

INSPECTION REPORT

Bassingbourn Village College

Bassingbourn, Nr Royston, Herts.

LEA area: Cambridge

Unique reference number: 110895

Headteacher: Catherine Jenkinson Dix

Lead inspector: Graham Preston

Dates of inspection: 6th – 9th October 2003

Inspection number: 258558

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the College Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Type of college: Comprehensive

College category: Foundation

Age range of students: 11-16

Gender of students: Mixed

Number on roll: 625

College address: South End
Bassingbourn

Royston

Postcode: SG8 5NJ

Telephone number: (01763) 242344

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr John Penny

Date of previous inspection: 24th February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COLLEGE

Bassingbourn Village College is a small rural mixed comprehensive with 625 students, an increase since the last inspection when it was 512. The college draws its students mainly from four rural communities including some from a local army-training establishment. Almost all students have white UK heritage backgrounds and are above average economically. There are no refugees or students for whom English is an additional language though there are a few children from traveller families. The proportion of students with special educational needs is broadly in line with that nationally. Standards on entry are a little above national average.

Bassingbourn has village college status and as a community college successfully meets the wider educational needs of the community, adult education, family learning, and drop in facilities, local clubs and activities. The college also has strong and developing links with nearby village colleges and primary schools in arts, sports, community activity and youth work. Its technology college status reflects its strength in that curriculum area and is demonstrated by its recent success in the Young Electronic Designer of the Year awards. Other links include those with local further education colleges and some universities as part of curriculum development and teacher training.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1990	G.C. Preston	Lead inspector	
19798	J. O'Keefe	Lay inspector	
2561	T. Byrne	Team inspector	English
18178	I. Matthews	Team inspector	Mathematics
30433	C. Corp	Team inspector	Science
2495	B. Munden	Team inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology
2501	R. Allison-Smith	Team inspector	Art
22042	J. Challands	Team inspector	Geography, special educational needs (SEN)
10761	P. Willan	Team inspector	History, religious education
32208	D. Aitken	Team inspector	Citizenship, Modern foreign languages
20767	J. Royle	Team inspector	Music
7926	J. Bowden	Team inspector	Physical education
3674	G. Marriott	Team inspector	English as an additional language (EAL)

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Bassingbourn is a successful college that is valued by parents and students and gives good value for money. Teaching is consistently good and the effective student learning is reflected in the GCSE standards that are well above national average. In some subjects the gifted and talented do particularly well. Students have a positive attitude to college and despite some distractions in the earlier years, students make good progress throughout their time in college. The college is very well led and staff and students have created a strong and inclusive ethos. It is both a technology college and community college and its developing local and regional links are excellent.

The college's main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' good achievement reflected in well above average GCSE standards.
- Good teaching and learning with a third of teaching very good or better.
- The very good leadership of the headteacher well supported by strong and effective governors and senior managers.
- A very positive and inclusive college ethos based on the co-operation and mutual respect of teachers and students.
- Very good care and guidance systems including careers.
- Excellent community links and development.
- A lack of development in information and communication technology (ICT) provision that limits students' progress in that area.
- Some teaching does not engage the interest of a minority of the younger students.
- Assessment in Years 7-9 which is not fully and consistently established to a good standard.
- Communications, that have some strengths but are not wholly effective in ensuring that parents are aware of the college's vision and direction or appreciate its continuing success.

The college has built on the success recognised in the last inspection by establishing more explicit college systems that reflect both a larger college and recent national developments and initiatives. It has sustained the high standards and successfully addressed the relative weaknesses previously found in science and college monitoring and evaluation procedures. The latter has been made possible by a larger management team and greater delegation of responsibilities. The further expansion of wide ranging community links has been another successful feature. All of this represents good improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Performance in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
	A	A	A	A*

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average

Similar colleges are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 9.

Students achieve GCSE standards **well above national average** and these compare very well with those pupils nationally who entered secondary college with similar end of Year 6 test scores.

Students come into the college with overall standards a little above national average and make sufficiently good progress in Years 7-9 to achieve clearly above average standards across their different subjects. In English, mathematics and science, students' knowledge and skills are well above national average and in history, geography, design and technology, modern foreign languages and religious education they make particularly good progress from modest entry standards.

Achievement is less pronounced in art and particularly ICT. Progress is slowed for a minority of less motivated and immature boys though the great majority of students achieve well in the first three years.

Increased student effort and motivation combined with a greater proportion of very good teaching in GCSE courses result in an increased rate of progress in Years 10-11. Consequently, students achieve standards well above national average. The A* in the table above indicates that students perform exceptionally well when compared with those in similar schools. Gifted and talented and higher attaining students in general, do particularly well in a number of subjects where the proportion of the highest grades are significantly above national average.

Students enjoy being in college and get on well with adults and other students. Most behave well and are increasingly more mature and responsible.

Attendance is very good with very low levels of unauthorised absence. Students get to lessons on time and behave well around the college and in lessons. With the exception of small minority of mainly younger boys, most students develop their personal and social skills well through the opportunities to take responsibility and be more involved in the life of the college.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education provided by the college is good with some very good features. Teaching and learning are consistently good.

In 123 lessons seen, teaching was never less than satisfactory and three quarters of lessons were judged to be good or better. Staff are dedicated and well organised and this is reflected in the consistency in provision. Subject knowledge, lesson planning and variety are strengths and these provide challenge and enable students to learn well. Teaching is less strong in Years 7-9 particularly in assessment and occasionally class management.

Learning support assistants play an important part in supporting those students with special educational needs. Very good pastoral care and support is supplemented well by the student counselling of the youth worker. The college forum provides a genuine means of involving students in the work of the college. The college has very good links with other schools, colleges and universities and has excellent community provision.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is very good and overall management of the college is good.

The governing body has a clear view of its role and good understanding of the college's strengths and weaknesses. The very good leadership of the headteacher and the leadership group has provided a very clear focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising standards of achievement. This work also sustains a strong and inclusive ethos.

PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE COLLEGE

Parents have high expectations of the college and readily voice any concerns they have about provision. However, the college is popular and the great majority of parents appreciate the good provision. Students made thoughtful and articulate comments about the college and were very positive about most features.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the college should do to improve are:

Raise students' standards and achievement in ICT by;

- Better co-ordinating and developing ICT curriculum opportunities for all students.
- Improving both staff knowledge and skills in teaching ICT and the range of and access to computer facilities.

Improve assessment practice, particularly in Years 7-9

Assessment is often good in Years 10-11 and is largely satisfactory in other years. However, practice could be even better if;

- All curriculum areas make effective use of the college data analysis and target setting procedures.
- There were fully developed departmental marking and assessment systems.

Consistently good teaching is a strength of the college though would benefit further by;

- Sharing the best strategies currently being used to further improve boys' achievement.
- Strengthen communication with parents so that they better understand the developments and successes of the college.

