inter-school sports is meant, but there is no clear statement that National Curriculum physical education is not taught in Years 10 and 11, and "[the school has] an excellent record for teaching European languages" is unclear. The fifth of Year 11 pupils who take a modern language GCSE do quite well, but it is a legal requirement for all pupils to take a language. Furthermore, the school admits that any 'less able' who wish to pursue a modern language are "counselled" out of the frame before option classes start in Year 10. The headteacher maintains that most schools use hyperbole to exaggerate their curriculum offer and admits that the school has not made the absence of the legal entitlement to physical education in Years 10 and 11 clear to parents.
79. The thriving parents and teachers association called, the Friends of All Saints, consists of a committed group of parents who work diligently to raise funds for the school through a variety of social and public events. Parents, from all cultures represented in the school, are welcomed and valued and they fully participate in the life of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

80. Leadership by the headteacher and management of the school generally is satisfactory, overall. There are some very good features of the headteacher's leadership: Standards in GCSE/GNVQ

examinations have risen faster than the national trend and exceeded statutory targets last year. Policies and actions are in place to improve standards in Years 7 to 9 and hence make standards in Year 11 even better. Very good attitudes and behaviour amongst pupils have been fostered and maintained. Major building works have been implemented to improve provision and raise aspirations of pupils and teachers. Successful recruitment of staff is a key feature of the school and the headteacher is at the forefront of this; curricular developments and success are most often linked to new appointments. However, the headteacher has not resolved conflicting curricular issues and the school fails to meet statutory requirements in several areas. Nor has he resolved issues related to inadequate music teaching and learning identified at the last inspection. The new science building has not been equipped adequately and resources have not been put in place to allow ICT to be used appropriately in all curriculum areas as well as to underpin the ICT GNVQ and AVCE courses. Though it may be correct that the government provided funds only for the science building, not for resources, management should have budgeted for equipment over time. There is also the question of why there is insufficient basic equipment in the first place, unless science has been operating with too little for a long time. The ICT GNVQ course is certainly an examination success and gives the school headline results. However, management should have perceived that the knock-on effect of this course would be too few computers available for most other teachers, and to have developed some strategies to deal with the shortfall.

81. The leadership and management of subject areas are very good in science, art and design, and ICT. They are good in all other areas except modern foreign languages and music. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory in modern foreign languages principally because of unsatisfactory assessment procedures and inadequate provision for relatively lower ability pupils, coupled with the continuance, since the last report, of non-compliance with statutory requirements. Leadership and management of music are unsatisfactory for many reasons, significant amongst which is no significant change from the poor picture given at the last report. The inspection noted that there is no person appointed as a head of music and there is only one music teacher; consequently, leadership of music and monitoring of provision presumably devolves to the headteacher. The headteacher has put in place strategies to provide musical opportunities outside the classroom, for example, free instrumental tuition and support for a jazz band.
82. On balance, the governing body fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily, within the limits of its knowledge. It ensures that money is spent correctly, keeps a very good eye on teacher recruitment and retention, and is knowledgeable about standards and how they are analysed and reported. The annual report to parents also meets requirements. However, some members of the governing body were unaware, prior to a meeting with inspectors, that statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are not being fully met, whilst others remain dismissive of statutory breaches after the inspection. Though some curricular requirements are scheduled to change, this is not a reason for current and past omissions. Neither do governors appear sufficiently aware of areas of unsatisfactory or worse teaching as they have done too little to address them.
83. The school now closely monitors pupils' attainment in Years 7 to 11 and is good at recognising features of national analysis. However, this analysis does not always extend into action at the classroom or pupil level and, for example, more able pupils are often insufficiently challenged in the work given them. Overall, the school does evaluate teaching and learning well. This is linked to very good appraisal and performance management and excellent induction of new staff. However, the school is not so effective at handling teaching and learning, which has been seemingly ineffective for years. Bad practice identified at the last inspection still exists.
84. A director of teaching and learning, an assistant headteacher, has taken a key role in making improvements in teaching and learning since the last inspection. His work has contributed significantly to improvements in lesson structure, particularly a move to the three-part lesson in which lesson objectives are shared with pupils, the lesson is taught, and progress is checked at the end. Significant work has been done with the history, mathematics and science departments to improve teaching and learning and has been effective, as is reflected in the relevant subject sections in this report. Part of the role of the director is to ensure that procedures are in place for monitoring teaching and learning. Two years ago some procedures, at least, were not good enough, ("Much work is carried out on analysing examination results without any thought as to how this analysis can be used to improve results"). Subject departments and teachers now

appear to be better in reflecting on their work, but some are obviously not doing well enough and others have inconsistencies, for example, in the quality of marking. Another assistant headteacher manages both science and staff development very well. Professional development of staff is mostly very well done and linked effectively to their performance management targets. How effective training has been is closely monitored down to classroom level to see if learning and standards improve.

85. The total money received by the school is typical of a school of this size in London, though funding for sixth forms complicates matters. The money received is well managed by the deputy headteacher and prudently spent, quite a small balance being carried forward for contingencies. Staffing costs are kept down, in relationship to overall costs, through recruitment of young staff, a relatively light senior management team, and little need for supply teachers; there is generally little staff absence. The school is quite successful in 'winning' other funding for buildings and curriculum developments. Good use and management of funds is a strength of the governing body. However, it is unclear if all governors are aware of the money the local education authority says needs to be spent immediately on equipping the new science block, or if all governors were aware of the resource implications of pursuing GNVQ ICT.
86. Best value practices of comparing, challenging, consulting and competing are, overall, done satisfactorily. School performance data are compared and routes for this school to improve overall examination performance relatively quickly, for example, GNVQ, were selected. However, a comparison between the curriculum of this school and that of most schools has not been made, or if it has been, the comparison has been ignored. The school has challenged itself to improve and has done so, and is continuing to do so with various initiatives targeting almost all years in the main school. The school does consult parents with the use of questionnaires and does have an effective school council in place so that the views of pupils and students can be taken on. Competition is not a feature of the school, as it is well oversubscribed, attracting nearly a third of pupils from outside the borough. The sixth form is also part of a consortium with three other local schools and mutual co-operation is the feature of that, rather than competition.
87. The school's ten priorities for improvement in the 2002/2003 school improvement plan are laudable and five refer to raising standards. Two refer to the curriculum. One of these is about citizenship, which this report says is currently good, and one to ICT capability, which this report says is well addressed in ICT lessons but not across the curriculum. There is no clear development plan to outline use of ICT across all subjects or to show how the co-ordinator will match the wider use of computers to the school's aims. Neither the school nor pupils have a record of the ICT skills they accumulate both within subjects and out of school.
88. Nothing significant is said in the plan about the ongoing non-compliance with regard to physical education. A reference is made in the modern foreign languages plan "to advertise the subject in a way that will give it a greater appeal", despite the fact that it is currently still statutory. On balance, priorities are satisfactory. School staff mostly want the school to carry on improving and there is a good capacity for the school to do so.

Special educational needs

89. Management of special educational needs is excellent. Special educational needs staff have a very wide range of expertise and qualifications that inspire confidence from parents, teachers and pupils. All records and documentation are maintained through meticulous secretarial support. Excellent use is made of the borough advisory service, which is having a specific, positive effect on the needs of pupils with English as a second language. Resources are very good and include excellent support from the team in the Learning Resource Centre; they identify necessary resources very well, and run comprehensive sessions to support pupils with literacy problems. Development planning is excellent and builds on the strengths of subject departments; planning extends the support of the special educational needs department to provide the boost to learning that builds pupils' confidence and self-esteem - helping pupils to become lifelong learners. When the National Literacy Strategy pilot was introduced, all departments were asked to develop their own policies for the use and development of language in their subject areas. A literacy committee met regularly during the first year to disseminate information to departments, share out ideas

picked up from training and co-ordinate whole-school initiatives. Most departments now have literacy policies and there have been some good results across the curriculum, with use of key words and specialist vocabulary. The programme was originally set up and organised by a member of the English department. When she left the school last year it was taken over by the head of the special needs department, who works closely with the head of English. Management of pupils with a gifted and talented profile is a mixed picture. Pupils, who are gifted and talented, by the criteria used in the school, have been identified and their parents have been informed. A mentor from the senior management team supports all pupils recognised as being gifted and talented and there are some extra opportunities for such pupils, such as links with the local university. The programme is called 'Extension' and extends to more able pupils rather than just gifted and talented pupils. Monitoring the benefits or deficits of the programme lacks rigour and therefore it is difficult to assess how effective it is. Identification of talented pupils does not lead to much because of the lack of opportunities for them in the restricted curriculum; there are few chances for talents to shine in music, modern foreign languages, physical education, or drama.

Staffing

90. Staffing is good, overall. The local education authority is innovative and creative in attracting new teachers to the borough, providing very good hostel accommodation and loan incentives. The significant inner London teaching allowance, which Barking and Dagenham receives, also helps. Teachers are well qualified. In science, geography and special educational needs staffing is very good; all have specialists with a good balance of age and experience. In most other subjects staffing is good. In design and technology, English and modern foreign languages it is satisfactory. In design and technology past staffing difficulties are now being resolved. In modern foreign languages, teachers have a good command of the taught language but are less secure in their knowledge about the National Curriculum and examination course requirements. Staffing in music consists of just one person, supplemented by visiting tutors and the voluntary help of teachers from other subjects, and is inadequate, overall. Teachers are given good support by the range of non-teaching staff in the school. In science, technicians provide an invaluable service. Support staff working in the special educational needs department are all well trained. The learning resource centre is well served by qualified, experienced and helpful staff who maintain and continue to develop an invaluable resource for the whole school.

Accommodation

91. Accommodation is good, overall, and has improved significantly since the last inspection, with many specialist rooms for many subjects sited adjacently. Building work continues; music and drama will shortly be well provided for. The close proximity of the Learning Enhancement Centre to the Learning Resource Centre is helpful, as are the adjacent ICT rooms. The most recent ICT room is an excellent working space that encourages flexible work by pupils, both individually and in groups, promoting independent learning and personal development.

Resources

92. The resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory, overall, and in many instances contribute very effectively to approaches expected in a technology college. Pupils in the design and technology department, for instance, enjoy state-of-the-art computer-controlled equipment for milling, cutting and turning. The art department has a wide range of resources for textiles, printing, sculpture and digital processing of images and these play an important part both in the interest and enjoyment of the pupils and the high standards they achieve. Science and geography teachers have embraced the use of interactive whiteboards linked to the computer network and multimedia resources. These dramatically increase the scope for learning and were used to very good effect during the inspection. Whilst the number of computers for a school of this size is only about average, the range of software is good. Access to computers is inadequate for some curriculum areas and contributes to the mathematics departments' use of ICT being unsatisfactory. However, throughout the school, pupils can get information through the broadband network. They use e-mail and can send in work that they have done at home. Resources for science in general, and for physics in particular, are unsatisfactory because there are not enough everyday items such as test tubes and other experimental equipment. This deficit means that too

little practical work is currently done in science, disappointing in a new building. Resources for music are also unsatisfactory.

93. The library resource centre is very well managed with a very good supply of books, talking books, periodicals and access to computers. Resources for careers are good and are kept up to date. There is very good co-operation between the library staff and teachers, links with the county library service and good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Family literacy sessions are held successfully in the resource centre and play an important part in community relations. The very good level of library resources for the school has been maintained since the last inspection.

Sixth form

Leadership and management

94. Leadership is satisfactory and management is good. The sixth form co-ordinator and heads of year meet regularly to ensure smooth day-to-day running. The school 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 continuing links with other schools in the consortium and through effective links with the wider community. The school's governing body has the same level of information as it does about the school; it knows about examination standards, for example, but it is unclear how it provides a steer to the work of the consortium.
95. The headteacher, head of sixth form and the school's senior management team work in close collaboration with their counterparts within the consortium to organise overall provision. The consortium sixth form co-ordinator oversees sixth form management and provides communication between schools. However, systems currently in place lack sufficient rigour to ensure consistency in working practices across the consortium, to monitor and evaluate overall provision, or to identify and spread good practice. The school's head of sixth form and the consortium sixth form co-ordinator do not have a clear view of standards or students' achievement across the sixth form as a whole; nor are lines of responsibility for this clear. Consequently, long-term strategic planning to improve academic provision and drive up standards across the consortium is also unclear. The school's improvement plan for 2002-2003 does recognise weaknesses that this inspection has revealed. A computerised system to support administration of post-16 work was set up in July 2002. This does not yet allow information to be collated from consortium schools about the progress being made by students from All Saints. The plan intended better information to be provided to post-16 teachers about students' prior attainment from September 2002, with a national system of monitoring achievement to be in place from December 2002. The inspection acknowledges that a national system is being used for students in Year 12, though the school is still awaiting analysis. However, the school holds no data about the achievement of current students in Year 13; inspectors had to determine and inform the school that students in 2002 did achieve well, overall. The improvement plan goes on to student attendance: "to ensure all advanced level students maintain acceptable levels of attendance". No data on the attendance of Year 13 students were forthcoming during the inspection. Other planning targets - pastoral support, a 'core' enrichment curriculum, and improved social and study facilities - have been met or are well on their way to being met.
96. The school receives funding on the basis of the number of students on its own register. Any discrepancies in funding the teaching actually done in different consortium schools are reconciled between schools at the end of the year. The large number of students across the consortium permit a wide range of courses, which can be mixed and matched to student demand, and students at All Saints, at least, stay on their courses and achieve well. Consequently, the sixth form is cost-effective.
97. Leadership and management are good, overall, within subject areas, with particular strengths in business education, ICT and mathematics. Systems generally are in place to improve standards and the quality of teaching and learning but these are subject- and teacher-led rather than consortium-led. Consequently, consistency in practice and the spread of good practice are not strengths.

98. There are also inconsistencies in expectations across the consortium as regards behaviour and dress which students find difficult to cope with. There are no effective systems in place to ensure that all schools have the same approach.
99. Although progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory and standards have been maintained, no effective action has been taken to address issues raised in last report; for example, the development of independent learning. There is no system in place to ensure that this aspect of students' learning is developed and monitored effectively across the consortium.
100. Management of the sixth form is good. The head of the sixth form is well informed about students' general progress and works closely with her counterparts in other schools to monitor them and provide prompt and appropriate support where necessary. She meets other sixth form managers regularly to exchange information, organise activities and ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the sixth form. There is a thorough student induction programme beginning in Year 11 to inform potential students about the sixth form and the choices available to them. This continues in Year 12, to help students settle quickly into sixth form life. Any movement between courses is restricted to the beginning of the year and after that drop outs are rare. Very few students fail to complete courses that they start at the beginning of Year 12. Students appreciate the support they receive and the efforts made on their behalf to provide work experience and extra-curricular activities.