And, to meet statutory requirements:

- Work towards meeting the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Students achieve well in all years and reach GCSE standards well above national average. These compare very well with those students nationally who entered secondary school with similar end of Year 6 test scores.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall GCSE standards are well above national average.
- Most students achieve well including both gifted and talented and those with special educational needs.
- Students make good progress in all three core subjects.
- Students do well in most foundation subjects often from an average standard on entry.
- Standards and achievement in ICT are unsatisfactory largely because of weaknesses in curriculum provision and resources.
- A small minority of students in Years 8 and 9 make less progress than they should.
- GCSE standards have improved in art though students make modest progress in Years 7-9.

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 9 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	College results	National results
English	35.7 (33.2)	33.3 (33.0)
Mathematics	38.2 (35.8)	34.7 (34.4)
Science	36.2 (35.9)	33.3 (33.1)

There were 122 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. Students come into the college with overall standards a little above national average and make sufficiently good progress in Years 7-9 to achieve clearly above average standards across their different subjects. The table above shows that the three core subjects all improved in recent years and were noticeably better than national average. Standards in those subjects continue to be well above national average.

2. Progress is slowed for a minority of students, often less focused and immature boys. In a number of lessons, predominantly in Year 8, those students are unsettled and can slow the progress of themselves and the class. Despite this, the great majority of students achieve well in the first three years.

Standards in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11 in 2002

	College results	National results
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	69 (67%)	49.9%
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	104 (98%)	90.9%
Percentage of students gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	105 (99%)	97%
Average point score per student (best eight subjects)	51.5	39.8

There were 106 students in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Greater proportion of very good teaching in GCSE courses results in an increased rate of progress in Years 10-11. Consequently, students achieve standards well above national average. Gifted and talented and higher attaining students in general, do particularly well in a number of subjects such as design and technology where the proportion of the highest grades are significantly above national average.

4. Standards in English of speaking, listening, reading and writing are above average when students enter Year 7 though standards of listening are less strong. Across all years, the higher attaining students do well particularly in the GCSE courses where teaching is more challenging. Boys' achievement is significantly lower than girls throughout, though lower attaining boys are as keen to do as well as girls of similar ability. Standards of presentation of work by all students are consistently high. Students with special educational needs do very well, often reaching average standards in English despite learning difficulties. Gifted and talented students, especially girls, perform very well.

5. Standards in mathematics are a little above national average on entry and by the end of year nine standards rise to be clearly above average. This represents good student progress and achievement reflecting the effective teaching in most lessons. Stimulating contexts that enable students to discuss their ideas and solve problems characterise the best practice leading to very good progress for all abilities. The good progress continues for most students in Years 10-11 where the higher attaining students are able to take GCSE earlier and move on to higher level work. Lower attaining students also do well when the teaching is good particularly in their investigative skills. Even so, where there is less pace and lower expectation in lessons, progress is more modest for some of those students.

6. Standards in science are well above the national average in all years and this reflects good progress since the last inspection when it was judged to be the weakest of the three core subjects. The highest attaining Year 9 students can, for example, describe accurately the difference between mass and weight, while Year 11 students are able to calculate the energy levels in the burning of organic substances. The achievement of all students is good. The students join the college above the national level and make good progress to be well above by the GCSE stage. This is due to the well-planned sequence of lessons in all years that enables the students to build effectively on prior knowledge.

7. In contrast, ICT is an area of weakness in the college. Students in Year 7 start off working at national average standards because they benefit from a taught ICT lesson but the lack of such lessons and the patchy use of ICT in other lessons slow their rate of progress. At the end of Year 9, standards in word processing, desktop publishing, spreadsheets and databases are below national average. The good work in design and technology does help students make progress in some aspects such as computer graphics but students' overall achievement in ICT is unsatisfactory. Student progress is more mixed in Years 10-11 with those taking GCSE ICT achieving well and reaching above average standards but other students do not reach the levels expected given their performance in other subjects.

8. Students generally make good progress in most of their foundation subjects and GCSE options. In many of these subjects the students come to the college with no better than average standards often because these curriculum areas have not had as much emphasis and coverage in primary school.

9. This good progress is well illustrated by the modern foreign languages of French and German. Standards are well above average in Years 7-9 with the dual linguists in Years 8 and 9, including gifted and talented students making fast progress. Their listening skills are highly developed and their thorough grounding in vocabulary and structures enables them to write in depth to secure high grades in assessments. Middle and low attaining students also make good progress as they steadily acquire the skills to work with increasing confidence, especially in listening, and in writing

using the three tenses. This good teaching continues in Years 10-11 and results in well above average GCSE outcomes.

10. A similarly positive picture applies to history, geography, religious education, physical education and music. In design and technology, students make good progress in skills that combine creative flair in design with sound technical knowledge. Art has also improved considerably at GCSE level but student progress is more modest in Years 7-9 compared with other subjects.

11. National GCSE results show that girls considerably outperform boys in terms of the higher grades. Bassingbourn has made some progress in some subjects, such as history, to reduce the gender gap in achievement. Consequently in 2003 girls achieved 11 percent more grades A*-C than boys compared with 15 per cent nationally.

12. Many of the students identified as having special educational needs experience difficulties with literacy skills. Several others have difficulties related to behaviour and some have specific learning difficulties related to hearing impairment or autism. Most of these students, particularly those with statements, succeed in making good progress because the teachers and learning support assistants have a very good appreciation of those students' needs and work hard to ensure that appropriate strategies and resources are utilised.

Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Students enjoy being in college and get on well with adults and other students. Most behave well and are increasingly more mature and responsible. This reflects the good opportunities provided for students' social and moral development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students have good relationships with teachers and other students.
- Attendance is well above national average and reflect a commitment and positive attitude to college.
- Behaviour is good overall and in many instances very good though a small minority of younger male students distract others on occasion.
- Students respond positively to the opportunities to take responsibility and participate in college activities.
- Most reflect the inclusive nature of the college and have a concern and respect for others.
- The college provision for PSHE and citizenship underpins its commitment to inclusion.

Commentary

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
College data	6.5
National data	7.8

Unauthorised absence	
College data	0.1
National data	1.2

The table gives the percentage of half days missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

13. Most students completed their questionnaire and over 90 percent like coming to the college. Student attendance is very good and well above that found in secondary colleges nationally. Unauthorised student absence is very low. The college has established a strong learning ethos and almost all students expected to work hard and do their best. Parents and carers are also very supportive in ensuring the high levels of attendance. When in college students get to lessons on time.

14. Behaviour in general is good. A small minority of mainly younger boys are immature and their distracting behaviour slows the progress of learning in some lessons. This is balanced by the very good behaviour of many others. There are some lively students but movement around the college building is calm and students show respect for adults and their peers. The college rightly sees itself as inclusive and certainly in lessons, all students including those with particular learning needs or with some physical impairment, work well together and treat each other with consideration. Consequently, Students with special educational needs develop good relationships with others, approach their work with enthusiasm and are confident they will succeed.

Exclusions

<i>Ethnic background of students</i>	<i>Exclusions in the last college year</i>		
Categories used in the Annual College Census	No of students on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	616	51	0

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

15. Student exclusions are a little high but this reflects the high expectations the college has and those exclusions are always temporary and usually short. Bullying does occur though is more often name calling and dealt with firmly and effectively.

16. Students respond positively to efforts to involve them in the work of the college. Some of the older students who experienced a smaller and perhaps more informal college atmosphere are a little less positive in their views. Even so, many of the Year 11 students play an active role as mentors to younger students as well as chairing the individual forums in each year that enable many students to discuss ideas and make decisions. The use of adults other than teachers to support the forums allows for more open discussion and students use the opportunities provided to express their views sensibly.

17. Students are well aware that they can approach staff if they have concerns and will be listened to with empathy and patience. Those with particular personal problems greatly appreciate the counselling provided by the attached youth worker who works closely with the pastoral staff.

18. Students readily discuss their views and have a strong moral code. They have developed a respect for others values and beliefs and an appreciation of other cultures through the work of the college particularly in PSHE and religious education. The citizenship programme is still being developed but the approach taken further underpins the college commitment to developing reflective and independent young people.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE COLLEGE

The overall quality of education is good. The college strengths as a successful and inclusive village college are reflected in its good and consistent teaching, its care and concern for all of its students and its active involvement in the local and regional community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is **good overall** with greater strengths in Years 10-11 where there is more very good teaching and stronger assessment practice.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Dedicated staff prepare lessons well and this is reflected in consistently good teaching with no unsatisfactory lessons evident during the inspection.
- Specialist staff in almost all of the main curriculum areas, with the exception of ICT.
- Effective work of the learning support assistants contributes significantly to the good progress of students with special educational needs.
- The better lessons use a variety of methods including those that encourage students to research and develop their work with more independence.
- Teachers have a good working relationship with students and this helps establish a positive learning atmosphere.
- Excellent practice is helping boys improve and so reduce the gender difference in GCSE results.
- Effective use of equipment and resources stimulates interest and develops skills though this is not always extended to the use of ICT.
- Otherwise satisfactory teaching is less effective in engaging mainly Year 8 and 9 boys.
- The identification and sharing of the very best practice has yet to be fully achieved.
- The marking and assessment of GCSE work clearly contributes to students' success but there is less good practice in Years 7-9.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 123 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4(3%)	32 (26%)	53(44 %)	33(27 %)	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

19. Teaching is good overall with nearly three-quarters of lessons being good or better and about three in ten lessons being very good and on occasion excellent. All teaching during the inspection was satisfactory. Learning is similarly good in nearly three-quarters of lessons reflecting the successful practice of most teachers

20. A feature of this practice is the emphasis on developing students as more independent learners and is part of the whole college vision. Most subjects provide students with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and to discuss and develop their ideas with others. Consequently they work co-operatively and are able to concentrate for long periods. Where possible, these learning strategies are well supported by different resources though the lack of computer access has weakened efforts to make greater use of ICT.

21. The specialist teachers use their knowledge and skills effectively to challenge and develop the students. In subjects such as design and technology the teachers use their strong technical knowledge to help students learn well and produce excellent projects. Many teachers' very good understanding of the GCSE examination requirements help students acquire relevant skills necessary to reach high standards.

22. Science teaching is challenging through the facility of enabling higher attaining students acquire sufficient breadth to take the three separate GCSE sciences. Another example of high expectations and successful classroom strategies was in an excellent GCSE English lesson where paired 'study buddies', each a boy and girl, took responsibility to regularly discuss and share ways of improving their work. The effect of this was to ensure students met deadlines, worked with care and accuracy and gained insight as to how they could improve their work. The result was both boys and girls reaching higher GCSE standards.

23. Many of the above examples relate to GCSE teaching and there is clear evidence that the stronger teaching practice tends to be in Years 10-11 where it is more focused on examination requirements and assessment practice has greater rigour. In the inspection nearly two thirds of the very good and excellent teaching was seen in those years.

24. Teaching in Years 7-9 is still good overall and there are numerous examples of very good practice together with some relative weaknesses. Certainly a number of the boys in Year 8 lack concentration and distract others. The inspection found that teachers in a number of subjects including art, English and mathematics, were more challenged by some inappropriate behaviour that slowed learning of the class.

25. In Years 7-9 a lack of specialist teaching of ICT and the college reliance on other subjects to cover the ICT scheme of work results in insufficient and unchallenging learning.

26. Assessment is satisfactory overall though practice is less strong in Years 7-9. GCSE assessment is generally good. Teachers know the examination requirements, readily adapt their learning programmes to meet student needs and through their marking of coursework and homework, help students improve. Marking and record keeping in Years 7-9 is satisfactory but most teachers do not make full use of National Curriculum level descriptors to show students how they can improve. In a number of subjects, teachers' end of Year 9 assessments are unrealistically high.

27. The teaching of students with special educational needs is good in all subjects and years. When the very experienced Learning Support Assistants are present they provide very good support for students and have a significant and very positive impact on the progress of students in many lessons. A good example was observed in a Year 11 maths lesson where the teaching assistant worked very well with a student experiencing significant problems with his writing. He had been provided with a lap top computer and this combined with very good support from a learning support assistant helped him to focus on a maths task resulting in good progress.

28. Overall the college has been successful in ensuring students have consistently satisfactory and usually good teaching. Until it has developed its more rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures it has yet to fully identify and share the very good and excellent practice in the college.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is **good**. The opportunities for enrichment, including out-of-college activities are **very good**. The quality and quantity of accommodation and resources to meet the needs of the curriculum are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The college meets the National Curriculum requirements and further enhances provision through enrichment courses and additional support.
- The range of extra curricular opportunities is very good.
- The curriculum in art and ICT is unsatisfactory.
- The match of teachers to the curriculum is good in all subjects.
- The accommodation is very good in science and drama but is unsatisfactory in art.
- There is no daily act of collective worship.

Commentary

29. The overall curriculum is good in terms of the coverage of National Curriculum subjects and the range of options in Years 10-11. The curriculum has been enhanced for the higher attaining students and though the vocational options are very limited, the needs of all students are met.

30. The largely academic curriculum would seem to be less appropriate for some lower attaining students including those with special educational needs but this is rarely the case. Students with special educational needs are well supported by learning support staff or by teachers providing extra work and a range of appropriate resources which ensures that progress is at least satisfactory and often good.

31. All students receive their basic curriculum entitlement. The college size constrains the number of GCSE and vocational options though it has built links with a local further education college to provide a modest vocational alternative for some students including those with special educational needs. The college is in the process of extending the range of these courses in collaboration with other local schools and colleges.

32. Provision for gifted and talented students is good. There is a register of all those students with appropriate criteria identified and strategies for developing their progress. All subject staff are aware of these students and in many lessons they are provided with appropriate extension activities. The achievement of high attainers is well above the national average in the majority of subjects. In maths high attainers enter the GCSE examination one year early and spend Year 11 on a bridging course for the GCE 'A' level examination. In science all sit the three single sciences and in design and technology the gifted and talented are provided with very challenging opportunities after college where they have been very successful in national competitions.

33. The curriculum is unsatisfactory in art and in ICT. The ICT curriculum in particular, barely covers the National Curriculum programmes of study and the lack of co-ordinated planning and limited resources have limited students' standards and progress in developing their knowledge and skills. The college now has a new computer suite that will increase access and there are plans to improve the ICT curriculum.

34. The programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is well thought out and covers all the required areas. Lessons are taught effectively and students say they find the provision both informative and enjoyable.