Resources

101. It was not possible to determine the level of resources across the consortium. In this school the quality and range of resources for the sixth form are satisfactory overall. In most instances they are identical to those available for the main school. Students have enough textbooks to enable them to study at home and all make good use of the school network and Internet for research. Resources for design and technology and biology are very good. Resources for physics and chemistry are unsatisfactory. Staffing is very good. Accommodation is at least satisfactory. Again, consortium schools were not inspected.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

102. To raise standards, improve the quality of education, and meet statutory requirements the headteacher and governors should:
- 1) Be rigorous and effective in tackling the issues that lead to unsatisfactory teaching.
Paragraphs 27-29, 66, 67, 81, 157, 112
 - 2) Ensure that all statutory requirements for the curriculum are met as quickly as possible; any decision to delay or not comply with statutory requirements should be clearly explained to current parents of pupils, and clearly stated and explained in the prospectus for parents of potential pupils.
Paragraphs 4, 9, 39, 58, 78, 81, 86, 88, 151, 183, 210
 - 3) Rectify rapidly inadequacies in the provision of music – an issue that has hung on since the last inspection, six years ago. The inspection acknowledges that new accommodation for music is nearing completion and that a director of music post is being advertised.
Paragraphs 9, 38, 67, 80, 81, 90, 193, 195, 200, 201
 - 4) Tackle shortcomings in the teaching and management of modern foreign languages.
Paragraphs 63, 80, 81, 183, 184, 186, 188, 189, 191
 - 5) Ensure that national expectations for the use of ICT across the curriculum are met.
Paragraphs 40, 86, 115, 125, 130, 165, 169, 188, 201, 227

Sixth form

- 1) Ensure that the rigour now being applied to evaluation and developments in the 11 to 16 school extends to the sixth form.
Paragraphs 11, 35, 94, 95, 279
- 2) Take steps to see that assessment information is consistently well used to help students do better.
Paragraphs 36, 64-66, 95, 247, 266, 273, 285, 286
- 3) Review procedures for monitoring student attendance and retention so that information can be accessed quickly, wherever students might be taught in the consortium.
Paragraphs 13, 71

In addition to the significant issues above the governors should include the following more minor issues in their action plan:

- More able pupils are too often not challenged well enough in lessons.
Paragraphs 9, 110, 116, 123, 155, 169, 178, 199,
- The quality of written information provided to parents each year about how well their children are doing is unsatisfactory. The inspection acknowledges that very good attendance at parents' evenings helps supplement this.
Paragraph 76
- Improve resources for science, music and ICT.
Paragraphs 35, 40, 86, 92, 101, 123, 166, 200

THE LEARNING ENHANCEMENT CENTRE

103. Standards of work of pupils in the learning enhancement centre (LEC) are better than might be expected because of teachers' detailed analysis of pupils' needs and the very good response they make to support them. Many of these pupils find school difficult and absence is high. This leads to problems with learning because lack of continuity due to absence is compounded by pupils' individual lack of self-esteem. The Learning Enhancement Centre uses a variety of effective strategies to encourage pupils to focus on their strengths and to build up self-belief. These actions are very effective in fostering pupils' personal development and improvement. A well-planned strategy prepares pupils for re-entering main school classes when it is considered they are able to. Links with learning mentors are flexible and pupils can 'drop-in' to the centre to receive support, which helps maintain their positive approach to their education.
104. Teaching and learning in the LEC are very good. Pupils are attached to one of the three trained learning mentors. Together they plan appropriate academic and personal targets that involve pupils, their teachers and their parents. All targets are monitored and work towards the time when pupils can totally re-enter the main school. Behaviour management discussions help pupils to plan to deal with times when they feel they may not cope in a situation, and also plan suitable actions. A 'learning to learn' programme is in place to help pupils understand the way they learn best, so they can build on that knowledge to extend their skills and understanding. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the benefits they have gained from the LEC and the fact that it has changed their lives because they have a more positive view of themselves and school.
105. Very good management ensures that the work of the LEC is totally integrated into the school community. Heads of year are key managers in disseminating the work of the LEC through a standing agenda item at all their meetings. Very effective management of a strong team of inspiring learning mentors, with vast experience, deploys them effectively across the needs of identified pupils. However, there is a waiting list for pupils to work with learning mentors, which indicates that all teachers should have more awareness of the work of the LEC to help enhance their own personal teaching and learning techniques. Resources are very good and many are produced within the centre as a result of working with pupils and determining what they need to help them. The LEC is adjacent to the learning resource centre (enhanced library) and the LEC

team make very good use of that team's knowledge of alternative resources. Good ICT provision has recently been introduced but lacks the integration of an Independent Learning System (computer assisted learning) in order to use technology, to stimulate independent learning. The LEC is well recognised, outside the school, for its work, which is promoting innovation in the work of mentors and pupils.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | | |
|--|--------------|-----|
| Number of lessons observed | Years 7 – 11 | 131 |
| | Sixth form | 40 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | | 45 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Years 7 – 11 | | | | | | | |
| Number | 9 | 39 | 44 | 25 | 9 | 3 | 2 |
| Percentage | 7 | 30 | 34 | 19 | 7 | 2 | 1 |
| Sixth form | | | | | | | |
| Number | 1 | 11 | 25 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 2.5 | 27.5 | 62.5 | 5.0 | 2.5 | 0.0 | 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 one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll | Y7 – Y11 | Sixth form |
|---|--------------|------------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll | 917 | 190 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 155 | n/a |
| Special educational needs | | |
| | Y7 – Y11 | Sixth form |
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 15 | 2 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 146 | 2 |
| English as an additional language | No of pupils | |

| | |
|---|----|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 74 |
|---|----|

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 19 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 55 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 7.9 |
| National comparative data | 7.8 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.6 |
| 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)

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | 2002 | 113 | 89 | 202 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above | Boys | 77 | 74 | 83 |
| | Girls | 79 | 68 | 73 |
| | Total | 156 | 142 | 156 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above | School | 77 (62) | 70 (63) | 77 (70) |
| | National | 66 (64) | 67 (66) | 66 (66) |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above | School | 35 (24) | 39(36) | 39 (29) |
| | National | 32 (31) | 45(43) | 33 (34) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above | Boys | 61 | 76 | 74 |
| | Girls | 68 | 70 | 71 |
| | Total | 129 | 146 | 145 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above | School | 64 (72) | 72 (63) | 71 (67) |
| | National | 67 (65) | 70 (68) | 67 (64) |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above | School | 29 (28) | 35 (36) | 27 (16) |
| | 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 pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | 2002 | 87 | 95 | 182 |

| GCSE results | | 5 or more grades A* to C | 5 or more grades A*-G | 1 or more grades A*-G |
|---|----------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified | Boys | 60 | 85 | 85 |
| | Girls | 63 | 90 | 90 |
| | Total | 123 | 175 | 175 |
| Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified | School | 68 (51) | 96 (99) | 96 (99) |
| | 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 pupil | School | 48.4 (42.8) |
| | National | 39.8 (39.0) |

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 pupils who achieved all those they studied | School | 200 | 92 |
| | National | | n/a |

| Average A/AS points score per candidate | Candidates entered for GCE/A/AS | | | Candidates entered for GCE VCE/Advanced GNVQ | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--------|------|--|--------|------|
| | Male | Female | All | Male | Female | All |
| School | 14.5 | 11 | 13.5 | 0 | 9 | 6 |
| National | 16.9 | 17.9 | 17.4 | 9.8 | 11.4 | 10.6 |

| Vocational qualifications | | Number | % success rate |
|---|----------|--------|----------------|
| Number in their final year of studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied | School | 10 | n/a |
| | National | | n/a |

Ethnic background of pupils

| Categories used in the Annual School Census |
|---|
| White – British |
| White – Irish |
| White – any other White background |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean |
| Mixed – White and Black African |

Exclusions in the last school year

| No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 765 | 65 | 1 |
| 36 | 0 | 0 |
| 48 | 0 | 0 |
| 17 | 2 | 0 |
| 5 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | |
|---|-----|----|---|
| Mixed – White and Asian | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – any other mixed background | 13 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British - Indian | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British - Pakistani | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background | 13 | 1 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean | 53 | 1 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – African | 102 | 16 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| Any other ethnic group | 19 | 0 | 0 |
| No ethnic group recorded | 3 | 0 | 0 |

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y13

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 66 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 16.8 |

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | n/a |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | n/a |

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

| | |
|---|-----|
| Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes | n/a |
|---|-----|

Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y13

| | |
|-------------|-----|
| Key Stage 3 | n/a |
| Key Stage 4 | n/a |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|---------|
| Financial year | 2001/02 |
|----------------|---------|

| | £ |
|--|-----------|
| Total income | 3,764,085 |
| Total expenditure | 3,791,905 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 3,400 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 41,967 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 14,147 |

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 26 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 27 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE) | 1 |
| 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 | 800 families |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 341 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 52 | 41 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 54 | 43 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 51 | 43 | 3 | 0 | 2 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 40 | 48 | 9 | 2 | 1 |
| The teaching is good. | 49 | 44 | 5 | 0 | 2 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 39 | 45 | 13 | 1 | 1 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 65 | 31 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 73 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 44 | 44 | 8 | 1 | 2 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 67 | 29 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 57 | 38 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 38 | 41 | 7 | 1 | 13 |

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

ENGLISH

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

| |
|---|
| <p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The steady improvement in GCSE results in recent years, particularly in literature • The recent improvement in the National Curriculum test results in Year 9 • The teachers' commitment to maintaining and raising standards • Pupils of all abilities have full access to the English curriculum <p>Areas for development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing good practice, so that more lessons have the qualities seen in the best • Extending the range of learning opportunities, including extra-curricular activities and the use of ICT • Developing the use of the excellent examination and test data now available, for departmental analysis, evaluation and planning |
|---|

| Aspect | Years 7 - 9 | Years 10 - 11 |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| Girls' standard of work seen | Average | Above average |
| Boys' standard of work seen | Average | Above average |
| National test and examination results 2002 | Above average | Above average |
| Similar school comparisons | Good | Good |
| Overall achievement | Good | Good |
| Attitudes and behaviour | Excellent | Excellent |
| Teaching | Satisfactory | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good | Good |

106. Standards in the tests taken in Year 9 have been in line with national standards over the past three years. After a drop in attainment in 2000 and 2001 there was a rise in 2002, when 77 per cent of pupils attained Level 5 or above, in comparison with the national 67 per cent. With English test results on entry just below the national average, this represents satisfactory progress. At this stage, pupils did less well in the national tests in English than in science, but better than in mathematics. Performance in comparison with similar schools was good and the value added was satisfactory by national standards.
107. In GCSE, with a commendable entry for both English examinations, there were good results in English and very good results in English literature. In English, pupils' attainment was slightly above the national average, 65 per cent of pupils gaining* A-C grades in comparison with the national 57 per cent. In literature, 82 per cent of pupils gained levels A*-C, well above the national figure of 62 per cent. In both examinations boys did very well. They exceeded the national figure for boys by 13 per cent in English and by 23 per cent in literature. Girls performed less well, but were also well above the national average in literature and very slightly above in English. This cohort of pupils, two years previously, had attained the national average. Their GCSE results in 2002 show good achievement, especially when compared with previous years. From 1998 to 2000 results in English were below the national average and in literature well below. The improvement that began in 2001 was sustained in 2002.
108. Work seen and lessons observed during the inspection show average standards in Years 7 to 9 and above average standards, overall, in GCSE classes. Pupils are well motivated, and the excellent attitudes and relationships in English lessons provide a strong basis for learning. A particular strength of the department is the work being done in most of the foundation or lower ability sets. These pupils have access to the full English curriculum and in the best lessons respond with much enthusiasm and energy. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

Inclusion and entitlement are admirable features of the department's policy and practice, and these will be further strengthened by some planned strategies to help pupils in the earlier stages of learning English as an additional language.

109. Pupils' speaking skills are satisfactory in discussion and their listening skills are very good, though they need more opportunities in lessons to take a lead, argue and present evidence. Reading aloud, however, is poorly developed and pupils need more practice and training if they are to read poetry and plays confidently and competently. Performance does not play enough part in the English schemes of work.
110. Reading and comprehension skills have been developed by use of the National Literacy Strategy materials and schemes, supported by the local education authority, in Years 7 to 9. A good school library is well used. The Reading Quest scheme launched by the department encourages reading and knowledge about authors. In lessons, however, opportunities for extending this awareness of writers and genres are sometimes missed. More could be done to develop extracts used for study and to introduce pupils to the work of the writers used. When reading a series of extracts from books on travel, for example, pupils in Year 8 were told very little about the writers quoted or other books they had written.
111. In Years 7 to 9, there are examples of lively and imaginative writing, and much is displayed on classroom and corridor walls. The writing requirements of the National Curriculum are being tackled systematically. Pupils write stories and reports, letters, scripts and poems. They write to argue or persuade and demonstrate good understanding of means and methods. Creative and analytical work on *Macbeth* in some Year 9 books shows both knowledge and enjoyment of the play. Despite some good work, however, there is a lack of lengthy writing in some classes and also inconsistency in the regularity of marking and the attention given to content and ideas. In Years 10 and 11 thoughtful analytical response to the set texts is evident in coursework and notebooks. Carefully researched and presented work is usually marked very conscientiously, teachers establishing a dialogue with pupils and setting appropriate targets for improvement.
112. The quality of teaching is good, overall. In half the lessons observed it was good or very good. In the other half it was mainly satisfactory, though a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching was seen across all years. In all lessons observed, class management was good and relationships friendly and encouraging. In the best lessons, imaginative planning provided a variety of activities designed to stimulate ideas and extend pupils' understanding, and vocabulary. Where teaching was less successful, teachers talked too much and students too little, and photocopied extracts were more in evidence than books. Over-use of exercises to identify features of language and style hindered rather than enhanced pupils' pleasure in a poem or passage as a whole. This formulaic approach reduces the important contribution English literature can make to pupils' cultural and spiritual experience.
113. In a very good lesson, Year 11 pupils considered the qualities of a good English teacher and then made a short list from five applications. Lively, purposeful group talk ensued, as they tackled a task requiring careful thought and willingness to hear and challenge the views of others. This was not a higher ability group, but pupils gained confidence in forming and expressing opinions and they made good progress. The teacher's guidance and interventions were well judged. In a less successful lesson with the same year, the analysis of a media text was done mainly by a series of teacher's questions, which offered little opportunity for pupils to take charge, show initiative or exchange ideas. Their passivity was in sharp contrast to the animation seen in the other lesson.
114. In a very successful lesson in Year 9, pupils considered evidence for character change in *Macbeth*. Whole-class discussion led smoothly into well-structured group work. Pupils discussed ideas and prepared presentations which they made to the whole class in a good lesson conclusion, showing sound knowledge of the text, and quoting confidently. A satisfactory lesson in another Year 9 class, with good preparation and subject knowledge on the part of the teacher would have been improved with some evidence that pupils were enjoying the passage.

being analysed. Rigorous dissection left no opportunity for pupils to share reactions to one of the most striking openings in contemporary fiction.

115. Good leadership has enabled the department to improve attainment by the end of Year 9 and the end of Year 11 since the last inspection. There is now scope for improvement in departmental management. There is no departmental handbook, to ensure that all teachers, newcomers in particular, are aware of departmental structures, policies, resources and analyses of recent and previous results. More use could be made of the very full data now provided to all departments by the school management for analysis, evaluation and planning. Some policies, for example, ICT, need writing or updating. ICT is not used either frequently or effectively enough. Although teachers offer generous support to pupils outside lessons, English extra-curricular activities are too limited, in the main school as in the sixth form. There have been visits by writers, but there are no clubs, very few theatre visits, and no performances, even within year groups.
116. With its excellent record in recent examinations, the English department is making a significant contribution to the success and academic progress of the school. A committed team has worked hard to achieve this. They should now consider ways in which they can extend and enrich pupils' experiences of language and literature outside the classroom. Other subjects' contribution to literacy will be found in the standards section and in the teaching section of this report.

MATHEMATICS

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

| | |
|---|--|
| Strengths | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent organisational changes are producing improvements in teaching and learning Lessons are well planned and there is good use of the national three-part lesson strategy, particularly up to Year 9 Documentation and assessment material are very good, enabling effective monitoring of the progress of pupils | |
| Areas for improvement | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision, within the department, of ICT facilities is unsatisfactory; these requirements of the National Curriculum are not being met Expectations and standards related to more able pupils, both at the end of Year 9 and at the end of Year 11, are not high enough Academic target-setting for pupils, in all years, needs to be clearer so pupils know better what they need to do to improve | |

| Aspect | Years 7- 9 | Years 10-11 |
|--|-----------------|---------------|
| Girls' standard of work seen | Above average | Average |
| Boys' standard of work seen | Above average | Average |
| National test results and examination results 2002 | Broadly average | Below average |
| Similar school comparisons | Broadly average | Below average |
| Overall achievement | Good | Satisfactory |
| Attitudes and behaviour | Very good | Very good |
| Teaching | Good | Satisfactory |
| Learning | Good | Satisfactory |
| Leadership and management | Good | Good |

117. National test results at the end of Year 9 in 2002 were better than those in 2001. The trend over the last three years is of gradual improvement and parallels the national trend but remains slightly below national standards. Boys' results show little change, but in 2002 girls outperformed boys for the first time. Results in 2002 differ from the standard of work seen because of recent improvements in teaching and learning, more effective adoption of the National Framework for mathematics, and better attention to the needs of higher-attaining pupils. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2002 agree with test results.

118. In test results in 2002 the proportion of pupils attaining Level 5 or higher was above those in similar schools - representing good progression from pupils' attainment levels on entry to the school - but below for pupils reaching Levels 6 or higher, because more able pupils received insufficient challenge to raise their standards.
119. GCSE results were below average compared with those in all schools. The proportion of pupils attaining an A*-C grade was below average. The proportion of pupils attaining an A*-G grade was above average. When compared with similar schools, GCSE results, overall, are as good as might be expected, though the proportion of pupils attaining A*-C grades was lower than might be expected. The proportion gaining A*-G grades was an excellent 100 per cent. If the overall GCSE results in 2002 are compared with the likely performance indicated by those pupils' end of Year 9 test results in 2000, then the results are satisfactory. Hence, pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
120. In 2002, more pupils gained A* or A grades than in the past four years, average point scores increased, and all but one pupil gained at least an F grade – indicative of effective teaching and learning. A higher proportion of girls than boys were awarded A*-C grades, but boys' average point scores were above those of girls. There was no significant variation in performance of different ethnic groups. Although results in 2002 were better than in 2001, both boys and girls underachieved in mathematics in comparison with their performance in their other GCSE subjects. Whilst there has been a marked improvement in results since the last inspection, recent trends show only moderate growth, the A*-C percentage remaining around 43 per cent for four years, partly reflecting prior performance and partly an effect of staffing issues.
121. By Year 9, pupils can handle data well, determine probabilities, evaluate by substitution into formulae, calculate areas and volumes, and use coordinates and gradients. However, many cannot operate effectively with fractions or deal with other than simple linear equations. Achievement, overall, is good but hindered as standards on entry are below average. Many pupils do improve their standards by two or three national levels, which is very good, a similar number improve by just one level, a few remain at the same or drop a level.
122. By Year 11, pupils can interpret cumulative frequency graphs, rearrange algebraic formulae, and solve simultaneous equations. Higher-attainers can solve quadratic equations and use the sine rule. However, few pupils can use trigonometry and many cannot convert efficiently between metric units, and work, though neat, often omits key stages of calculation – a source both of error and loss of method marks in examinations. Over half of the current Year 11 and just under 40 per cent of the current Year 10 started in Year 7 below Level 4 in mathematics (below national expectations). Summer schools and catch-up classes for lower-attainers, Year 9 'booster' classes, Year 11 revision classes, and participation in various Mathematical Challenges are helping to promote skills in the subject.
123. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of positive help from learning support assistants and when teachers structure teaching to meet pupils' needs – this though is not consistent across the department. The most able pupils make satisfactory progress but, with some exceptions, are not being set demanding enough work to allow them to attain more highly. Pupils who may not use English as their first language at home make satisfactory progress as in many lessons key words are stressed and objectives made clear.
124. Two-thirds of lessons seen were good or better, one was excellent, but two were unsatisfactory. Lesson planning is very good, many – especially in Years 7 to 9 – adopting the three-part strategy of the National Framework in mathematics. Numeracy 'starter' activities are common, though too often consisting of pencil-and-paper exercises; development work in the lesson is generally good, but plenaries (rounding up at the end) brief. A very good Year 7 lesson on coordinates and an excellent Year 9 lesson on equations of lines made effective use of overhead projectors, quick-fire question and answer sessions that promoted learning, variation in activities that sustained interest, and pupils illustrating work on the board. In contrast, resources were poorly used in an unsatisfactory Year 7 lesson and errors not corrected. In Years 10 and 11 a very good lesson on probability and a good lesson on tessellations actively involved pupils in their learning, with clear concise notes given in the former. In contrast, an unsatisfactory lesson was too strongly teacher-directed, with limited pupil participation and rapid loss of interest. Overall,

teachers have good subject knowledge and the warm relationships between teacher and pupils greatly assist learning. Pupils are attentive, work well individually or in pairs, and behaviour is very good in all lessons. Even when activities prove less interesting to them they remain courteous and polite. Marking by many teachers is very good, and helpful advice sometimes given alongside grades is good practice that should be more coherently adopted. Work on investigating and applying mathematics has improved since the last inspection, some good coursework being seen.

125. The head of mathematics has overall management responsibilities, but the key areas of enhancing teaching and learning and of supervising Years 7 to 9 and Years 10 and 11 are delegated to two other very committed staff. Eleven teachers, including newly qualified teachers, contribute to the teaching of mathematics, giving a blend of youth and experience. Considerable amounts of data are collected on pupils' progress. Each teacher has records for each class, enabling performance tracking and academic target-setting to take place, though evaluation of the data does not yet inform teachers as fully as it might. Schemes of work are now extensive, with detailed folders of material and advice available, and used. Much development evolves from the school's piloting of the National Framework and invaluable links with the local authority from whom much derives. Accommodation is spacious and displays are good. A serious deficiency is the lack of any computer facilities in an otherwise well-resourced department. 'Gridlock' with the school's ICT system prevents access, so National Curriculum requirements are not met and progress of all year groups in a key area of mathematics inhibited. A class set of graphic calculators is available for use.
126. With the combined responsibilities, leadership and management of the department are now good. Inspection indicates that further advances in standards are realisable. Other subjects' contribution to numeracy will be found in the standards section and in the teaching section of this report.

SCIENCE

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

| | |
|---|--|
| Strengths | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching is good and all teachers have the highest expectations of pupils • Results in tests and examinations are improving • Accommodation is excellent • Very good use is made of ICT to support teaching • Leadership and management are very good | |
| Areas for improvement | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of textbooks and basic scientific equipment, including ICT to support learning • The work with gifted and talented pupils needs further development | |

| Aspect | Years 7- 9 | Years 10-11 |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| Girls' standard of work seen | Above average | Above average |
| Boys' standard of work seen | Above average | Above average |
| National test and examination results 2002 | Above average | Above average |
| Similar school comparisons | Well above average | Well above average |
| Overall achievement | Good | Good |
| Attitudes and behaviour | Very good | Very good |
| Teaching | Good | Very good |
| Learning | Good | Very good |
| Leadership and management | Very good | Very good |

127. National test results at the end of Year 9 in 2002 were better than those in 2001. The trend over the last three years is one of gradual improvement at a faster rate than the national trend. Teacher

assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2002 agree with test results. Test results in 2002 were much better than they were in similar schools.

128. In 2002, GCSE results were above average compared to those in all schools. The proportion of pupils attaining an A*-C grade was above average. The proportion of pupils attaining an A*-G grade was above average, with no pupil failing to achieve at least a G grade. When compared with similar schools, GCSE results are much better than might be expected. The proportion of pupils attaining A*-C grades was particularly high whilst the proportion gaining A*-G grades was 100 per cent, much higher than might be expected. If the overall GCSE results in 2002 are compared with the likely performance indicated by those pupils' end of Year 9 test results in 2000, then the results are good. Hence, pupils' achievement is good. There was no significant difference between the results of boys and girls. Results in 2002 were better than in 2001. The trend in results over the last three years is up because teaching, leadership, management and accommodation have all improved.
129. By Year 9, pupils can handle scientific ideas with confidence and present their work well. However, because of a lack of basic scientific equipment they are less experienced in practical work. The standards of pupils' scientific work on entry to the school are average and this is helped by the regular programme of 'master classes' that teachers run for children in Year 6 of their primary schools. By Year 11, pupils can handle numerical work in science and understand the complexities of much of the work in genetics. They produce coursework of a good standard but this is again hindered by their relative inexperience in the actual handling of scientific equipment. Pupils can use the excellent network of computers with skill and accuracy but they do not have any experience in the use of data-logging equipment because this is not available in the department. Consequently, this element of National Curriculum requirements for ICT is not met.
130. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because the class setting system (different classes for different abilities) enables teachers to focus on suitable levels of work and this is supported by effective and helpful worksheets. The most able pupils make good progress but the work for them could be harder and make them think more, and there are plans to introduce triple science examinations (biology, chemistry and physics), which may provide a greater stimulus. No textbooks are issued to pupils and this does not encourage pupils, of all abilities, to do additional work or research at home. Pupils who may not use English as the first language at home make good progress because they are supported appropriately and the high number of lessons using computer-generated large screen presentations makes the reading of work on the board as clear as possible.
131. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. In over three-quarters of lessons teaching was good or better. There were several excellent lessons. In Year 9, in an excellent lesson on sound, the teacher used a full range of methods of producing sounds, involved the pupils actively and enthusiastically throughout, providing both excellent presentation from the 'SMART' board (a computer-linked whiteboard) and making use of her ability to sing. The result was a stimulating and absorbing lesson that resulted in some excellent learning. In a satisfactory Year 8 lesson the topic of the planetary system was explored. The teacher did allow pupils to enthuse, but their enthusiasm then dominated the lesson and the less experienced class and time management of the teacher meant that this resulted in just satisfactory learning. In Year 10, an excellent lesson on the topic of rocks saw pupils swept up by the enthusiasm of the teacher. Excellent planning and class management supported this enthusiasm and the lesson proceeded at a fast pace with pupils enjoying every minute, identifying and learning a great deal about the structure, formation and appearance of rocks. In contrast, in a satisfactory lesson on the same topic the approach by the teacher was less confident and enthusiastic and the attention of the pupils was not gripped in the same way. Class and time management was less efficient but the result was a perfectly satisfactory learning experience if a less exciting one than the first lesson described.
132. The department makes effective use of ICT in most lessons, using the SMART boards in every laboratory to their full. The principle ideas of the National Key Stage 3 Strategy are followed in the structuring of lessons and the department makes a satisfactory contribution to improving literacy skills by encouraging reading and speaking, and supporting accurate writing by careful marking of pupils' work.

133. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are very good and pupils are keen to participate in lessons and to learn. The work in exercise books is good and shows evidence of care and effort made by pupils. Pupils' work is marked regularly, often with helpful and encouraging comments. Assessment and monitoring of pupils' performance are thorough and pupils have a good understanding of both the level of attainment they are achieving and their targets.
134. Leadership and management are very good. An enthusiastic team of teachers is closely involved in developments and there is a real determination to continue to raise standards. This is illustrated by the presence of the entire department giving 'booster' classes to Year 9 pupils approaching their National Curriculum tests. There has been some imaginative experimental setting of boys and girls separately but it is too early for the department to evaluate fully the effect of these experiments; early indications are promising. Work schemes are clear and supportive and a new, helpful, departmental handbook has just been produced. The strength of leadership and management lies in the very good team spirit, which exists amongst all the teachers. Teachers are supported by a very good team of technicians who work hard to minimise the detrimental effects of the very limited supply of equipment in the department.
135. The department makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Teachers talk about the wonder of science and in topics such as evolution, reproduction and genetics, moral issues are discussed at some depth. There is a satisfactory contribution to the teaching of numeracy skills in lessons and this is seen in the work of pupils, but the department has yet to produce a numeracy policy. There is no formal policy for the contribution to citizenship in the science handbook but most teachers referred to any aspects relevant to this in their lesson plans
136. Since the last report the department has made very good progress. Planning is now very good, teaching is good, standards have risen significantly and pupils are achieving results above the national average. In addition, the building of a new science block has given the department excellent accommodation, if not equipment and resources.

ART AND DESIGN

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

| | |
|---|--|
| Strengths | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching and learning in all years The breadth of opportunities that the curriculum provides Boys' achievement The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education | |
| Areas for improvement | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no major areas for improvement. However, some teachers could broaden the range of teaching methods they use | |

| Aspect | Years 7 - 9 | Years 10 – 11 |
|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Girls' standard of work seen | Above average | Above average |
| Boys' standard of work seen | Above average | Above average |
| Achievement, overall | Well above average | Well above average |
| Teaching | Very good | Very good |
| Learning | Very good | Very good |
| Attitudes and behaviour | Very good | Very good |
| Leadership and management | Very good | Very good |

137. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2002 broadly agree with the standard of work seen because standards have been maintained. Boys achieve as well as girls by the end of Year 9, contrary to the national picture, because teachers support them well in their learning.

138. In 2002, GCSE results were well above average compared with those in all schools. The proportions of pupils attaining an A*-C grade and an A*-G grade were well above average. If the overall GCSE results in 2002 are compared with the likely performance indicated by those pupils' end of Year 9 test results in 2000, then the results were very good. Hence, pupils' achievement was very good. Boys' results were slightly higher than girls' results because teachers ensure that they are fully included in the well-focused teaching. Results in 2002 were better than in 2001. The trend in results over the last three years is up because teaching and overall provisions are very good.
139. Pupils enter the school with below average knowledge and skills in art and design. By Year 9, pupils can create imaginative compositions, sculptures and prints based on an above average appreciation of the work of artists and designers. Pupils are able to explore in depth because their knowledge and use of artistic language are developed well through critical study and evaluation of their own and others' work. Teachers also ensure that pupils develop a range of drawing skills from observation and through work in the style of other artists. Pupils with special educational needs also make very good progress because they are very well supported in the classroom. The most able pupils make very good progress because they are given opportunities to work on their own initiative. Boys' and girls' achievement are about the same. By Year 11, pupils produce work of a very high standard in print, textiles and in three-dimensional work. Pupils make very detailed studies, for instance, on the history of underwear and the paintings of Cézanne. Although the finished pieces are not always of the highest technical standard they are lively and imaginative. One higher-attaining student made a powerful composition from studies of figures in action and incorporated the style of European 'Futurists'. All pupils, including those who may not use English as the first language at home, make very good progress because they are involved and interested and keen to do well. Pupils at all levels bring a high degree of maturity to bear in class, and in their homework, so that teachers are able to set a high level of challenge. The quality of homework in Years 7 to 9 is well above average.
140. All students visit museums and galleries, and are exposed to stimulating displays in the classroom and around the school of their own and others' work. They collaborate on projects and relationships are very good.
141. More than half of lessons seen were very good. In a very good Year 8 lesson, the teacher made sure the pupils knew what they had to do by clearly explaining what they would learn. Pupils enlarged and overlapped drawings from observation to create pictures in the style of Michael Craig-Martin. As the lesson progressed, the teacher engaged them in discussion, using technical language, and helped them evaluate and develop their work. Most pupils understood how well they were doing, although few could say what standard they thought they were at. Pupils were fully involved and keen to show what they had learned. In a satisfactory Year 9 lesson, pupils had made good use of workbooks to record images and ideas on figures in action and these were being developed into paintings. Learning was satisfactory as the pupils were given a clear idea of the task. However, the teacher did not explain or demonstrate the way that other artists have expressed movement and, as a consequence, the images had a rather static quality. Higher-attaining pupils did not have sufficient opportunity to develop ideas independently. In a very good Year 10 lesson, the teacher set clear targets and time limits; students organised themselves and got to work quickly using drawings from life, photographs and studies from the work of Picasso. Creative work in a range of media resulted because students were confident and relaxed.
142. The school enters pupils in one of four GCSE art examinations: unendorsed, textiles, 3D and printing. All students make good use of ICT for research. Digital photography is combined with image processing of scanned drawings to develop work in advertising and publishing media. Work in progress during the inspection included masks and sculptures made by moulding the pupils' own faces and hands as well as pieces modelled in wire and plastic.
143. Leadership and management are very good and improvement since the last report has been good. Standards have improved, the curriculum has broadened and a high percentage of Year 11 pupils do very well in their GCSE examination. The teachers are expert and committed. For instance, classes are held after school for GCSE students who wish to improve their work or who want to

take an extra examination. The department has good links with local primary schools and regularly teaches groups of Year 6 pupils. The co-ordinator for art monitors teaching and learning well and an informal approach enables good curriculum development through the interchange of ideas. However, the process does not allow for a more critical understanding of teaching methods, so that good practices can be shared with non-specialist teachers. Teachers use a good system for assessing pupils' work and showing pupils how they can improve. Marking is not always consistent, with the use of "excellent" and "good" often interchangeable. More use could be made of National Curriculum attainment level descriptors when showing pupils what they can do to improve. Reports to parents at the end of the year are unsatisfactory because they do not show what an individual knows and can do and do not set targets for improvement. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils and the creative environment contributes to the very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Storage of work is a problem and lessons are sometimes taken in non-specialist rooms, which limit their scope.

CITIZENSHIP

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

144. Citizenship has been a requirement of the National Curriculum since September 2002 and practice is still developing in most schools. This report is presented in a different way from that of other subjects, as some judgements, for example, on standards, are not as clear cut.