35. Provision for citizenship is developing and is currently satisfactory in terms of the delivery of the programme of study. The college rightly points to the ways in which its work contributes to the wider aspects of citizenship through its successful efforts to involve students in the running of the college. The college's arrangements for careers and work experience prepare students very well for the future through a carefully planned programme which forms an integral part of PSHE.

36. Students are very positive about the good quality and range of the curriculum courses and extra-curricular activities on offer. The choice of extra-curricular activities is wide ranging covering sports, the arts and most subject areas. There is a full programme of after college courses that enable students to take music qualifications and be involved in different drama and music productions. There are also opportunities for gifted and talented students to attend additional GCSE classes that lead to earlier entry. Students also benefit from other excellent local facilities including the successful youth clubs that form part of the community role of the village college. All students have access to two hours of good quality physical activity per week. The majority of this is formally timetabled and there is also a good extra-curricular programme, which includes recreational activities as well as competitive fixtures. As a result of this, 38 per cent of boys and 44 per cent of girls took part in general extra-curricular activities in the previous college year. In competitive fixtures, 34 per cent of boys and 30 per cent of girls represented the college.

37. The match of the staff to the curriculum is good. All subjects are, in the main, taught by specialist teachers who have good subject knowledge. Where teachers take subjects that are not their specialist subjects there is no negative impact on the learning due to good support and sound lesson planning.

38. The accommodation is satisfactory overall and allows the college to teach its planned curriculum. Some of the art accommodation is dilapidated and so unsatisfactory. The accommodation for science and drama is very good. Most subjects have suites of rooms but the increased college size means that some teachers have to use rooms in other buildings.

39. The resources for the curriculum are adequate to deliver the curriculum. The resources for art are unsatisfactory. The number of computers in the college has improved recently with the opening of a new ICT suite freeing up another computer room for use by all subjects. However the proportion of computers to students is still well below national average. The learning resource centre is well managed and resourced and is central to the learning of the college.

Care, guidance and support

Staff's supportive approach enables them to get to know students very well. As a result students are very well cared for through the college's pastoral system and welfare procedures.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good procedures ensure students are safe and secure.
- Very good relationships exist in the college.
- Good procedures are established for the induction of new students and transfer on to sixth form college.
- Very effective arrangements exist for careers and work experience.
- Good opportunities exist for students to air their views.

Commentary

40. Staff have a caring, supportive approach to students and the college's relatively small nature enables them to get to know students very well. In addition the college's very efficient procedures for welfare, child protection and health and safety strongly ensure students general well-being. The pastoral manager is the person designated to deal with child protection concerns and staff are very well and regularly briefed in this sensitive area. Thorough procedures are in place for ensuring the health and safety of all. Regular health and safety assessments now take place.

41. Thanks to the very good relationships that exist within the college students feel safe and know there is always someone they can talk to. The very supportive pastoral team of year head and support assistants work very well together to provide a wide range of support for students, both academic and personal. On pastoral review days they meet up with students who each have a chance to have their say on how they are progressing. Planners are used well by staff to identify concerns. Through regular input from, for instance a local drugs awareness project, college nurse and the youth worker on site students are able to find information and personal support whenever they need it.

42. Assessment information gathered by teachers is used well at tutor reviews to set targets for students to aim for next. Working very closely with each other, form tutors, specialist staff and outside agencies the pastoral team ensures that students are quickly supported if they have any problems, either personal or to do with their academic progress.

43. From year 8 upwards students are regularly and carefully encouraged to think about their futures through a range of special events as well as the PSHE curriculum. A careers library is available daily for students with a Connexions personal adviser visiting the college weekly to provide useful individual support to older students. As a result of this well thought out and thorough system, students are able to make informed choices about their futures. The college forum has been carefully devised to give students opportunities to take the initiative and express their views on the college and its future.

44. Liaison with primary schools is very good and involves a range of visits to the primary colleges by staff at Bassingbourn and visits by all primary school students to their new college. This forms the foundation for initial assessment which is then developed through extensive testing of students on entry and in subsequent years. This provides relevant information which helps the college to make decisions about the level of support necessary for all students.

45. Arrangements for assessing, recording and reporting the progress of students with special educational needs are good and meet statutory requirements. Procedures for identifying students are thorough. Links between departments in the college and the learning support department are good, are developing and are effective in ensuring that most staff have an appropriate understanding of the specific learning needs of those students with special educational needs. Individual education plans have recently been modified and now provide appropriate information and set useful targets. At the moment they are only being used with those students who have statements of special educational needs but the intention is to extend this to other students with special educational needs. In some colleges this would seriously restrict the progress of these students but the very good knowledge and understanding of all staff of these students' specific problems and the high quality intervention of learning support assistants (LSAs) ensures appropriate progress for most students. All faculties have LSAs attached and they are a significant factor in the good progress made by students. They have developed extensive subject expertise, know the students and their specific needs very well and liaise very effectively with subject staff.

46. This is a very inclusive college and every effort is made to ensure that all students make appropriate progress. For those with special educational needs, several strategies are employed to promote inclusion. The reading intervention programme has just started to provide very valuable support for Year 7 students with very low reading ages. Withdrawal from some lessons for some Year 7 students is helping them improve their literacy though does adversely affect their progress in performing arts lessons.

Partnership with parents, other colleges and the community

The college has **good** links with parents and **very good** links with other colleges. Its involvement with, and support for its local community is **outstanding**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The college continues to foster good links with its parents.
- Community links are excellent.
- Very good links with other colleges.
- Some parents are not fully aware of the development and successes of the college.

Commentary

47. The college has maintained its good links with parents who value the education and care that their children receive. A small minority of parents were less satisfied with the college, which they felt did not keep them as well informed as they would like. Parents receive useful and varied information from the college in the form of weekly newsletters. Parents in Partnership meetings are held termly. These provide information on a range of topics to do with the curriculum and were praised by many parents who had attended them. However the level of parental support for some of these meetings has been variable.

48. There are short, termly progress reports and consultation meetings are regularly held for each year group, preceded with interim progress reports. Full reports are issued annually and are clearly presented and give good personalised information on how well students are progressing and what they need to do next.

49. The college brochure and governors' annual report for parents are detailed and informative. Their content meets all the legal requirements set for them. Most parents are satisfied with the college's complaints procedures. Many parents make good use of students' planners to communicate with staff. A small Parent Teacher Group operates in the college arranging regular fund raising events which are well supported by parents.

50. The college's excellent links with its local community are a strength. The college maintains very close academic and pastoral links with its feeder primary schools which ensures successful induction for Year 7 students. Useful links have also been forged with the local sixth form colleges where the majority of students transfer to in Year 12.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the college are **good** and the leadership offered by the headteacher is **very good**. The governance of the college and the leadership of other key staff are both **good**.