Strengths

- Teaching and learning in Years 10 and 11 are very good
- The school is committed to teaching citizenship
- Pupils are most often good citizens and this reflects provision
- There is good planning for the development of the subject

Areas for improvement

- There is not sufficient time for the adequate teaching of National Curriculum citizenship in the current curricular arrangements
- Strategies are not yet in place to assess standards and achievement in citizenship
- Contributions by other subjects to citizenship are incidental rather than explicit and there is no overall scheme of work identifying citizenship within them

145. Citizenship is taught throughout the school through a variety of subjects. The personal, health and social education (PHSE) programme includes citizenship topics, such as government and parliamentary democracy in Year 8, the world as a global community in Year 9 and concepts of citizenship and the individual's role in Year 11. In addition, all pupils in the school study religious education to GCSE and this course provides two further units of citizenship: resolving conflict, and prejudice and discrimination. Other subject areas do make a contribution to the subject and the school has identified these areas. However, these subject contributions are incidental rather than explicit, with the exception of religious education and science and, at present, there is no overall scheme of work identifying learning about citizenship. In science, opportunities are taken to discuss the effects of pollution on breathing and the harmful effects of chemicals. Outside lessons, there are good active citizenship activities that enable pupils to participate in charity events and community service. The school council involves pupils' participation in the decision-making process and meetings are fully minuted by pupil secretaries. Pupils are able to see a connection between active citizenship and community improvements. Pupils are able to gain recognition for being "Active citizens during school" and most pupils in the school are good citizens.
146. During the week of the inspection there was insufficient evidence to allow judgements on standards of attainment or on teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9. This was because an extended school assembly reduced the one scheduled PHSE lesson to around two-thirds of its length. In Year 10 and Year 11, attainment is above average and pupils achieve well. Coursework confirms that pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the topics covered on their religious education course (this information was provided by a second inspection team – this

team did not inspect religious education). For example, pupils are aware of the harm that prejudice and discrimination can cause and the implication for the wider community. Pupils also have good enquiry skills; in Year 10 they have found out about local councils and what they do and have used ICT to research pressure groups. In lessons seen in Year 10, pupils showed good listening and debating skills and their attitudes to the subject are very good. When pupils worked in groups higher-attaining pupils supported those who found the work more difficult, so that all pupils made notes for discussion. In one lesson seen, girls showed a very good understanding of the concepts covered.

147. The quality of teaching and learning in the small sample of lessons seen was very good. Teachers have very good behaviour management skills and provide very good opportunities for discussion to which pupils respond very well. Lessons are well planned and structured. Good quality resources enhance learning experiences as was seen in a Year 10 lesson on pressure groups, where pamphlets issued by groups campaigning against 'sweatshops' were available for pupils. However, although pupils have a written record of their learning in PHSE lessons, there is no formal assessment and recording of skills, such as skills of debate. There is very good assessment on the religious education GCSE course (again, information supplied by the other inspection team).
148. Planning for the development of citizenship is good, with a clear commitment to the subject's further development. A co-ordinator for the subject is in place and leadership is good. However, implementation of the plans is not yet complete and the teaching arrangements for parts of the curriculum are not clear. Several subjects make incidental contributions to the course but their contributions are not explicit. The time for delivery of the subject, at present, is insufficient and extended assemblies, on a regular basis, erode such time as is allocated. Strategies are not yet in place to assess the citizenship modules taught in PHSE lessons. However, in spite of this, the quality of the citizenship education provided by the school is good and results in pupils becoming good citizens within the school community.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

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

Strengths.

- Standards are rising
- Improved resources are enabling pupils to design and make better products
- Pupils have a very positive attitude to the subject and are keen to do well

Areas for improvement

- The number of pupils achieving the higher grades in GCSE is well below average
- Contrary to current National Curriculum requirements, and expectations of a technology college, all pupils in Years 10 and 11 do not study design and technology

| Aspect | Years 7 - 9 | Years 10 - 11 |
|------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Girls' standard of work seen | Average | Average |
| Boys' standard of work seen | Average | Average |
| Achievement, overall | Good | Satisfactory |
| Teaching | Good | Good |
| Learning | Good | Good |
| Attitudes and behaviour | Very good | Very good |
| Leadership and management | Good | Good |

149. Boys achieve as well as girls by the end of Year 9 because the work is planned to meet the needs of both sexes. Standards of work indicated by teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2002 are not the same as the quality of work seen now because changes in staffing are bringing about a rapid improvement in standards.

150. GCSE results in 2002 were well below average compared with those in all schools. The proportion of pupils attaining A*-C grades was low. The proportion of pupils attaining a grade in the A*-G range was average. Recent school results show a higher percentage of pupils achieving A*-C grades than quoted here because they include subjects taught by technology teachers like art/textiles and print design. These are not approved design and technology courses. This means that not all pupils in Years 10 and 11 take a technology option, which is a statutory requirement. Neither is food technology taught; this is not statutory but is common practice. Almost twice as many boys as girls were entered for this subject. If the overall GCSE results in 2002 are compared with the likely performance indicated by those pupils end of Year 9 national test results in 2000, then the results are unsatisfactory. Hence, pupils' achievement was unsatisfactory.
151. There were many pupils who got very low grades because of staffing difficulties and because of disruption caused by refurbishment of the accommodation. This resulted in practical rooms being out of use for a considerable length of time. This had an adverse effect on the results. Both boys and girls performed less well in this subject than they did in their other subjects Results in 2002 were better than in 2001. The trend in results over the last three years is up because of improvements in staffing, accommodation and resources.
152. By Year 9, pupils can use a range of tools and materials effectively and safely. They use a design process to make products that are at least satisfactory and some are good. Pupils make good use of ICT for research, presentation and are beginning to use Computer Aided Design and Computer Aided Manufacture (CAD/CAM) to good effect. There are, however, inadequate links between modules of work to ensure coherence and progression in pupils' work. Generally the elements of designing and making are well balanced except in textiles where designing skills far outweigh those of making. Pupils enter the school with widely differing experiences of the subject and standards that are below average, overall. Standards are average in the work seen and this represents good achievement by pupils.
153. By Year 11, pupils can research, analyse and produce effective design specifications in response to a design problem. They are able to generate a number of possible solutions and to develop their best idea. They are not as good at communicating design development in their folios or at evaluating the final product with reference back to their original specification. Final products are generally well made and fit for purpose but very few are innovative. Standards have improved recently because of better staffing and teaching, which is driving standards upwards. Increased ICT provision enables pupils to design and make some products to an industrial standard. Coursework folios are average in quality. Pupils display numeracy and literacy skills that are adequate for the needs of the subject.
154. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported by teachers and other adults. The most able pupils make satisfactory progress, but in Years 7 to 9 some of the class work lacks sufficient challenge to meet their needs fully. Additional provision is made out of lessons for these pupils in a technology club. Pupils who may not use English as the first language at home make satisfactory progress because they are provided with opportunities to develop language skills, appropriate to their development, both orally and in writing.
155. Teaching is good, overall. Two-thirds of the lessons seen were good or better. There were two unsatisfactory lessons. In Year 8, in a very good lesson, pupils designed the packaging for a prototype camera they had made using CAD/CAM. They responded well to teachers' high expectations by producing very good work. Pupils willingly and routinely re-did work in order to achieve a higher standard following feedback from their teacher. The lesson moved at a good pace and pupils rapidly acquired new skills including ICT, when they drew 'nets' for their packaging on the computer. An able pupil used sophisticated software and acted as a mentor to other pupils. In contrast, in an unsatisfactory lesson in Year 8, pupils were not well motivated when the teacher failed to explain his expectations or the task clearly. Pupils did not settle to work, time was wasted and by the end of the lesson very little was achieved. Discipline was ineffective; pupils lost interest and instances of poor behaviour occurred.

156. In a Year 11 graphic products lesson, teaching was very good in a revision lesson on the differences between sketching and formal drawing. The teacher used exam questions to ensure that pupils gained practice in different techniques and these were explained well and demonstrated using the whiteboard. All the necessary resources were provided so that pupils could practise the techniques whilst the teacher ironed out individual difficulties. Pupils were very productive and made significant gains in knowledge and understanding in the lesson. In a satisfactory lesson on textiles in Year 10, pupils did work related to designing and making a slipper. The design work was of a very high standard but pupils did not possess good making skills. They did not display a good knowledge of construction techniques and did not always use the correct tools. The teacher is not a subject specialist and this affects standards adversely.
157. Leadership and management of the subject are good under the guidance of the recently appointed head of department. He has initiated good improvements since the last inspection. He has monitored and evaluated the work of the department and is taking effective action to improve standards. Although a great deal has been achieved in a comparatively short time some issues are yet to be resolved. Assessment procedures need to be developed further in order that pupils' progress can be tracked effectively. The course of study in Years 7 to 9 needs to be reviewed in order to plan for progression and to provide greater challenge for more able pupils. Currently, not all pupils cover the same work during the three years. Although teaching in the department allows pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social, cultural and citizenship skills to a satisfactory degree, these elements do not yet appear within planning.

DRAMA

158. Drama was not inspected fully so is reported on a little differently from other subjects.

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

Strengths

- There is a very good record of examination success in GCSE
- Teaching is by an enthusiast who has flair and good subject knowledge

Areas for improvement

- Accommodation is currently unsatisfactory (although a new studio is due for completion this year)
- The size of teaching groups is inappropriately large
- Drama is currently not taught in Years 7 to 9

159. Drama is a GCSE option in Years 10 and 11. The GCSE results in 2002 were well above average compared with those in all other schools. Ninety per cent of pupils attained grades A*-C compared with the national figure of 69 per cent. In the two previous years results were at similarly high levels, well above the national averages.
160. Standards in the work seen were average in Year 11 and above average in Year 10. Students develop a sound understanding of the examination requirements and the disciplines and skills of drama work. They respond readily in lessons, from the initial exercises through the whole-class and group work that follows, as they prepare material for presentation. Particularly good work was seen in the very large Year 10 class, in the second term of their two-year course.
161. Teaching in both lessons observed during the inspection was good, despite the current difficulty of over-large classes and temporary accommodation at a distance, which reduces lesson time. With 32 students in Year 10, students have limited space to develop their work and the teacher limited time for intervention and assessment. Determination and patient co-operation are evident amongst pupils as they do their best in this situation.
162. The teacher has very good subject knowledge, and his teaching skills are used effectively to involve and enthuse these large classes. Lively warm-up exercises get lessons off to a brisk start. Well-defined objectives and clear explanations enable pupils to work productively on script or

improvisation and to understand how to evaluate and improve their work. Attitudes and relationships are good.

163. At present, drama is not taught in Years 7 to 9 and there is clearly scope for developing the subject if staffing and accommodation allow. Drama makes a significant contribution to pupils' confidence and their social and interactive skills. Pupils studying drama enjoy a range of theatre visits and perform in school productions. At present, these activities are usually limited to those studying drama for examinations. All pupils would be likely to benefit if such visits were more widely available as part of the school's extra-curricular programme.

GEOGRAPHY

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

Strengths.

- Much improved standards including the attainment in GCSE examinations
- Pupils' achievement is good overall, often very good in Years 10 and 11
- Teaching and learning are very good overall and there is some excellent teaching
- Relationships are excellent and attitudes and behaviour very good

Areas for Improvement

- The further development of fieldwork is needed, particularly in Years 7-9
- Insufficient use is made of ICT to help teaching and learning
- Assessment practice, including targets for improvement and more precise tracking of pupils' progress
- Shortfalls in learning resources need to be remedied

| Aspect | Years 7 - 9 | Years 10 - 11 |
|------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Girls' standard of work seen | Average | Average |
| Boys' standard of work seen | Average | Average |
| Achievement, overall | Good | Good |
| Teaching | Very good | Very good |
| Learning | Very good | Very good |
| Attitudes and behaviour | Very good | Very good |
| Leadership and management | Good | Good |

164. Standards when pupils start in the school are below average. Boys achieve as well as girls because their attitude to learning is unusually positive. They are well-motivated and enthusiastic learners.
165. Pupils' attitude to learning is very positive and many display interest and enjoyment in their work. Pupils work very conscientiously and are keen to learn. Presentation of work is good overall, and many display a pride in their work. Behaviour is very good. Relationships with teachers are excellent, with a rapport evident that contributes significantly to pupils' good progress. Pupils work well with their peers when undertaking paired or group work but they are not used enough. Relationships across ethnic groupings are extremely harmonious. Pupils participate much more in discussions than they do in most schools and oral skills are well developed.
166. By Year 9, pupils have received a good grounding in geographical skills. Most use and interpret Ordnance Survey maps satisfactorily but much more practice is needed in the presentation and analyses of statistical data graphically. Pupils of all attainment levels have a sound understanding of location, such as the main mountains, rivers and cities of the United Kingdom. The understanding of spatial patterns is weak. Gifted and talented pupils and higher-attainers are not sufficiently challenged. Average-attainers are suitably stretched and produce work of an appropriate standard or above. Lower-attainers progress well, as they are well supported by teachers. Pupils with special educational needs, when provided with specialist support, which is of a particularly high quality, usually make very good progress.

167. By Year 11, standards are just above average for boys and girls, with some working above this level. These standards are higher than recent GCSE examination results would indicate. It reflects greater stability in staffing and higher standards of work. This indicates for most pupils good achievement in Years 10 and 11 and for some pupils very good achievement. There is no noticeable difference in the achievement of boys and girls. This is due to consistently high quality teaching by subject specialists, and pupils, especially boys, who work with commitment and enjoyment towards clear goals. Standards are higher in Year 10 than Year 11. In Year 11, pupils have a very thorough knowledge and understanding of the main physical and human processes studied. The best independent study projects for GCSE, based on fieldwork in the Brecon Beacons, are of high quality and show very good skills of enquiry. Average and lower-attainers produce work of a standard appropriate to their ability and often above that normally expected for their prior level of attainment. More revision and examination skills are needed to ensure that pupils gain the maximum benefit from the taught course.
168. In recent GCSE examination results, the proportion of pupils attaining grades A*-C has been at or above the national average. Results have shown noticeable improvement since the last inspection. Boys perform as well as girls and better than nationally because they are well motivated. The proportion of pupils gaining the highest A*-A grades is below the average but the proportion gaining an A*-G grade is above. The subject is very popular as a GCSE option and much more popular than nationally. Compared with other GCSE subjects within the school, in recent years geography results have been better; in 2002, geography results were similar to those in other subjects.
169. Teaching and learning are very good, overall, and some excellent teaching was observed. Teachers are very committed, caring and supportive of their pupils. Their management and control in lessons are very good and built on warm relationships and trust. Learning is effective, as lessons are planned imaginatively and underpinned by teachers' very detailed knowledge of topics taught. Questioning is skilful, as it extends pupils' knowledge and understanding significantly. A great strength of teaching is the emphasis placed on developing geographical enquiry and investigatory skills, which is done most effectively. Teaching is supported in most lessons with a wide range of visual aids, including film, photographs, maps and diagrams, and very high quality resources which have a very positive effect on the quality of learning. Tasks set are appropriate to pupils' needs. Pupils' understanding of their own learning develops well in Years 9 to 11 especially. Teachers' presentation is, at its best, lively, stimulating and inspiring and learning benefits from high expectations, brisk pace and good productivity in lessons. Learning in Years 7 to 9 is limited by insufficient use of local Ordnance Survey maps, local examples, and atlases to help pupils' understanding of spatial patterns and processes. Class learning would be improved with more regular reinforcement of teaching points visually on the board. More time needs to be given to setting some lessons fully and thoroughly in the context of previous study. This would use pupils' prior knowledge better so that there is a firm foundation for new learning. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught satisfactorily, overall. Teachers' use of ICT has been seriously limited by difficulties in accessing computers. There is need to plan for and teach to all pupils a coherent programme of ICT skills linked to curriculum themes.
170. Leadership of the subject is good. The department is run and managed very effectively and curricular planning is of good quality. The work of the department is suitably monitored through classroom observation and detailed analysis of pupils' work. Staffing is a real strength as it is highly professional, has good balance and all staff work together very collaboratively as a team. The assessment policy is satisfactory but there is scope for improvement. Day-to-day marking is consistently good and very good in Years 10 and 11, where pupils are given more detailed guidance on how to further improve their work. However, pupils are not informed precisely enough of their standards of attainment against National Curriculum levels or GCSE equivalent grades. Closer targeting of work, including pupil self-evaluation and tracking of progress, is needed. The accommodation is excellent, with all four adjacent specialist rooms large enough for independent resource-based learning. Excellent quality wall displays provide an effective learning environment in rooms and adjacent corridors. Resources are very good but there is need for a fieldwork budget, better access to computers to support teaching and learning, and software so that the computer weather station can be used in teaching. The fieldwork undertaken in Year 7 locally and in Year

10 in Trewern provides most effective learning and greatly stimulates pupils' interest in the subject. However, overall provision for fieldwork in Years 7 to 9 is inadequate. There has been good progress since the last inspection and there is very good capacity to take action on the points raised in this report.