Main strengths

- The governing body has a clear view of its role and good understanding of the college's strengths and weaknesses.
- The very good leadership of the headteacher and the leadership group has provided a very clear focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising standards of achievement.
- A good performance review system provides a good basis for further raising standards in subject areas.
- Provision for professional development of staff is good, as are arrangements for the induction of new staff.
- The college contributes very well to initial teacher training.
- The college provides good value for money and improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

Commentary

51. The governance of the college is good. An experienced governing body provides a sense of direction for the work of the college and, through its main committees, acts as a critical friend, offering both support and challenge. The chair has a very good grasp of the college's strengths and weaknesses, as do the main committees. The governing body drew up the college's mission statement, has a good involvement in whole college strategic development and monitors well the work of the headteacher. There is a clear focus on the need to raise standards even further. As a result of their strategic influence and effective working relationships with the headteacher, the college has developed considerably since the previous inspection. The governing body has been instrumental in dealing with the two main issues raised in the previous inspection. Apart from the statutory requirement for a daily collective act of worship, accommodation being a barrier here, the governing body has ensured all other statutory requirements have been met.

52. Leadership is dedicated to improving standards and achievement in all aspects of the college's work. In particular the very good leadership of the headteacher, appointed since the previous inspection, has ensured the college has made good improvement.

53. A very good leadership group has been formed and the clear leadership and management structure in the college is recognised by both staff and students. This new structure is providing leadership development throughout the college for a range of staff.

54. The quality of leadership in many subject areas is good and in some areas very good. As a result, improving standards and achievement are clearly evident. Regular evaluation of provision within subject areas takes place through the leadership group link arrangements thus maintaining the focus on college improvement. The great majority of teaching is effective but leaders are not complacent and well-timed reviews are undertaken to ensure further improvement. There is a clear vision of the college in the future and all staff know what they are working towards. The college has recently been recognised as being one of the forty-two more successful and inclusive colleges in the country.

55. The effectiveness of management is good. Managers are committed to enabling the college to achieve its vision and strategic aims and objectives. Structures have changed considerably since

the previous inspection and the college recognises that all policies and systems have yet to be fully implemented.

56. The college places a high priority on appointing high calibre staff, providing continuing professional development opportunities and deploying them to their particular strengths and to best effect. The college's membership of the Cambridgeshire Outreach Network for Education (CONE) helps support further professional development opportunities for staff. Good performance management procedures ensure staff are supported and have access to training that is relevant to their needs.

57. Staff are clear about their roles, responsibilities and personal objectives. Target setting and the monitoring of achievement are becoming well embedded; a member of the leadership group has responsibility for assessment matters and subject heads are carrying out detailed analysis of results of examinations. Policies for planning, assessment, behaviour and special educational needs are starting to be reflected consistently across the college and there is a strong emphasis on raising standards.

58. Management is supportive and ensures accountability. Much has been done to reduce the administrative workload of teachers, to enable them to focus on classroom teaching. The college has a very strong commitment to initial teacher training. It is a full partnership institution and will be receiving twelve students this year from the University of Cambridge.

59. The learning support co-ordinator has just been appointed and has already managed to engage and inform all staff very effectively. There is a clear policy and a good and developing range of information for staff. Support staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and their deployment is generally effective. Procedures for the recording of the progress of individual students are good and an important factor in the good progress made by these students. Regular meetings with representatives of all departments in the college have been scheduled, where procedures and teaching strategies will be discussed. This has resulted in a more consistent approach to students with special educational needs across all departments. At the moment no clear learning support development plan specifies priorities and staff training requirements but the college development plan identifies special educational needs in the context of its focus on teaching and learning. The governing body fulfils its statutory requirements.

60. The college manages its finances soundly though it does have a current deficit, and priorities are linked to the whole college development plan. The most recent external auditor's report was complimentary to the college. Recent and ongoing changes to administrative procedures have been made and the college now has a five-year structured plan to balance its books. Principles of best value clearly guide the college decision-making and allocation of resources.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	2,147,696
Total expenditure	2,269,112
Expenditure per student	3683.62

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	572
Balance carried forward to the next	-120,844

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

Community Links

The college has now built up **excellent** links with the local community through its own work and networking with other colleges and primary schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The college provides a range of after college courses and activities that extend the college curriculum including music, sports and early entry GCSE programmes for the gifted and talented.
- The range of adult education programmes is popular and meets the needs of local people including those being supported through care in the community as well others in sheltered accommodation.
- The very popular youth clubs both on the college site and in local villages meet the needs of young people.
- The youth service also provides valuable and much appreciated student counselling through its close working with the college pastoral staff.
- Good and developing work providing for young families and supporting parenting initiatives in the local community.
- Sports activities are varied though some team sports are less developed because of limitations in the time of specialist college staff.

Commentary

61. The college has worked very hard since the last inspection to build up its links with the local community. This has been extremely successful and the provision is now outstanding.

62. The college is in constant use for adult education with over 400 people attending its courses which are run by staff funded through a franchise agreement with a local Further Education College and by the local education authority.

63. Two very popular youth clubs are run in the evenings at the college catering for over 100 young people, many of whom are students at the college. In addition the youth workers close links with the pastoral team at the college has enabled her to set up special support programmes out of college hours for those students who are in need.

64. Younger families are also supported well through the provision of a mother and toddler group and activity group for young children. The music school provides a valuable enhancement operating as it does on the college site both during and outside college hours each week. It offers students, ex-students and members of the community opportunities to learn to play a wide range of instruments using outside specialist tutors.

65. At weekends and in the college holidays the provision continues with IT clubs run at weekends and a summer school for students from Year 6 upwards. An indication of the success of this provision is that users of these comprehensive services come from many of the villages surrounding the college as well as from outside of the county.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- High standards are obtained in external tests and examinations.
- Gifted and talented students and those with special educational needs both make very good progress.
- Boys' achievement is significantly less than girls' particularly in English language.
- Good leadership and management has recently and quickly been established.
- Monitoring teaching and sharing best practice has yet to be properly developed.
- Access to computers has proved difficult and consequently there is insufficient use of ICT.

Commentary

66. By the end of Year 9, standards rise to well above average, with a high proportion of students reaching higher levels (6 and 7), but far more girls than boys reach that standard. GCSE results at the end of Year 11 have been consistently very high. Provisional English language results at grades A*-C for 2003 do show a dip below 2002 results, mainly reflected in the B to D range, but are still likely to be well above average. Boys fell further behind girls than in 2002. Results in literature held up better in comparison with 2002.

67. Standards of speaking, listening, reading and writing are above average when students enter Year 7 but standards of listening are less strong. Students make good progress in all years and standards of work by all students are consistently well above national average. Gifted and talented students do very well, particularly when benefiting from the more challenging teaching in Years 10 and 11. Boys' achievement is significantly lower than girls throughout, though lower attaining boys are keen to improve and match the girls' performance. Students with special educational needs do very well, often reaching average standards despite learning difficulties.

68. Teaching and learning are good overall and very good in Years 10 and 11. Some excellent practice was seen in Year 11, when the poem, "*Hurricane hits England*," was made very accessible for a group of lower attaining students and in another class where girls and boys were paired as "study buddies".

69. Teachers' awareness of students' prior attainment is good, but sometimes they do not use this knowledge fully to target questions to individuals. Some teachers are very good at sharing the learning contained within the lesson with students and when this happens, learning is very good.