HISTORY

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

| |
|--|
| <p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and learning are good • Pupils achieve well • Pupils have very good attitudes to the study of history and relationships in the classroom are very good • Standards of work at GCSE are above average <p>Areas for improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement could be further raised if teachers challenged pupils in mixed-ability classes according to their individual needs, by providing more support for lower attainers and by stretching more able pupils • Systems are not in place to make use of available data on prior attainment to set individual pupils academic targets to ensure progression • ICT is not used extensively enough to help learning • Schemes of work do not include explicit and specific references to citizenship learning activities |
|--|

| Aspect | Years 7 - 9 | Years 10 - 11 |
|-------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Girls' standard of work seen | Average | Above average |
| Pupils' standard of work seen | Average | Above average |
| Achievement, overall | Good | Good |
| Teaching | Good | Good |
| Learning | Good | Good |
| Attitudes and behaviour | Very Good | Very Good |
| Leadership and management | Good | Good |

171. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 agree with the standard of work seen because teachers assess regularly and mark realistically using National Curriculum attainment levels to determine standards. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.
172. GCSE results in 2002 were average compared with those in all schools, both in terms of the proportion of A*-C grades and average point scores. This confirms the trend of the last four years when results have been broadly in line with national averages. In 2002, boys attained results above national averages whilst girls' results were below. However, there is no consistent trend of imbalance between the results of boys or girls; boys did better in 2002 and 2000, girls did better in 1999 and 2001. The results vary with the make-up of the option intake but indicate good achievement, overall.
173. By Year 9, pupils have a good knowledge and a satisfactory understanding of the major historical events and personalities of the periods they have studied and they can place these in a chronological framework. Higher-attaining pupils have a more detailed knowledge and a better understanding of historical concepts, such as cause and consequence and similarity and difference. Pupils have satisfactory enquiry skills. Almost all, including those pupils with special educational needs, can extract information from a variety of written and pictorial material, including the Internet, to answer simple historical questions. However, ICT skills are underdeveloped because the planned use of ICT has not yet been fully implemented, though some pupils use ICT for researched homework tasks. Pupils know that history is based on evidence and their ability to evaluate this evidence is being well developed in Years 7 to 9 as was seen in a Year 8 lesson on Oliver Cromwell. The majority of pupils have good oral and listening skills and has many opportunities to develop these in lessons. Writing skills are satisfactory, overall, though lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs have poorer literacy skills. For these, spelling is weak and sentence construction is poor, although pupils are encouraged to write in a variety of ways, for example, as diarists, using appropriate historical vocabulary. However, these pupils do not always receive sufficient support in lessons and written work is often

not completed. Higher-attaining pupils write more extensively and all are encouraged to write evaluatively, as was seen in an essay entitled "Why was the church so powerful in the Middle Ages?" Literacy skills are being developed through 'WISE' assessments linking the school's literacy policy to history attainment targets. Overall, pupils make good progress in history in the first three years at school owing to their very good attitudes to the subject and the good teaching they experience during that time. However, lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs do not make as much progress as their peers because materials are not always structured to meet the needs of these pupils in mixed-ability classes. In the same way, gifted and talented pupils could make better progress if they were challenged with higher expectations.

174. By Year 11, pupils' knowledge and understanding of history have deepened and skills of evaluating evidence are now well developed by all but the lowest attainers, who have difficulty with the higher order skill of analysis. Higher-attaining pupils can make justified conclusions and supported judgements, as was seen in their coursework on Stalin. Attainment is above average, overall. All, including those with special educational needs, achieve well, though some still have weak literacy skills and find it difficult to write extensively and many pupils still find difficulty with spelling.
175. Teaching and learning are good, with some very good features. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Lessons are very well planned, with clear learning objectives. Confident lesson management and very good relationships promote a positive interest in pupils and a purposeful learning environment. Lessons get off to a prompt start, enabling pupils to focus quickly on their learning, and teachers constantly reinforce previous learning. Skilful questioning involves pupils in their own learning and teachers encourage their contributions. Resources are used to enhance learning, as was seen in a Year 11 lesson when original documentary clips were used to illustrate learning about the Hitler Youth movement. Teachers mark books carefully, giving guidance on how to improve. However, some written tasks are insufficiently structured to allow those with poorer literacy skills to record their learning adequately, and since these pupils also have poor recall, this lack of a written record affects standards. Sometimes, too, the same tasks are set for all pupils in the mixed-ability teaching groups and often the highest-attaining pupils and gifted pupils are not given hard enough work to tackle.
176. The department of experienced and well-qualified teachers is well managed by a recently appointed head of department and leadership is good. There is a commitment to raise standards that is reflected in the history development plan. There are regular departmental meetings where the history team work together on the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum. The history area has attractive displays designed to celebrate pupil achievement and to enhance the learning environment. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the raising of standards, and all of the issues raised then have been addressed. Plans have been made to integrate ICT into the history curriculum and assessment procedures, using the school's literacy programme 'WISE' have been implemented. However, not enough use is currently being made of the attainment data provided by the school to set individual pupil targets to improve their progression. The department does make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development but there is no reference to this in schemes of work. Similarly, schemes of work do not include explicit and specific references to citizenship learning activities.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision in information and communication technology lessons is **very good**. Some subjects do not use ICT in their work as they should.

Strengths

- The very good quality of teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9
- The introduction of an effective 'on-line' GNVQ examination at Year 11 for all pupils
- The enthusiasm of teachers and the consistent high expectations of behaviour and work
- The improved management of ICT subject teaching

Areas for improvement

- Those pupils with talents in ICT need to be recognised better and have their standards taken to new heights
- Investigate business links to enable the department to strengthen actual vocational experiences

| Aspect | Years 7 – 9 | Years 10 - 11 |
|------------------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Girls' standard of work seen | Average | Well above average |
| Boys' standard of work seen | Average | Above average |
| Achievement, overall | Very good | Very good |
| Teaching | Very good | Very good |
| Learning | Very good | Very good |
| Attitudes and behaviour | Very good | Very good |
| Leadership and management | Very good | Very good |

177. Boys achieve as well as girls by the end of Year 9 because pupils are well motivated by teachers' expectations and regular weekly use of computers. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2002 do not agree with judgements made on the standard of work seen because the department leadership has changed; new systems are in place that standardise teachers' marking. The result is that pupils now know what they must do to improve, and standards have risen to average.
178. In 2002, overall GNVQ results were well above average compared with those in other schools. The proportion of pupils attaining an equivalent to A*-C GCSE grades was well above average and recorded as distinctions and merits. The proportion of pupils attaining an A*-G grade was well above average and recorded as passes. If the overall GNVQ results in 2002 are compared with the likely performance indicated by those pupils end of Year 9 test results in 2000, then the results are very good. Hence, pupils' achievement was very good.
179. Boys' results were better compared with girls' results because boys are very well motivated by their individual access to computer equipment. Results in 2002 were better than in 2001. The trend in results over the last three years is up because good links have been made with primary schools through the 'Excellence in Cities' initiative. This means that teachers can plan more effectively. They build on pupils' previous performance from primary school or home. In addition, the 'on-line' materials used by Years 10 and 11 require a strong element of independent learning, which engages pupils more effectively in thinking and planning for themselves.
180. By Year 9, pupils can use computers to find out about different topics by working on the Internet and using CD-ROMs to obtain information. High attainers are more sophisticated in refining and questioning that information. Pupils are proficient in exchanging and sharing information through e-mail. Techniques for presenting information to particular audiences - for example, 'Power Point'-are used well. Pupils' reviewing, evaluation and modification of their work is very good; pupils make excellent use of on-screen and hand-written annotations to demonstrate how they have improved their work. However, problem-solving skills related to measuring results of experiments and controlling movement, sound and light is not practised in other curriculum areas such as science. Consequently, National Curriculum requirements for these areas of ICT are not met.
181. By Year 11, pupils use computers with confidence. The recent introduction of GNVQ Intermediate accreditation for Year 11 has had a significant effect on pupils' approach to their learning and their results. They now work with 'on-line' units of work that explore the vocational use of computers. Pupils' annotation of their coursework and the ability to talk through their analysis, design and implementation of information systems is impressive. However, their evaluation stops short at personal reflection and is not yet fully investigating the opinions of other users. Many pupils are finding deadlines difficult to meet because of the pressure of other coursework. The network manager is working on a screen prompt with deadline information every time a student logs on to work. Open access to computers at times of the day apart from lessons, catch-up classes and a very effective library provision in both books and hardware promote positive attitudes to learning in ICT. Absence is an issue for some pupils in Year 10. A very high number of pupils have home computers so the department is developing a system of 'easy link', between school and home.

182. Pupils with special educational needs make better than expected progress in class. This has a positive affect on their achievement because the method of learning boosts their self-esteem and their standard of work. The most able pupils make good progress. Lack of identification of their ICT talents impedes enrichment of their work; they have extension work, but limited opportunity to be challenged to go further in their studies, through, for example, early examination entries. The small number of pupils who may not use English as the first language at home make good progress because their needs are identified and targeted in teachers' planning.
183. Three-quarters of lessons were good or better, there were several excellent lessons and no unsatisfactory lessons. In Years 7 to 9 excellent lessons were innovative and pupils had fun. Well-planned learning targets challenged them and encouraged them to be creative and imaginative. Year 7 pupils were developing a web site for Year 6, in the primary school, about the solar system. Some pupils were amazed at the extra information they were gaining from their investigations. Classical music during the lesson encouraged good concentration and made an excellent atmosphere. Outstanding demonstrations by the teacher, with probing questions, supported by a support assistant well integrated into the lesson, showed pupils how they could best plan to navigate their web site. Homework set was very good preparation for the next lesson. Excellent questions to guide pupil's self-evaluation, plus development of high order thinking skills, prepared pupils for other users' evaluations, when testing out their web site. Year 8 pupils produced a plaque for an Eco company and all enjoyed the topic of endangered species. Pupils choice of animal or insect ranged from a spider to a sperm whale. They had to meet criteria set out by the company. This was where the real challenge came, finding and importing an appropriate map, planning and writing a synopsis of information on the subject, using an appropriate font, finding an image of their subject and altering the image size without distortion as well as selecting a suitable background for the plaque were all completed confidently. There was a buzz of excitement as pupils were organised to do an evaluation of each other's work. Evaluation influenced changes in the plaque.
184. In Year 11, a very good lesson, drawing GNVQ coursework together, demonstrated the effectiveness of working with on-line materials. Teachers prompted learning, rather than using direct teaching. More able pupils had already completed, evaluated and modified their final unit. These pupils supported their peers by giving advice and help to those who needed a second opinion. Thus consolidating the more able pupils' learning, while releasing the teacher to support those who might be struggling with a particular skill. The class were very diligent and focused on their work. Their creation and modification of systems for a commercial company enabled them to learn the value of customising software. They used 'macro buttons', to improve letter presentation and merge items such as the signature of the user. Pupils said that the GNVQ method of independent learning had initially been difficult for them in Year 10 and being responsible for their own time management was also a challenge. However, teachers' planning had responded to this issue by bringing the GNVQ unit '*handling information*' into Year 9. In contrast, satisfactory lessons lacked consolidation of learning and setting new targets by the teacher and so pupils' understanding of how well they were doing and their time management, was not so clear.
185. Leadership and management are very good. The new head of ICT has strengthened the team spirit of the department. Very effective documentation guides the department's core mission to raise individual standards. This has had a very good impact on the consistency of teachers' marking, longer-term assessment and expectations of behaviour and work. The network manager is making a very good contribution to the development of on-line resources for the department. Improvement since the previous report has been rapid and successful, with all problems solved. Significant improvements in teaching and increasing learners' responsibility for their own progress have raised standards. Work on pupil's personal development, and their understanding of the use of ICT in society to improve their lives, is embedded in planning. Pupils, for example, have a good understanding of confidentiality issues and know about the Data Protection Act.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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

| | |
|--|--|
| Strengths | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards attained by boys in GCSE examinations are high Pupils are concerned to do well and behaviour is excellent There are examples of good and very good teaching within the department, that enable the highest-attaining pupils to achieve well | |
| Areas for improvement | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards attained by girls in GCSE examinations are well below average and there is significant underachievement Standards attained by many pupils in Years 7 to 9 are well below average The quality of teaching and learning, overall, is unsatisfactory; insufficient attention is paid to developing pupils' practical language skills. This leads to significant underachievement for many pupils Opportunities for all pupils to use the language are limited and result in a lack of confidence and independence in speaking Lesson planning does not always take sufficient account of the needs of average, lower-attaining pupils, and pupils with special educational needs. Consequently, they do not always make appropriate progress Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment, and for monitoring and supporting pupils' progress are unsatisfactory ICT is not used to help teaching and learning be more effective Statutory requirements for modern languages are not met; most pupils do not receive their entitlement to study a language in Years 10 and 11 Leadership and management of the department are unsatisfactory | |

| Aspect | Years 7 - 9 | Years 10 - 11 |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Girls' standard of work seen | Below average | Below average |
| Boys' standard of work seen | Below average | Below average |
| Achievement, overall | Unsatisfactory | Unsatisfactory |
| Teaching | Unsatisfactory | Unsatisfactory |
| Learning | Unsatisfactory | Unsatisfactory |
| Attitudes and behaviour | Very good | Very good |
| Leadership and management | Unsatisfactory | Unsatisfactory |

186. French is taught to all pupils in Years 7 to 9. In Years 10 and 11 numbers opting to continue with French to GCSE are very low. Pupils are 'counselled' by the head of department to determine if they should do French. Those who do so are mainly higher-attaining pupils.
187. In both 2001 and 2002, the proportion of pupils entered for GCSE examinations was very low compared with national figures, so that comparison with national averages is not possible. This is compounded by the fact that the range of ability of pupils starting French GCSE in Year 10 is biased towards the more able. Consequently, the comparative judgements made next are done just to give a view of what standards are. They should not lead to the conclusion that standards are high compared with other schools. Overall, standards achieved in GCSE examinations are well above average. The proportion of students gaining A*-C grades in GCSE in 2002 is well above average when compared with national figures, but this masks below average attainment by girls and above average attainment by boys. In 2001 results were similar.
188. Although school data suggests that most pupils are achieving in line with expectations in French by the end of Year 9, work seen in Year 9 during the inspection does not match those findings. Teacher assessment records are inadequate and do not give a clear picture of individual pupils' progress and attainment. Marks awarded to pupils in writing tests were inconsistent and not

linked effectively to National Curriculum levels. Consequently, teacher assessment is unreliable and likely to be over-generous.

189. There is no significant difference between boys' and girls' achievements in Years 7 to 9 but there is a marked difference in GCSE examinations, where boys achieve better by a large margin.
190. Standards of work are below average, overall. In Years 7 to 11 standards are well below average in speaking and listening except for the highest-attaining pupils; a large proportion of pupils have difficulty in understanding instructions and in responding to questioning without guidance from the teacher or written prompts. Although the highest-attaining pupils in Year 9 display a good degree of independence in manipulating the language and contribute well to class oral work, for the majority this is not the case. Reading skills are below average; most pupils in Years 7 to 11 have difficulty in completing reading tasks and wait to copy answers from the overhead projector rather than attempt tasks themselves. Higher-attaining pupils are able to identify and apply patterns in the language and apply them (for example, verb endings in the past and present) but they are not always able to put this into practice to communicate their ideas in speech and writing when left to their own devices. During the inspection there was little evidence of original work; pupils write accurately to a model or copy and adapt set phrases to produce extended pieces of writing or dialogues and pupils' books contain mostly copied grammar notes. Pupils with special educational needs find great difficulty in completing tasks and are not confident in using the language because they are not given adequate support to enable them to succeed.
191. Behaviour in all lessons is excellent. Pupils settle quickly and listen attentively. They are concerned to do well and persevere in the face of difficulty. When they are given the opportunity to work in pairs and small groups they stay on task and behave sensibly. They are keen to take part but often only the higher-attaining pupils are given recognition for their achievement when performing in front of the class; this has a detrimental effect on the confidence of lower-attaining pupils or pupils with special educational needs. Their achievement is often greater, although the standards they attain are lower. In a minority of lessons, where pupils are given the opportunity to practise new language, they are confident and display enjoyment in their learning. However, the atmosphere in a few lessons inhibits learning; pupils are afraid of giving wrong answers and avoid eye contact with the teacher.
192. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall. Three lessons were unsatisfactory and one lesson was very good. Some good and very good practice was seen in classes of higher-attaining pupils but teaching methods are not adequately adapted to meet the needs of all pupils; tasks are often too difficult and this leads to significant underachievement. For lower-attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs in particular, expectations are too often inappropriate and hamper their progress. Lesson objectives in some Year 10 and 11 lessons are not appropriate and do not prepare pupils adequately for examinations or enable them to achieve their potential. Learning objectives in other lessons do help pupils to understand what is expected. ICT is not used to help teaching and learning as nationally expected, though difficulty in accessing computers during lessons might contribute to this.
193. Teachers' control and management of pupils are very good. Expectations about behaviour and effort are clear and pupils respond appropriately. Presentations of new language are usually clear and the use of visual prompts in the more effective lessons allows pupils rapidly to understand and use the new vocabulary and structures themselves. However, pupils are not always given sufficient practice to become confident with new language and the pace of lessons is too often aimed at the highest-attainers, leaving the rest to cope as best they can. Teachers have an excellent command of the language and provide excellent role models. Lessons are usually conducted in French and good use is made of display to reinforce key phrases so that most pupils complete routine tasks, such as asking permission, in French. In the most effective lessons, question and answer techniques are used well to enable pupils to respond appropriately and teachers check that pupils have understood instructions by challenging higher-attaining pupils to interpret for others. This is effective in developing pupils' listening skills but does not occur often enough. Pupils make very good progress when given the opportunity to try out new language themselves and gradually add to their knowledge in small achievable steps, for example in a Year 9 lesson where pupils learned how to describe their physical characteristics, their confidence

increased as they practised each element of the description until eventually they took part in a guessing game to identify which person was being described. However, this is not the norm and in most lessons the range and variety of learning

opportunities are limited. Opportunities to enable pupils to work informally or to try out new language for themselves are often missed and, as a result, most are not confident in speaking or responding.

194. The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 does not prepare pupils adequately for examinations and there is undue emphasis on grammatical analysis, reading and writing to the detriment of speaking and listening. Pupils copy sentences to produce continuous pieces of prose; the result is writing of a high standard, but pupils are not necessarily able to produce the same standards when left to their own devices because they are not given sufficient opportunity to use the structures and vocabulary to express their own ideas and consolidate learning.
195. Leadership and management of the department are unsatisfactory. The issues raised in the previous inspection have not been addressed effectively. Statutory requirements are still not met. The department's procedures for assessment, monitoring and supporting pupils' progress are unsatisfactory. Development planning identifies raising standards and raising the profile of languages within the school, but there are no clear strategies to achieve this and action taken since the previous report has not been effective. The department has received in-service training to develop teaching and learning styles but this has yet to have an effect on the standards achieved by the majority of pupils and without adequate records of pupils' attainment and progress it is difficult to evaluate how successful this is. There are examples of very good practice within the department but this is not being developed effectively enough to ensure that all pupils make appropriate progress.

MUSIC

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

| | |
|--|--|
| Strengths | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In most music lessons, pupils behave very well and this potentially creates an appropriate learning environment Staff's subject knowledge of music is good | |
| Areas for improvement | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and assessment procedures are underdeveloped and inadequate Pupils' progress in performing and composing is limited Insufficient attention is paid to pupils' musical learning Too much teaching is characterised by low expectations and challenge and this leads to underachievement The music curriculum lacks focus and does not always provide an appropriate range and balance of performing, composing, listening and appraising activities Teaching does not focus adequately on meeting the needs of individual pupils Teaching styles and strategies are inadequate Departmental resources are inadequate ICT is not used to help teaching and learning as expected and as seen in many schools | |

| Aspect | Years 7- 9 | Years 10-11 No music is taught |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Girls' standard of work seen | Below average | n/a |
| Boys' standard of work seen | Below average | n/a |
| Achievement, overall | Unsatisfactory | n/a |
| Teaching | Unsatisfactory | n/a |
| Learning | Unsatisfactory | n/a |

| | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----|
| Attitudes and behaviour | Good | n/a |
| Leadership and management | Unsatisfactory | n/a |

196. Music is taught to 11-14 year old pupils only.
197. Standards in music are below those expected nationally and the pupils are not achieving as well as they should. The position has not changed since the last inspection.
198. Although school data suggest that most pupils are achieving in line with expectations in music by the end of Year 9, assessments seen in Year 9 during the inspection did not match these findings. Teachers' assessment records are very limited, lack detail and are unable to support the results awarded. Consequently, teachers' assessments are unreliable and likely to be over-generous.
199. The inspection occurred during a period in which music teaching took place in temporary non-specialist accommodation, since a new music suite was under construction at the time. The accommodation was inadequate to support the curriculum and no musical instruments were used with classes. Despite the inevitable constraints placed on lessons because of this situation, standards of work seen were at a particularly low level. No recordings or any significant evidence of past work were made available to inspectors. Teaching concentrates too much on non-musical matters, and, consequently, musical learning is often difficult to discern. Pupils are unable to use technical musical vocabulary in meaningful ways, and listening work lacks focus. The poor quality of teaching and learning observed contributes to unnecessarily low standards. Hence, pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory.
200. Pupils do not opt to take school music in Year 10 (although a very small minority opt to study for GCSE and A-Level at the local Community Music Service). Several pupils reported a perceived lack of their progress in music over time. There is little significant difference between boys' and girls' achievements.
201. By Year 9, pupils will have completed various projects in music lessons. For example, they will have done some work on orchestral instruments and will have listened to 'Peter and the Wolf'. They will have covered some aspects of 'classical' form (for example, the symphony and the concerto), and will have done some performance work from standard Western musical notation. They also study jazz. However, pupils' understanding of music remains underdeveloped. There are significant deficits in the following areas: composing, appraising, pupils performing their own compositions, individual and group work, music technology, and music that is influenced by a range of different cultures and traditions. Although staff knowledge of music is good, this is not always communicated effectively to pupils.
202. All lessons observed were less than satisfactory. Despite the lesson constraints described above, teaching was judged to be very poor. Worksheets were used for substantial parts of each lesson, and these had been photocopied without the permission of the copyright holder. The teacher did not keep adequate records or assessments of pupils' work, and some work was repeated from one lesson to the next. The work itself was delivered in identical forms to all ability groups. Teacher-led explanations did not help pupils to understand musical issues. When short extracts of music were played, pupils were not encouraged to engage with them musically. Although pupils' behaviour was generally good, pupils' motivation is unsatisfactory despite small class sizes of about 15 pupils. Opportunities to teach musically are consistently missed.
203. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress since individual needs are neither recognised nor catered for. This includes pupils with special educational needs, the most able pupils, and those who may not use English as their first language at home.
204. Significant weaknesses in the leadership and management of the department, evident at the time of the last inspection, still persist. These are underpinned by a lack of understanding of the standards expected of Year 7 to 9 pupils. There is still no written documentation outlining development plans or identified targets that would help to raise pupils' attainment. Composition is still restricted, as is the range of teaching strategies used. Individual and group work continues to

be limited and assessment still inadequate. Pupils' attainment and progress remains unsatisfactory, and instrumental resources are still inadequate despite a fairly generous annual budget. Homework is still not set.

205. In addition to the above deficits, insufficient attention is paid to the needs of individual pupils, and, considering advances in this field, ICT is now very significantly under-used. Further staff training is recommended in the above areas and also in issues associated with 'Music: The National Curriculum for England' and the Key Stage Three National Strategy. Appropriate expenditure on a good variety of quality musical instruments, including investment in music technology, is also urgently needed.
206. The time allocated for music in the school is slightly less than in most schools nationally.
207. Staff from other departments, for example, science, or the local Music Service, provides extra-curricular activities in music. They include a lower and an upper school choir and a jazz club (which is primarily for gifted and talented pupils). There are also opportunities to sing in masses and religious concerts, for example, and these provide some pupils with the chance to engage in some spiritual aspects of music-making.
208. The school also benefits from the input of a range of visiting instrumental teachers. A guitar lesson observed during the inspection was excellent. Teaching here is practical and musical and is tailored to meet individual needs. Work is well planned and there is ample evidence of appropriate assessment and record-keeping. Teaching is well managed and relaxed but purposeful. Rigorous attention is paid to developing musical techniques in musical contexts. These lead to high standards of attainment in this area.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

| | |
|--|--|
| Strengths | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of teaching is good, overall, with teachers setting high expectations of pupils in terms of participation, performance and behaviour • Pupils' learning and progress are good, particularly in Years 7 to 9 • Pupils have a positive and lively attitude towards physical education and feel valued for both effort and attainment • Extra-curricular activities are very good and make a significant contribution to pupils' experiences of physical education • Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in physical education | |
| Areas for improvement | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although a physical education course is a statutory requirement, most pupils in Years 10 and 11 are not provided with it. This has been the case for at least six years and is a clear breach of pupils' legal entitlement to such a course • Teaching and learning of GCSE theory need to improve to allow examination standards to rise | |

| Aspect | Years 7- 9 | Years 10-11 For the small proportion taking GCSE |
|------------------------------|------------|---|
| Girls' standard of work seen | Average | Average |
| Boys' standard of work seen | Average | Average |
| Achievement, overall | Good | Good |
| Teaching | Good | Good |
| Learning | Good | Good |
| Attitudes and behaviour | Very good | Very good |

| | | |
|---------------------------|------|------|
| Leadership and management | Good | Good |
|---------------------------|------|------|

209. Boys achieve as well as girls by the end of Year 9 because of their positive attitude to the subject, their very good behaviour in lessons and by listening carefully to the teachers' instructions. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 agree with the standard of work seen because of teachers' expert knowledge of assessment requirements and the careful linking of National Curriculum criteria to specific sports.

210. In 2002, GCSE results, overall, were below average compared with those in all schools. The proportion of pupils attaining an A*-C grade was low but the proportion of pupils attaining an A*-G grade was above average. If the overall GCSE results in 2002 are compared with the likely performance indicated by those pupils' end of Year 9 national test results in 2000, then the results are satisfactory. Hence, pupils' achievement was satisfactory. Examination results over the last three years are broadly similar, with pupils continuing to find the theory aspects of the course more difficult than the practical aspects. Teachers are aware of this and have implemented policies to improve pupils' performance. These include having additional revision classes, individual tutorials and more structured planning for coursework. Physical education makes a very valuable contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills with excellent, well-researched and presented projects on sporting themes, for example, in the production of sports newspapers. Though ICT is used well to support the production of these presentations and newspapers, no use of monitoring equipment to analyse performance was seen.
211. By Year 9, pupils can copy simple skills with control and co-ordination. The more able pupils, particularly those identified in Year 7, perform with precision and consistency, boys most notably in football and girls in netball. In all year groups there is a wide range of attainment. The teachers accommodate this through individual support and encouragement, and, as a consequence, all pupils achieve well. Pupils have a lively and positive approach to physical education and the majority makes clear progress in lessons by listening carefully to the teacher and practising conscientiously as individuals and in groups. However, many cannot yet evaluate their and others' performance in order to improve, particularly where the teacher does not make teaching points and learning objectives clear and explicit. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because teachers know them very well and teach lessons using a range of graded activities, which ensure that all pupils are included in them. The most able pupils make good progress because of the setting of challenging activities in lessons and the expert coaching outside of timetabled physical education.
212. In half of the lessons seen teaching was good or better. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. In a very good Year 7 netball lesson pupils made very good progress in passing and being able to receive the ball under pressure. This was as a result of the teacher's enthusiastic and expert teaching of the skills involved. In contrast, a satisfactory Year 9 orienteering lesson was not as successful, as the purpose of the lesson was not clearly explained and the lesson structure did not keep all on task. However, in another Year 9 lesson, on swimming, pupils listened carefully to the teacher's very clear direction and teaching points and as a consequence all pupils improved both their breast stroke technique and their personal survival skills.
213. In the two satisfactory GCSE theory lessons observed, one making excellent use of videoed pupils' performance and one on women in sport, pupils did not make as much progress as they could do despite displaying satisfactory knowledge of the relevant topics. Whilst the delivery of the lessons and the management of pupils were good, there was not enough capture and consolidation of important key points to assist pupils in their understanding of the theoretical aspects of the course. The coursework of current Year 11 pupils is good and shows that they have the relevant skills of planning, research, analysis and evaluation.
214. Leadership and management are good; the head of department provides a good role model in terms of her own very good teaching, the organisation of the programmes of work and associated staffing and the setting of high expectations of pupils. Teaching is monitored regularly and relevant feedback given, not least in the sharing of good practice. The department's unqualified but effective teacher now needs to have a more formal and explicit professional development plan if he is to progress further and the department to make more use of his expert coaching skills. The curriculum is broad and balanced in Years 7 to 9, with the appropriate range of sports activities being supplemented by the very good extra-curricular activities, although the allocated timetable time is less than average. The head of department is not responsible for the school's failure to meet statutory requirements in Years 10 and 11; the school does not offer physical education to its non-examination candidates. This represents non-compliance with National Curriculum requirements and has been the case for at least six years.

215. The department works closely with its feeder primary schools and the weekly timetabled lesson provides an excellent opportunity for Year 6 pupils to experience secondary school. In the Year 6 lesson seen, teachers ensured that it was an enjoyable and rewarding experience for all. The department does not have a formal policy that integrates spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as well as citizenship, issues into physical education, as it does with literacy. However, the department ensures that pupils develop positive attitudes to themselves, their peers, whom they work with collaboratively in groups, and that they develop clear values in terms of rules and fair play. The department has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in terms of the work it is permitted to do by the school.

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

In the inspection, nine subjects and courses were inspected and are reported on in detail. Very little work in other subjects and courses was sampled as the consortium was not inspected.

The table below shows entry and performance information for courses completed in 2001. National comparisons for 2002 were not available at the time of the inspection.

GCE AS-level courses

| Subject | Number entered | % gaining grades A-E | | % gaining grades A-B | | Average point score | |
|-----------|----------------|----------------------|---------|----------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|
| | | School | England | School | England | School | England |
| Geography | 1 | n/a | 74 | n/a | 6 | n/a | 1.18 |

GCE A-level and AVCE courses

| Subject | Number entered | % gaining grades A-E | | % gaining grades A-B | | Average point score | |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------|----------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|
| | | School | England | School | England | School | England |
| Mathematics | 16 | 94 | 87 | 31 | 43 | 5.13 | 5.80 |
| Biology | 10 | 90 | 88 | 20 | 34 | 4.80 | 5.25 |
| Chemistry | 2 | 50 | 90 | 0 | 43 | 3.00 | 5.90 |
| Full Design and technology | 4 | 50 | 91 | 0 | 30 | 2.50 | 5.38 |
| Business studies | 3 | 67 | 92 | 0 | 32 | 4.00 | 5.50 |
| Economics | 2 | 50 | 89 | 0 | 36 | 1.00 | 5.52 |
| Business Post 16 VQ | 10 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 4.80 | 10.45 |
| Computer studies | 6 | 50 | 86 | 0 | 23 | 1.33 | 4.62 |
| Sports/PE studies | 7 | 100 | 92 | 0 | 25 | 5.14 | 5.09 |
| Vocational studies | 3 | 100 | 76 | 0 | 26 | 3.33 | 4.36 |
| Other social studies | 8 | 100 | 87 | 25 | 34 | 6.50 | 5.30 |
| Art and design | 11 | 100 | 96 | 55 | 46 | 6.91 | 6.57 |
| Drama | 1 | 100 | 99 | 100 | 38 | 10.00 | 6.59 |
| Communication studies | 10 | 100 | 93 | 70 | 31 | 7.00 | 5.53 |
| Geography | 9 | 100 | 92 | 33 | 38 | 5.56 | 5.74 |
| History | 8 | 88 | 88 | 25 | 35 | 6.00 | 5.45 |
| Sociology | 2 | 50 | 86 | 50 | 35 | 5.00 | 5.32 |
| English language | 17 | 88 | 92 | 24 | 30 | 4.35 | 5.28 |
| German | 1 | 100 | 91 | 0 | 40 | 4.00 | 5.81 |

SUBJECTS AND COURSES GROUPED IN CURRICULUM AREAS

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCES

216. The inspection covered the AS and A-level mathematics courses. Biology was the focus in the sciences but physics and chemistry were also sampled.

Mathematics

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

| |
|---|
| Strengths |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teaching and learning are good• Students are well motivated, work hard and have good relationships with each other and their teachers• The new course is well planned and managed |
| Areas for development |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The use of ICT is not developed well enough• Students' independent learning needs to be encouraged further |

| Aspect | Year 12 | Year 13 |
|--------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Females' standard of work seen | Above average | Above average |
| Males' standard of work seen | Above average | Above average |
| Examination standards 2001 | n/a | Average |
| Examination standards 2002 | Weaker than 2001 | Weaker than 2001 |
| Achievement, overall | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |
| Teaching, overall | Good | Good |
| Learning, overall | Good | Good |

217. The GCE A-level examination results in 2001 were in line with national averages. All the students achieved a grade and about one third achieved an A or B grade. These results are in line with those predicted from their prior attainment. There is no significant difference in the performance of male and female students or of students of different ethnic origins. In 2002 the results were not as good. Fewer students took the examination and about 80 per cent achieved a grade. There are no national comparators available. In the AS-level examination in 2001 just over half the students achieved a grade. There was a national problem with this examination and most of these students went on to achieve results in line with their attainment at GCSE in the A-level examination in the following year. In 2002, of the eight pupils who followed the AS course six achieved a grade and one pupil achieved a grade B.