70. Learning is less effective when only the tasks to be done are explained to students. Usually teaching is at least good, promoting sensitive insights from students at all levels of literacy. Ground rules and what is expected by when are usually made clear, but when this is not the case lack of structure in the lesson detracts from achievement. Students often recollect and apply previous learning well and this continuity builds up their learning well. Reflection with the whole class at the end of the lesson is very good in some lessons, but a minority of lessons end rather raggedly. Relationships between teachers and students are very good and students are encouraged as individuals.

71. Learning support assistants often contribute very well to learning, but sometimes teachers do not make efficient use of that additional support.

72. Assessment is regular and supportive, referencing National Curriculum levels and GCSE grades in a way that makes clear to students what is required.

73. ICT is used by students for word processing and by teachers to download useful resources from the Web, but ICT is not fully utilised to support and enhance English teaching. The work of the department is supported by very good library provision but fiction resources are only just satisfactory. Sometimes, textbooks used in Years 7 to 9 do not stimulate learning well; pace and challenge suffer as a result.

74. Good leadership and management have been quickly established in a new team of staff. This situation is well supported by line management, which secures a firm link between the department's development and the college improvement plan. This is supported by willing and expert contributions from all team members though monitoring teaching and sharing the best practice has yet to be fully developed.

Modern foreign languages

Provision in modern foreign languages is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The maintenance of high standards of results.
- Challenging teaching promotes good achievement.
- The curriculum is well adapted to students' needs.
- Very effective leadership has secured a range of improvements to provision.
- Lesson strategies and marking do not fully meet the needs of lower attaining students.

Commentary

75. Standards in teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 were well above average in 2002; 2003 marked a further improvement with an increased proportion of top grades. Girls outperform boys in line with national averages. GCSE results in both French and German have likewise been well above average for several years; a sharp decline in boys' standards in French in 2002 was reversed in 2003 and more students achieved A*/A grades. Girls outperform boys by more than the national average.

76. Standards seen during the inspection were above average in Years 7 to 9. Dual linguists in Years 8 and 9, including gifted and talented students make fast progress. Their listening skills are highly developed and their thorough grounding in vocabulary and structures enables them to write in depth to secure high grades in assessments. Overall, middle and low attaining students make good progress as they steadily acquire the skills to work with increasing confidence, especially in listening, and in writing using the three tenses.

77. Students in all years make major gains in listening as teachers insist on the use of the foreign language in class. Standards in Years 10 and 11 are above average. Higher attaining students rarely require repetition of language spoken at native speaker pace. The department has recently adopted the coursework option, and this has been a factor in a significant improvement in the writing skills of middle and lower attaining students.

78. Although students' literacy skills are above average on entry, most Year 7 students have had no prior exposure to foreign languages so standards on entry are no better than average. The brisk pace of lessons accelerates students' learning as they are constantly made to react to and reflect on, what they hear. They quickly develop the ability to use a wide range of language. Frequent opportunities to correct errors enables them acquire a feel for accuracy in written work. The provision of a vocabulary/grammar book for reference ensures students spend time profitably in lessons working with language rather than in routine copying. Experienced Learning Support Assistants are well deployed to support students with severe learning difficulties. A wide extra-curricular programme provides further opportunities to develop skills and cultural understanding. As a result achievement is good in all years.

79. Teaching and learning are good. A substantial amount of the teaching in Years 10 and 11 and with higher attaining students in Years 7 to 9 is very good. Strong teacher expectations and a highly effective mix of techniques capture and hold students' attention. Most activities are well designed and interlinked to give them increasing independence in using language. In years 10 and 11 teachers' detailed knowledge of their students and examination requirements help them target advice effectively to improve students' work. Sometimes lower attaining students do not understand what they are to do and marking does not always help or motivate them fully.

80. Leadership has proved very effective and management is good overall. The faculty head has initiated a number of changes within the department to improve the curriculum and to adapt to wider college requirements. An effective tracking system is now in place to help students and teachers track their progress. Although there is currently no stated departmental policy for monitoring teaching, steps are being taken to ensure that best practice is shared more effectively.

81. As the previous inspection was a short one, no judgement can be made regarding improvement.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

82. Students' standards of literacy are mainly above average, or higher, on entry. This influences presentation of work by all students, including boys and students with special educational needs; it is generally good. A very well stocked library, which is managed efficiently, supports literacy and there are plans in place, once the technology is installed, to monitor the extent of borrowing by individual students. Departments, other than English, have been trained to respond to students' needs in this respect, but progress in developing support for literacy has been delayed by a change in staffing. Currently support for literacy is satisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Exam results at the end of year 9 and 11 are very good and students achieve well.
- Most of the teaching in the department is good, some is very good.
- A policy of early entry for GCSE is working well though is limited to only a modest number of students.
- The department is well led and managed.
- Data is used effectively to establish targets for students and to monitor their progress.
- Marking is inconsistent and teachers have yet to make full use of assessment data to influence teaching strategies.

Commentary

83. Students enter the college with subject knowledge and skills which are above average. A significant number of these students are well above average. At the end of Year 9 in 2002 and over time, results are well above average with boys and girls attainment in 2002 being broadly similar. In comparison with similar schools results are also well above average. In 2003 there has been a further improvement.

84. In 2002 results at the end of year 11 were well above average with the results in 2003 showing some decline from the previous high figure. The department significantly exceeds the national percentage of A* and A grades.

85. At the end of Year 9, standards of work seen in lessons and in books are above average, with some students attaining very high standards. For example, the top set in Year 9 was working on quadratic graphs. Following some stimulating discussion, cleverly orchestrated by the teacher, they were successfully able to deduce the shapes of graphs arising from complex practical situations. At the end of Year 11, standards are above average. In Year 10, a low attaining group starting an

investigation on patterns and sequences knew exactly how to structure the investigation. As a result they attained standards higher than expected.

86. Achievement at the end of year 9 is good. In some classes the quality of discussion and learning was particularly high. For example in a year 7 class, a mixed ability group was successfully able to describe the algebraic formulations arising from sequences – good achievement for this wide range of students. In Year 11 achievement is also good. Students entered for GCSE a year early obtain top grades and then move on to higher level work in Year 11. There were however variations in achievement in some classes across the age range due to the lower level of pace and expectation of performance placed on some students. In these classes some students are not ‘pushed’ to achieve as well as they might.

87. Overall, teaching and learning are good in all years. Some teaching is very good where students are given challenging work and lessons are well planned with pace and differentiation. Staff respond to the students’ learning needs and adjust their work as lessons progress to deal with difficulties, or modify lessons when students need more challenge. In a few lessons, the teachers do not place sufficient pressure on all students to learn. Good help is given to individuals but some students are able to mark time.

88. In the mixed ability classes in Year 7, teachers skilfully provided differentiated material. There were indications however that in spite of this, the very able students needed an opportunity for work more focused on their needs.

89. Students are assessed according to a well established system. They have target grades based on national and internal tests and assessments. This information does not influence marking, and there is considerable variation in the way marking informs students of how to improve and how their work relates to their targets

90. Leadership and management are good. The department is well managed and there is a strong collegiate atmosphere. A particular strength of the department is its early entry policy that enables Year 10 students to enter GCSE and involves staff in considerable extra work. It is surprising that this has not been extended to many more of the higher attaining students. Leadership is also good but it has not fully grasped the opportunities to monitor and improve practice and further develop and embed good assessment and target setting systems.

91. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

92. The general level of competency in number is good. The use of number work across the college is variable. In some subjects such as science and geography number is used well whilst in some others the application of number is largely ignored.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The attainment of students is well above the national average.
- Student achievement is good.
- The stable team of committed and enthusiastic staff have good subject knowledge and ensures teaching and learning are good.
- Accommodation for science is very good.
- Expectations of some teachers have been too low especially with lower attaining boys.
- Assessment procedures are good though not fully developed.
- Monitoring and sharing best practice is less developed.

Commentary

93. By the end of Year 9 the results in 2002 were well above the national level. This high level of attainment was maintained in 2003. The GCSE results were also well above the national figure in 2002 and were again maintained in 2003.

94. The standard of work seen was well above the national average in Years 7 to 11 both in lessons and in students' work. The highest attaining Year 9 students could describe accurately the difference between mass and weight. In Year 11 students were able to calculate the energy levels in the burning of organic substances.

95. The achievement of all students is good. The students join the college above the national level and make good progress up to GCSE. This is due to the well-planned sequence of lessons in all years that enables the students to build effectively on prior knowledge.

96. The teaching and learning are good overall with some examples of very good teaching. Lessons are well planned by teachers who have good subject knowledge and follow a suitable curriculum. Teachers use a wide range of teaching and learning styles including the use of computers and group work. The higher attaining students benefit from the opportunity of studying all three separate sciences in Years 10 and 11. Students with special educational needs are well supported by the teachers and learning support assistants who know their needs in detail. The ability of the department to group these students together results in the teachers being able to organise suitable supportive materials enabling these students to make good progress.

97. In the most effective lessons the teachers demonstrate good classroom management skills and an enthusiasm for the subject. In these lessons the atmosphere was cooperative with a good relationship between students and teachers. The department has made a good improvement in the aspect of investigations in science. The students show a good understanding of the principles of planning and performing these investigations and are well supported by the detailed assessment of their work by teachers. In the less successful lessons teachers needed to spend time correcting the attitude of some students, especially boys, and this affected the pace and focus of some lessons. On occasion too, some teachers have too low expectations of what lower attaining students are able to achieve. The literacy skills of some students are low and this restricts their progress especially in writing notes and reading texts for understanding. The department has strategies to improve these skills though has yet to work closely with the college literacy coordinator to refine them.

98. The leadership and management of the department are good. The head of department is experienced and has a clear vision of future developments linked to a relevant detailed development plan. The department is also well supported by an advanced skills teacher who has the necessary experience to further enhance the subject in the areas of assessment and learning styles. The teachers work as a team and there is a shared desire to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment through monitoring and disseminating best practice is in its early stages. The department is fortunate in teaching in a well-designed suite of laboratories, well supported by an efficient technician. The improvement since the last inspection is good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communications technology is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students taking the GCSE achieve well.
- Resources and accommodation have been significantly improved recently.
- Assessment procedures for the GCSE course are good.
- Students in Years 8 and 9 and those not taking GCSE ICT show insufficient development of their computer skills.
- Students have insufficient opportunities to use computers in other subjects.
- The monitoring and co-ordination of ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory.
- The lack of ICT specialist knowledge makes it difficult to establish satisfactory assessment procedures in Years 7-9.

Commentary

99. Results for the GCSE short course in 2002 were below the national average but improved to be slightly above average in 2003. Girls' results are better than boys' though both improved in 2003. The proportion gaining A to G grades and A* and A grades is higher than the national average.

100. Students come to the college with standards in line with those nationally and these are sustained in Year 7 because students have a taught ICT lesson and develop basic skills in the main areas of the ICT National Curriculum. However, the college strategy of continuing to teach the ICT programme of study through other subjects has only limited success because of the lack of co-ordinated and challenging ICT teaching. As a result standards at the end of Year 9 are too low and students' achievement is unsatisfactory.

101. Nonetheless, some good work does take place in some subjects such as design and technology where CD packaging is produced using computer graphics creatively, while other subjects make increasing use of computers for research. By the end of Year 11, those students taking the GCSE course are able to apply their knowledge and understanding satisfactorily in specific projects. These GCSE students, together with a number of very committed ICT users, make good progress and achieve well.

102. Most other GCSE subjects provide a range of opportunities to use ICT for research and coursework and these experiences just about cover the National Curriculum programme of study. However, these opportunities are not monitored or co-ordinated and students do not reach the levels that might be expected from following a planned and progressive learning programme. Achievement for these students is therefore unsatisfactory.

103. The quality of teaching and learning in the taught programmes is satisfactory overall. In Year 7, non-specialist teachers are well supported by the centrally planned programme of lessons and specialist support. Those teachers show increasing confidence and technical understanding when using new programmes and equipment. Teachers develop good working relationships and manage students' behaviour well. They use a variety of teaching methods well. Sound whole class teaching and good individual support enables students, of all ability levels, to develop basic knowledge and skills in set tasks. Time is used satisfactorily but there is insufficient use made of plenary sessions to share and consolidate new learning. Specialist teaching in years 10 and 11 is satisfactory. Overall planning is good, but lesson planning is insufficiently detailed to ensure that learning objectives are met. Students develop good levels of knowledge and understanding and apply these effectively in set tasks. Levels of concentration and commitment to their work are good. Procedures for marking and assessment in Years 7, 8 and 9 are not rigorous enough, but assessments for GCSE groups are good.

104. Leadership and management of the taught courses are satisfactory but co-ordination of ICT across the curriculum is weak. Recent improvements in resources and documented intended developments for the curriculum indicate the colleges' positive intention to develop information and communications technology. However, the current curriculum provides insufficient depth in students' ICT experiences by the end of Year 9 and for approximately half of students in years 10 and 11. At present, the expected contribution of other subjects is not sufficiently planned, supported, monitored or co-ordinated in order for students to attain higher levels of computer competence. Accommodation and resources are better but the ratio of computers to students is still below national average for secondary schools. The subject was not one of the focus areas in the previous short inspection so a judgement about improvement is not possible.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

105. Students have opportunities to use, and in some cases develop, their computer skills in other subjects. However, at present these experiences are not monitored or co-ordinated sufficiently and the national curriculum requirement for other subjects to include computer-related work is not being fully implemented.

106. The majority of subjects have computer-related activities planned within their programmes of work. For example, in English, humanities, science and design and technology, application of students' coursework is enhanced by the application of computing skills.

107. However, in many subjects, planned work is not being sufficiently implemented and in art it is unsatisfactory. General access and specific subject provision to computers has improved, but the current deployment and management of these resources is restricting students' opportunities to use computers more effectively. Overall, competence in the use of ICT is therefore unsatisfactory.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good with some very good practice.
- The attitude of students is excellent.
- Good GCSE examination results and particularly those of high attainers.
- The use of ICT in lessons is very limited.
- Assessment is not used consistently to help students improve.

Commentary

108. By the end of Year 9 teacher assessments in 2003 indicate standards that are well above average although evidence from the inspection indicates standards that are above average. GCSE results are also above average and the achievement of students by the end of year 11 is good.