218. Standards of work seen in the inspection in the sixth form are above average and reflect the standards required for the higher examination grades. In Year 13 students' good algebraic skills enable them to cope with the demands of the differentiation and integration aspects of the work, which form a considerable part of the pure mathematics course. In Year 12, students' work indicates that they have been well prepared for their pure mathematics and statistics examination in June. They understand well the early stages of differentiation and integration. In their statistics work, their ability to use clear diagrams helped them to solve problems. Male and female students do equally well. The standard of students' work, as indicated by their examination results and by work seen during the inspection, indicates that achievement is satisfactory.

219. Teaching is good and in some lessons very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, their planning is good and the pace at which the work is undertaken is well matched to the needs of students. Teachers give clear explanations and question students well. Students feel secure in the learning environment created and answer questions confidently and with a good level of understanding. In a Year 13 pure mathematics lesson, students' understanding of partial fractions and their use in integration was improved by clear teaching, which used good examples. In a Year

12 lesson, students could work out the area under a standard normal curve and use this to work out probability. They were helped to do this through very good teacher planning and board work and their own involvement of using a graphical calculator output projected on to a screen. Relationships between students and between students and teachers are very good.

220. Students work hard and are committed to achieving high standards. They co-operate with their teachers. Students find the course interesting and challenging. Much of the written work demanded of students takes the form of questions which test their understanding. Homework and tests are set regularly and marked in a very detailed way to help students understand what to do to do better. They are aware of their progress and predicted grades and recognise and greatly appreciate the support given by teachers. Teachers know individual students' strengths and weaknesses well.
221. The curriculum for sixth form mathematics is appropriate and meets the needs of students because of its interesting and relevant nature. Some students use graphical calculators confidently but no other use of ICT was seen. The new sixth form course is very well planned and managed. A great deal of careful work and thought has been put into the planning and the students appreciate the very good organisation and teaching of courses.
222. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. A-level results have fluctuated but teaching is now better. Monitoring of teaching is taking place by the local education authority. The department is now well placed to move forward and improve examination results.

Biology

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

| | |
|---|--|
| Strengths | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of teaching is good and students have a positive attitude to learning • Teachers have a good command of the subject and are committed to raising standards • Relationships with students are very good and teachers' enthusiasm is shared with students | |
| Areas for improvement | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students need to be encouraged to initiate discussion and challenge concepts • Strategies to raise further the level of students' attainment need to be further developed • Students' progress, irrespective of the school in which they are taught, needs to be more closely monitored | |

| Aspect | Year 12 | Years 13 |
|--------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Females' standard of work seen | Above average | Average |
| Males' standard of work seen | Above average | Average |
| Examination standards 2001 | Average | Average |
| Examination standards 2002 | Weaker than 2001 | Weaker than 2001 |
| Achievement, overall | Good | Good |
| Teaching, overall | Very good | Good |
| Learning, overall | Good | Good |

223. In the 2002 A-level examination the result for the one student who entered was lower than the last confirmed national average result of 2001. It was lower than the results obtained by students last year but performance over the past three years has been in line with or above the national average. The result was higher than that predicted by previous attainment and achievement was good
224. The attainment of students in the 2002 AS examination was lower than that predicted by their previous GCSE attainment. Some students enhanced their grades by retaking modules at a later date. There was no difference between the performance of males and females.

225. Inspection evidence shows that standards in Year 13 are broadly consistent with course expectations. Students have, for example, a sound grasp of the basic principles of genetics and understand the significance of genetic fingerprinting. Some do not understand fully the role of enzymes in the modification of genetic material. The achievement of Year 12 students is at least in line with and often exceeds expectations based on their prior attainment in GCSE. They make good progress in lessons. Written work indicates that they have a good grasp of the core principles related to biomolecules and cell structure, although some have weak understanding of the function of some organelles.
226. The quality of students' written work varies. Some take great care with their presentation but others, males more than females, lack organisation and fail to provide evidence of a methodical approach to study. Notebooks contain good examples of work that extends beyond the requisite notes, demonstrating students' ability to link together topics that they have studied. Students' skills in numeracy are satisfactory and are sufficient to meet the demands of the course.
227. Students improve their knowledge and understanding because teaching is good, overall, and at times very good or excellent. They have a desire to succeed, and share with teachers an enthusiasm for the subject. They benefit from the teachers' excellent command of the subject and the quality of lesson preparation. They respond well to humour, which is present in many lessons, and to praise, which improves their self-confidence. Relationships between students and teachers are very good.
228. Students are prepared to answer questions when asked but are reluctant to initiate discussion or challenge concepts. They are motivated and listen well but their learning and progress is enhanced when they are presented with a variety of activities and given the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning. In one well-prepared Year 13 lesson on the liver, after an initial discussion, students broke into groups to research different aspects of liver function. Although their skills of presentation were in need of improvement the knowledge and understanding they displayed indicated that good progress had been made.
229. In a Year 12 lesson, students' recall of previous work on genetics was very good. They gained in their understanding of this topic and of the stages of mitosis because of the teacher's excellent presentation. This included the use of computer image projection. Students tested their understanding by arranging, correctly, a series of photomicrographs. Year 12 students in another lesson demonstrated sound practical skills when investigating the water potential of celery. Two teachers worked well together to ensure that students made progress whilst assessing the reliability of their measurements.
230. The quality of accommodation is good, overall, and makes a positive contribution to standards. Excellent use is made of modern communication technology to improve the quality of teaching. The head of science and the teacher in charge of biology manage effectively the work of the department within All Saints. However, management is unsatisfactory, overall. The progress of students is not monitored rigorously enough because the schools in which students are taught retain assessment information. It is not shared on a regular basis with other staff.

BUSINESS

231. The focus for the inspection was upon A-Level and AS Business Studies, AVCE Business and Finance, and GNVQ Intermediate Business.

Business Studies

Overall, the quality of provision in business studies is **good**.

Strengths

- Leadership and management are very good
- Teaching is good, with a strong, supportive team ethos
- Teachers provide good individual support during lessons, which encourages all students to achieve

- Student attitudes to and motivation for learning about business are very positive
- Areas for improvement
- Examination data are not used effectively enough to help planning or to determine how well students achieve
 - Students' oral and independent learning skills are not developed well enough especially on A-Level courses

| Aspect | Year 12 | Years 13 |
|--------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Females' standard of work seen | Above average | Average |
| Males' standard of work seen | Above average | Above average |
| Examination standards 2001 | Below average | Below average |
| Examination standards 2002 | Better than 2001 | Better than 2001 |
| Achievement, overall | Good | Good |
| Teaching, overall | Good | Good |
| Learning, overall | Good | Good |

232. Females achieve equally as well as males in all courses because of the support for the individual learner in lessons.
233. In 2001, A-level, AS, AVCE, and GNVQ Intermediate results were well below average compared with those in all schools. The proportion of students attaining an A-B grade and Distinction or Merit level was very low. The proportion of students attaining an A-E grade was also very low. Results in 2002 have significantly improved because more students made effective progress during their courses, particularly between ends of module examinations. The trend in results over the last three years is upwards, owing to an increase in both student numbers, resulting in a better mix of prior attainment, and the effectiveness of the department.
234. If results in 2002 are compared with the likely performance indicated by those students' GCSE results in 2000, then the results are good. Hence, students' achievement was good on all business courses.
235. The business courses have attracted an increased number of students through the consortium arrangements. Retention rates are good and opportunities to transfer to alternative courses have been used by students to select more appropriate courses for them. Complementary courses, such as AS-level Accounts or ICT, help to enrich the post-16 business curriculum available to students.
236. In Year 12, students can make effective use of ICT to produce good quality business reports. However, they do not always sustain the level of analysis expected in the course and tend to present unanalysed data or rely upon descriptive narrative. Student attainment standards on entry, particularly for the GNVQ Intermediate course, were below average and students are achieving well. In Year 13, students produce more sustained analytical work and can relate key business concepts to their work on local organisations. However, they cannot fully develop classroom oral arguments or debates, and tend towards a generalised discussion of business topics.
237. Good use is made of the school and the department's resources, particularly for research and to access ICT. These help support the improving level of students' independent learning, although further opportunities should be taken to encourage more independent learning within the classroom.
238. Students with special educational needs make satisfactory progress because of the good student-teacher interaction. The teachers' clear focus upon the skills needed to achieve higher examination grades helps the most able students to make good progress. Pupils who may not use English as the first language at home make satisfactory progress aided by teachers' support and the help of their peers.

239. Lessons were all good or very good. Teachers have proficient subject knowledge and thoroughly prepare and plan lessons. In Year 12, a very good lesson drew upon GNVQ Intermediate students' first-hand experience as 'mystery shoppers' on an activity based in local businesses. A well executed role-play in the lesson helped to consolidate a clear practical understanding of customer care concepts. The momentum was carried through to the next lesson where students used ICT to present appropriate graphics to illustrate the main ethos of business customer care policies.
240. In Year 13, a good A-level lesson focused on the skills needed to achieve high grades in a practice A-level examination paper. The teacher made good use of group work to divide the tasks and maximise the responses. Students scanned the text and identified significant information; they extracted key numerical data and analysed trends and developments. They were able to suggest valid findings about sales and profit relationships and influences.
241. Leadership and management are very good. The way teachers work together is a strength that helps continuity and progression between Years 12 and 13. Students' work is systematically monitored and good written feedback encourages and guides students. The teachers' clear understanding of the requirements of the various examination assessments further helps students achieve better. Examination data need to be better used. A strong professional development programme underlines the department's priorities for teachers. Constructive use is made of local businesses and organisations, both as contributors to classroom activities and as hosts for visits and work experience.
242. Effective progress has been made since the last inspection, with increased numbers of students opting to take post-16 business courses and an improvement in the examination results. Accommodation and resources in the department are now good and combine with the school's learning resources to create a very positive learning environment.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

243. The focus was on the AVCE course

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

| | |
|--|--|
| Strengths | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The management and teaching of the AVCE course • Student' progress is now very good • Teachers' knowledge and understanding of ICT • Resources to support students' independent learning are good | |
| Areas for improvement | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proportion of female students on the AVCE course is small • Students are not punctual to lessons | |

| Aspect | Year 12 | Years 13 |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Females' standard of work seen | Good | No females |
| Males' standard of work seen | Good | Average |
| Examination standards 2001 | No data available | Below average |
| Examination standards 2002 | Below average | Very much better than 2001 |
| Achievement*, overall | Very Good | Satisfactory |
| Teaching*, overall | Very Good | Satisfactory |
| Learning*, overall | Very Good | Satisfactory |

* 2002/3

244. Females achieve as well as males in Year 12 because their prior attainment is of similar standard. Fewer than 25 per cent of students opting to take an ICT course post-16 are female.
245. In 2001, A-level results were well below average compared with those in all schools. The proportion of students attaining an A-B grade was zero. The proportion of students attaining an A-E grade was very low. A-level results in 2002 were significantly better because the prior attainment of students in ICT and other subjects was much higher in that year. The results for AVCE in 2002 were well above average results in previous years; latest national data were not available at the time of writing the report. The trend in results over the last three years is generally one of improvement given the change from a more academic course to a more applied, vocational one.
246. If the A-level results in 2002 are compared with the likely performance indicated by those students' GCSE results in 2000, then the results are very good. Hence, students' achievement was very good. All of the 2002 A-level students gained grades higher, and in many cases significantly higher, than their GCSE results would have predicted. Retention on post-16 ICT courses is satisfactory at around 80 per cent.
247. In Year 12, students can research in-depth textual information and create inter-linked web pages, including navigational tools for the end-user. They understand the copyright laws as applied to the Internet and recognise the need to ask permission to use images in their project work. In Year 13, students can produce model answers to past examination questions on topics such as machine architecture and low-level programming but often need help from their teacher. AVCE students are enthused by the practical nature and structured learning approach of the course, whereas in general the A-level students find the course difficult and too academic in nature. All students make good use of the school's library and resources centre and the AVCE students, in particular, are developing a strong independent learning ethos. The most able students make good progress because of teacher encouragement and knowledge and the availability of excellent ICT resources.
248. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. In a very good lesson in Year 12, all students learned a number of new techniques for web page development and were able to show their own progress through completion of their own record sheet, which was monitored by the teacher. The teacher planned the lesson very well and provided structured prompt sheets to guide students through this and other work. In a satisfactory Year 13 lesson, the teacher was confident and secure in the knowledge and understanding needed for working on past papers but the pace was slow and the teacher did not intervene frequently enough to keep students on task.
249. The leadership and management of the sixth form ICT provision are effective, particularly in respect of the relatively new AVCE course. The use of ICT to assess individual students' progress and to give them maximum involvement in how well they are doing is very good. There is a need to improve the punctuality of students in all classes.
250. The accommodation and resources for sixth form ICT are good but there is little software to support students' learning in other sixth form subjects, for example, science and mathematics.

HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

251. The focus was on GNVQ (Intermediate) leisure and tourism.

Leisure and Tourism

Overall, the quality of provision in leisure and tourism is **good**.

Strengths

- Students achieve well in relation to their prior attainment
- Good teaching and helpful support and guidance to students
- Very well motivated students who work hard on their studies

Areas for improvement

- The room used for teaching leisure and tourism is inadequate for the nature of the course
- There are too few practical visits to the workplace
- The time made available for the taught unit of the course is too short

| Aspect | Year 12 | There is no Year 13 |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Females' standard of work seen | Average | n/a |
| Males' standard of work seen | Average | n/a |
| Examination standards 2001 | Well below average | n/a |
| Examination standards 2002 | Better than 2001 | n/a |
| Achievement, overall | Good | n/a |
| Teaching, overall | Good | n/a |
| Learning, overall | Good | n/a |

252. Results in 2001, when compared with all schools, were well below the national average with only five students out of a cohort of eleven successfully completing the course with a pass grade. There was an improvement in 2002 when, of seven students on the course, two achieved a merit grade, three a pass grade and two failed. These results were close to the national average. Entry qualifications are below those nationally and some students have been allowed to continue the course when their level of motivation and attendance has been unsatisfactory. There are currently two students of the school on the course; both are performing above expectations. Retention rates on this course have improved and in 2002 were close to the average.
253. Standards achieved by students on the course are close to the national average. Since students started the course with below and well below average levels of GCSE attainment, these standards represent good and very good achievement. This very noticeable progress in Year 12 is due to the very good support and guidance provided and the students' high level of commitment to their assessed coursework assignments. Students show good knowledge and understanding of topics studied. They work with increasing confidence, collect information from a variety of sources and form satisfactory judgements from the data. Students balance sound theoretical knowledge with a competent array of practical experiences including work placement, such as when assessing the provision of customer service in the leisure and tourist industry. The best project work, which requires the students to plan and organise an event, is skilfully and professionally accomplished. This is well exemplified in the visits being arranged by students for Year 7 to 9 pupils, to the Chessington World of Adventures and Thorpe Theme Park. Presentations of coursework tasks are word-processed and of high standard. Students use ICT skills very competently to support their coursework assignments. They use the Internet well but do not question the accuracy and reliability of the data downloaded. The application of number, however, is more limited in coursework and is underdeveloped.
254. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers are committed, caring and very supportive of their students. Very good relationships between teacher and students form the bases for productive learning. Emphasis in lessons is suitably placed on independent learning aided by high quality guidance and support. Learning is effective, as students listen attentively in lessons and say that they find the content to be most relevant and interesting. When unclear they are prepared to ask questions so that they gain a better understanding of the topic taught. They receive positive encouragement from teachers. Teachers need to reinforce the main teaching points on the board and should provide more case studies to illustrate theoretical concepts. Work assignments are accurately and helpfully marked so that students can improve the quality of their presentation by redrafting. It has a significant and positive effect on the good progress made on this course.
255. Students have a good attitude to learning and most display a real interest in their studies. Students speak very highly of their teachers and particularly value the accessibility of teachers and the time given to them as individuals. They appreciate the freedom they are given to pursue independent study and realise that it is only effective because of the clear structure, provided by teachers, that encompasses it. Students gain considerable benefit from fieldwork in Trewern and visits to work places such as the Dagenham Bowl Leisure Centre. They would welcome more group visits to the workplace. Students also felt that they would benefit from more time being given to the taught unit.

256. The course runs efficiently and is soundly managed. The curriculum shows good sequencing and choice of topics and the well-selected case studies contribute significantly to teaching and learning. The course leader, who teaches extensively on the course, has a full and first-hand overview of students' progress. This provides very good academic and pastoral monitoring of progress. Learning resources generally are satisfactory and ICT facilities good. The accommodation is unsatisfactory as there is no specialist-designated base for leisure and tourism. Stocks of reference materials and a journal for wider reading need to be provided.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

257. The focus was on art and design A-level. Other schools in the consortium offer vocational arts courses but none of the students in All Saints School attends these.

Art and Design

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

| | |
|---|--|
| Strengths | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion: the department works with students from a wide range of backgrounds • Critical studies and gallery visits • The curriculum is creative and dynamic | |
| Areas for improvement | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data about examination and test standards are not used well enough to create learning objectives and to provide academic targets for students • There are cramped working conditions and limited storage space | |

| Aspect | Year 12 | Years 13 |
|--------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Females' standard of work seen | Above average | Above average |
| Males' standard of work seen | Average | Average |
| Examination standards 2001 | Above average | Above average |
| Examination standards 2002 | Weaker than 2001 | Weaker than 2001 |
| Achievement, overall | Good | Satisfactory |
| Teaching, overall | Good | Good |
| Learning, overall | Good | Good |

258. Female students achieve better than male students in art and design because, in general, they are more committed and mature in their approach to work.

259. In 2001, A-level results were above average compared with those in all schools. The proportion of students attaining an A-B grade was above average. The proportion of students attaining an A-E grade was above average. Results in 2002 were weaker because only a third of students gained an A-B grade and about a third failed to gain a result. Male students did less well than female students. If results in 2002 are compared with the likely performance indicated by those students' GCSE results in 2000, then the results are unsatisfactory. Hence, students' achievement was unsatisfactory. The trend in results over the last three years is variable, owing to several factors. The department is flexible in admitting students: cohorts have varied in attainment on entry, with students generally gaining results which are in line with their attainment in other examinations they take. In 2002, for instance, students began with lower than average expectations based on their GCSE results. The school has struggled to find a way of enabling less academic students to cope with the demands of the new AS/A2 curriculum. In addition, students have difficulties in maintaining their attendance and work-rate owing to their home circumstances and the necessity of undertaking part-time work to pay their expenses. Despite this, retention on courses is good. No students have left before the end of the course in recent years.

260. In Year 12, students build well on good GCSE results. They can work imaginatively from observational drawing, photography and their studies of the work of other artists and designers. Less successful students use a more limited range of media and their analysis lacks depth and personal insight. Students in Year 13 also bring a highly individual approach, especially in their use of information technology, both for research and image processing. Some of the male students are underachieving because they are not committed enough, for instance, in meeting deadlines or exploring alternative approaches. Female students on the other hand show real determination in overcoming obstacles and work hard to achieve their targets. Students with special educational needs generally make good progress because they are well supported by teachers and their peers.
261. All lessons seen were at least good and half were very good. Lessons are characterised by a challenging approach and high expectations by the teacher. In a very good Year 12 lesson, students evaluated their own and each other's work. Students interacted very well and had a mature approach to the work; they were able to share ideas based on the teacher's excellent knowledge of art history and industrial processes. Very good resources, as well as photographs and notes made on a visit to New York, ensured very good learning. In a good Year 13 lesson, students prepared work for the final submission to the examination board. The teacher set very clear objectives involving the collection of research material on the chosen artists. One of the high-attaining students has developed some outstanding ideas based on the work of Richard Long and Andy Goldsworthy, including an annotated walk on a beach and sculpture from found materials. It is evident from a scrutiny of work, however, that some of the lower-attaining students have not developed good independent working skills, so that their research lacks depth and relies heavily on photographs and reproductions. One of the problems is that there is not a consistent approach to the analysis of students' prior attainment and potential so that simpler, short-term targets can be set for low-attaining students, especially at the beginning of the course. The work of the less committed students is sometimes inhibited by the lack of a permanent sixth form working area and the poor storage space.
262. Leadership and management of the department are good. The head of department is committed to raising standards and improving provision. The quality of the sixth form staff is high and makes an important contribution to the creative and dynamic curriculum for art, which pervades the whole school. Many students benefit from weekly life-drawing classes after school and the resultant drawings and paintings have a strong influence on their work and that of the younger pupils. The school arranges visits abroad to New York and Venice. Italian students recently exchanged places with students in All Saints in an exciting reciprocal study exercise. Students say they are well supported and given good advice on careers and higher education.

HUMANITIES

263. Both geography and history were inspected.

Geography

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

Strengths

- Students are well motivated and achieve well
- Teaching and learning are consistently good across Year 12 and 13
- Students obtain great benefit from their fieldwork and the practical elements of their courses

Areas for Improvement

- Students need to prepare themselves better for lessons and contribute more to self-learning
- Students need to be better informed by teachers of the progress they are making in the AS and A-level courses
- Students need to summarise, refine and apply their work better to help them understand concepts

| Aspect | Year 12 | Years 13 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Females' standard of work seen | Average | Average |
| Males' standard of work seen | Average | Average |
| Examination standards 2001 | Average | Average |
| Examination standards 2002 | Similar to 2001 | Similar to 2001 |
| Achievement, overall | Good | Good |
| Teaching, overall | Good | Good |
| Learning, overall | Good | Good |

264. The sixth form consortium enables viable teaching groups to operate. Department staff teach all of the AS and A-level course. Overall, recent GCE A-level examination results were average when compared with those in all schools. Average point scores in 2001 were broadly in line with the national and above the school average. Results in 2002 showed a similar pattern. The schools first AS cohort took the examination in 2001. Results were broadly in line with the average and the proportion of students attaining the higher A-B grades above the average. In 2002 the results were not as good, as a lower proportion of students attained the higher grades. This was owing to staffing problems for part of last year. The retention rate on the AS and A-level course is well above the average. Most students attain as expected. There was no significant difference in standards attained by male and female students.
265. Lesson observation and analyses of work confirm that the standards achieved by students on the AS and A-level course are average when compared with all schools. A-level standards are above those achieved by students in the AS examination. This is partly due to more stable staffing providing better progression and continuity of teaching and learning, and partly due to the greater motivation and industry of these students in Year 13. Students' attainment standards at entry were below average, so students on both courses achieve well, overall. Students in Year 12 show good knowledge and understanding of introductory topics covered in both physical and human geography. Work on both courses is covered thoroughly and in great detail but the material is not sufficiently refined by students to gain the greatest value from it. Course units would benefit from a summary review at the end of each unit so that students do not lose sight of the overview focus of the topic. Critical analyses are progressively and well-developed over time, although evaluations are often rather limited by narrow application in Year 12. When writing set assignments, few students undertake independent research to add to text and notes provided in class. However, written work is generally of a sound standard. Students organise their work well in Year 13.
266. Teaching is consistently good on the AS and A-level courses. Teachers show good subject knowledge when presenting topics and when monitoring students' learning. They give effective support to all groups of students. Lessons are planned and presented thoughtfully with clear aims and learning foci, so that students clearly understand what they are doing, and this results in good learning. Lessons are well structured and organised with the purpose, through enquiry activities, to develop students' self-learning. Students are given opportunities to contribute to discussion and to develop their ideas but many do not respond well enough; they rely too much on their teachers. Learning would benefit from students spending more time preparing themselves for discussion and the consolidation of ideas, both oral and written, in lessons. Students' learning gains much from teachers' very skilful questioning, as it extends students' knowledge and understanding of topics taught. However, there is need of more regular consolidation of whole-class learning. Generally, lessons have good pace and productivity and teachers' expectations are high, though opportunities need to be taken to challenge higher-attainers better through developing synthesis skills. Students use resource materials well and enjoy and gain great benefit from practical assignments, particularly fieldwork and related activities.
267. The AS and A-level courses are competently managed. The provision is well co-ordinated and teachers work well together; their combined strength promotes satisfactory standards. Courses are well planned and fully meet syllabus requirements. Work is well marked and comments made on how work can be further improved are helpful. Students are, however, insufficiently clear of the progress they are making as marks for assignments are not related to AS and A-level grades. An examination skills programme and more testing of students' understanding of concepts would

benefit their learning. There is a very good stock of reference materials held within the department but more ICT facilities would further enhance opportunities for research and presentation of work.

HISTORY

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

| | |
|---|--|
| Strengths | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching is good: it is enthusiastic and reflects the strength of subject knowledge and high expectations of students Students have positive attitudes to the subject and it is increasing in popularity The most recent results show that students achieve well in terms of their prior attainment and that more are beginning to achieve the higher grades The subject is well managed. A particular strength is the number of different history courses students have access to across the consortium | |
| Areas for improvement | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The department needs to work on developing students' skills in speaking using formal language There is scope to share good practice more systematically across the consortium The attendance of a small number of students is unsatisfactory | |

| Aspect | Year 12 | Years 13 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Females' standard of work seen | Average | Just above average |
| Males' standard of work seen | Average | Just above average |
| Examination standards 2001 | Below average | Below average, but numbers are small |
| Examination standards 2002 | Similar to 2001 | Similar to 2001 |
| Achievement, overall | Satisfactory | Good |
| Teaching, overall | Good | Good |
| Learning, overall | Good | Good |

268. In 2001, A-level results were below average compared with those in all schools. The percentage of students attaining an A-B grade was below average. The proportion of students attaining an A-E grade, however, was above average. Results in 2002 were similar. The trend in results over the last three years is up because history is increasing in popularity as a sixth form subject and it is attracting a wider ability range. Over the last two years, for example, more students have begun to achieve A or B grades than before.
269. These results, compared with students' prior attainment at GCSE, represent good achievement. For a very small number of students, however, results at AS-level do not equate to their GCSE attainment: this is largely due to poor attendance combined with a lack of self-confidence.
270. Retention rates are generally good. Three Year 12 students have left since they began the course in September; two of these left because of poor attendance and one wished to concentrate on her other subjects. History is also becoming a more popular subject. Although no Year 13 students are currently studying the subject at All Saints School, there are 18 students in the Year 12 group, many of whom plan to continue the subject into Year 13.
271. In Year 12, students are beginning to analyse historical sources critically and evaluate a wide range of evidence to produce well-balanced and coherent arguments. Their written work is generally well organised and teachers are working hard to ensure that students write analytically rather than in narrative style. Most students are beginning to articulate their views with growing confidence, although a significant minority are hesitant and do not use formal vocabulary sufficiently. There are no Year 13 students currently studying history at All Saints, although a very small number take it at other schools in the consortium. It was possible to observe a Year 13 lesson in only one of these schools. In this lesson, students showed a sound depth of

knowledge and understanding of the Suez Crisis and their recall of previous learning was good. The teacher's effective use of questioning helped students to gain in confidence and try and work out answers when they were not sure. Students learn well in their courses in sixth form history and they show good progress in both thinking and writing. This good learning results from both the experienced teaching in the department and in the consortium schools and from the positive attitudes students have to their work. Additionally, the consortium arrangements enable students to choose from a very wide range of history courses. Courses can be taken, for example, in periods ranging from Weimar Germany to the American Civil War, the English Civil War or Elizabethan England. This means that most interests can be catered for.

272. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Three-quarters were good or better. There are many significant strengths in teaching and students learn well as a result. They are also enthusiastic about their history lessons. Students are given good opportunities to work independently and in pairs and small groups. Year 12 students, for example, particularly enjoyed a role-play that involved putting Charles I on trial. The marking of students' work is good, with plenty of comments on what they have done well and what they need to do in order to improve their answers. Teachers' confident subject expertise and high expectations of what students can achieve allow them to prepare students effectively for the demands of the higher order skills in the subject. In Year 12, for example, the teacher made very effective use of a board diagram to show students how to obtain A or B grades in analytical writing. Students worked in groups on exemplar introductions and conclusions and then shared their work with the rest of the class. In another lesson, the teacher tried to cover too much material in the lesson and consequently students were not given sufficient time to reinforce their learning. Teachers make good use of questioning to clarify and reinforce students' learning. This was evident, for example, in a Year 12 lesson on Elizabethan foreign policy where students quickly began to see the 'big picture' and compare relations with France and Spain. As a result of the teacher's skilful and encouraging questions, students worked out why Mary, Queen of Scots was a threat to Elizabeth even while she was still living in France.

273. Leadership and management are good. The head of department has a clear vision of what he wants to achieve and is ably supported by his colleagues. Teachers work well together as a team, although there is more scope to share good practice across all the schools in the consortium. The new head of department has made an effective start in reviewing A-level provision. A new module on the English Civil War has replaced the less popular course on nineteenth century British political history. Resources have improved and students are given the opportunity to attend A-level revision courses in London. No issues were identified in the last inspection report.

ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

274. The focus was on English literature.

English

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

Strengths

- Examination results in AS and A2 are among the best in the school, level with the national average, and indicate satisfactory achievement
- Teachers are highly committed and offer good support to students to help raise standards

Areas for improvement

- The collection and analysis of attainment data are unsatisfactory
- There are few extra-curricular activities organised to broaden provision

| Aspect | Year 12 | Years 13 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Females' standard of work seen | Average | Average |
| Males' standard of work seen | Average | Average |
| Examination standards 2001 | n/a | Below average |
| Examination standards 2002 | n/a | Similar to 2001 |
| Achievement, overall | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |
| Teaching, overall | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |
| Learning, overall | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |

275. Standards in A-level examinations in 2002 were in line with recent national averages but national data are unavailable at the time of writing. About a third of candidates achieved grades A and B. The attainment of males, relative to females, fluctuates from year to year because the total number of students is relatively small – usually around twenty – though this is greater than in any other subject, and the ratio of males to females changes. Examination results have been regularly among the best in the school, and relatively few of those who start the course fail to finish.
276. These results are confirmed by the standard of work seen in lessons. Students have good knowledge of the examination texts, and research the social and historical background to the literature well, for instance looking in detail at the life depicted in Hogarth's prints before considering the work of Blake. In Year 12, they are aware of the attitudes which influenced the poetry of Larkin, and argue passionately about the ambiguities in a poem like *Days*. In their essays they can compare modern novels, such as *The Colour Purple* and *Oranges are Not the Only Fruit*, and analyse the chief themes in each, commenting perceptively on the characters' search for identity, the influence of dominant males, and the significance of Christianity. Less successful were timed essays on the *Merchant of Venice*, which lacked structure. Students still have much to learn about how to incorporate quotation (despite a guidance sheet from teachers on this matter) and how to bring an essay to a well-argued conclusion. However, here again, students showed a keen awareness of the historical background to the play, and how anti-semitism has changed since Shakespeare's day. Coursework essays give brief bibliographies, reflecting students' depth of research.
277. It is an inclusive department, which makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral and cultural development of its students. This comes from teachers' willingness to widen the scope of discussion from a narrow consideration of the literature itself to the wider issues, which the literature illustrates.
278. Teaching is, overall, satisfactory. Two lessons seen were good and one was unsatisfactory. Teachers have very good knowledge of both the literature and its social context. They prepare their lessons thoroughly, and teach them with enthusiasm. They have good relations with students, offering not only encouragement, but also opportunities for further help after school. As a result of this conscientious and well-informed teaching, both learning and achievement are satisfactory.
279. Marking is unusually diligent. Some comments cover a page with writing, and make students aware of what they need to do to improve. One weakness is that occasionally these comments give more praise and a higher grade than the work deserves. A second and greater weakness is that for much of the time it is the teacher who does the talking, forcing students into a passive role. Students would learn more if they took a more active part in lessons, articulated their thoughts more frequently, and had more opportunities to learn from one another.
280. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The head of department knows what his two sixth form colleagues are doing, though his monitoring could be more structured and formal. He has put in place a scheme by which stronger students support the weaker, and a mentoring programme for those who need extra help. It is a weakness that the department lacks complete records of prior attainment, so cannot analyse trends over time, nor assess how well it is adding value. The range of extra-curricular activities, such as theatre visits, is narrow, and runs counter

to what is happening in lessons, when teachers are prepared to look outside the set texts for the wider issues.

281. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Attainment then was in line with national averages, and is so still. The number of high grades had improved slightly. Nothing was said before about management, but there is now room for further improvement in ensuring that all procedures are described in a departmental handbook. In particular, all assessment data should be readily available and used to measure progress.