109. Students come to the college with standards in line with those nationally. By the end of Year 9 students have acquired good geographical vocabulary and have developed skills of analysis and interpretation of data, graphs and diagrams to make good judgements. They can for example draw firm and well founded conclusions from rainfall and temperature graphs to describe climate and have the appropriate geographical knowledge to provide good reasons for the differences. They also have very good understanding of the reasons for the distribution and growth of population. Overall, students achieve well and demonstrate above average standards.

110. By the end of Year 11 the skills learned in Year 9 have developed significantly in preparation for GCSE and standards are well above national average. Their skills of analysis and interpretation of evidence are now more sophisticated and students are able to use these skills effectively for example to help them describe the effects of coastal erosion for their course work. They have a good

knowledge and understanding of places in the world, particularly through their work on urbanisation and also on tourism. Their work on volcanic activity and earthquakes extends this knowledge but also illustrates a good understanding of the physical processes involved and an appreciation of the environmental consequences. The development of literacy skills is good in geography. The insistence by most teaching staff on the use of key words is a significant factor in the good progress made by students and the opportunities provided for well-focussed and extended discussion in all lessons for all students is extremely important. They gain confidence in expressing themselves effectively and enjoyment from being listened to. Good opportunities exist for students to use a range of styles in their writing and to write at greater length. The development of numeracy skills in geography is very good particularly through their use in analysis and interpretation of statistics and graphs. Opportunities to develop their information technology skills are however very restricted.

111. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The key factors in the very good teaching are the excellent relationships between well informed and knowledgeable staff and students and the planning of lessons, combined with the use of a wide range of teaching methods. Occasionally too much time is spent reinforcing prior knowledge or repeating previously learnt skills and knowledge and in some lessons activities to extend the most able students were restricted. In all lessons observed the students had many opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and to discuss and develop their ideas with other students. They work co-operatively and are able to concentrate for long periods.

112. In a very good Year 8 lesson where students were developing their understanding of the main climatic features of a tropical rainforest the class teacher began by setting very clear aims for the lesson. This was followed by a very good question and answer session involving all students and exploring their prior knowledge. Through the use and very good organisation of a wide range of resources and by clear and detailed explanations by the class teacher the students made very good progress during the remainder of the lesson.

113. Students' work is regularly marked although such marking does not indicate clear targets for improvement regularly enough. Homework is used well to reinforce learning and to develop literacy skills.

114. Leadership and management of the department are good. The day-to-day management of the department is good and a team of committed teachers is well led with an appropriate focus on teaching and learning and improvement. Schemes of work are still developing and do not yet include appropriate guidance for teaching for all units of work. Although the development plan identifies clear areas for improvement, it relates to humanities generally and lacks specific actions points for geography.

115. In the last short inspection there were no targets for improvement for geography.

History

Provision for history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE results continue to be above average, with significant successes at the top grades.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and supportive, with good subject knowledge.
- Good enrichment opportunities exist from outside visits and the library.
- Teachers have good relationships with students.
- Monitoring teaching and sharing best practice including in assessment is still being developed.
- Access to computers has made it difficult to enable the full use of ICT to enrich teaching.

Commentary

116. Results of the teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 were well above the national average. Results in the GCSE examination for 2002 were above the national average. Results in 2003 are of a similar standard and showed a reduced gender difference as boys improved their results. The proportion of students gaining higher grades in GCSE was well above the national and college average. Students make good progress across all years.

117. Students come to the school with standards a little above expected levels and by the end of Year 9 are clearly above those nationally. For example, in their local study of Wimpole Hall and Farm, higher attaining students responded confidently to the various historical sources they had encountered. Their accounts drew logically on these, making comparisons and connections to support their accounts of what features they thought represented a model farm. Middle attaining students use the information to demonstrate good understanding of the changes that modernised farming. The quality of written explanation of the few lower attaining students limits their level of attainment.

118. Standards of students in Year 11 option groups are above national average. For example, a top set was seen looking at their responses to an examination question. Higher and middle attaining students readily understand the historical skills they need to use to sustain high attainment. In a lesson, they considered the provenance of sources, how and when they were written, and by whom, as factors affecting their force as historical evidence. The responses of lower attaining students show understanding of the topic, but their written accounts fail to draw as effectively on all the evidence available.

119. Overall, teaching and learning are good. Teachers' planning, strong subject knowledge, supportive marking, and very good relationships with students, result in students achieving well. This was seen most effectively in a lower Year 10 set. Through a selection of well chosen materials for the range of students in the class, and some brisk activities, students gained a good understanding of the main features of life in the trenches, and all were able to go on to consider the more challenging question of which conditions were the more serious for soldiers to endure.. Higher attaining students supported their choices with reasoned explanations that drew on all the sources they had looked at.

120. The department is well managed. The resources, including the use of the library, are good and the students have very good opportunities to learn from historical sites. Teachers make little use of ICT. Assessment though sound lacks a sharper focus on the expected outcomes of the National Curriculum and GCSE. Work on monitoring and sharing the best practice is still being developed.

121. The subject was not inspected in the previous short inspection so no judgment about improvement can be made.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students entered for the GCSE short course achieve above average results, with significant successes at the top grades.
- The specialist teacher has very good subject knowledge, and supports students and other teachers of religious education well.
- Good enrichment opportunities exist from outside visits and the library.
- Teachers have good relationships with students.
- Assessment does not consistently show students how they can better meet the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus and GCSE.
- Limited resources have resulted in insufficient use of ICT to support learning.

Commentary

122. Results in the GCSE short course examination for 2002 for the small proportion of students entered were above national expectations. Results in 2003, for a larger proportion of the year group who studied religious education, were well above expectations. Students make good progress in religious education. The proportion of students gaining higher grades in GCSE was well above the national and college average.

123. Standards are above national expectations in Years 7-9. For example, in one lesson, higher attaining students confidently noted from an illustration provided by the teacher, the significant features of Sikhs at prayer in the Gurdwara. In their written work, they explained how this reflected Sikh beliefs they had learned about in previous sessions. They moved on to relate this to the discussion about human rights that had started the lesson. Middle attaining students were able to draw together their previous learning about Sikh beliefs and match this to what they saw. The written explanations of lower attaining students in this group lacked the understanding they had shown in discussions.

124. Standards are above average in Years 10 and 11. For example, in a mixed ability class in Year 11 seen looking at prejudice and race relations, all students showed a strong understanding of the different ways in which racism can express itself in society. Higher and most middle attaining students went on to analyse the difficulties encountered in challenging covert or institutional racism. They identified how the government's strategies might have an impact, and how these lay within a set of moral values that Christian teaching would endorse.

125. All students achieve well across all years. This is the direct result of teachers' planning, support, and good relationships with students. Overall, teaching and learning are good, and sometimes very good. This was seen most effectively in a Year 10 GCSE class looking at salvation and eternal life. The teacher's very good subject knowledge, and the planned student activities, very clearly brought home the meanings of the parables of the Rich Man and the Good Samaritan to students. By the end of the lesson, all were able to relate these tales. Most students were confident in explaining not only their messages, but their potential relevance to everyday life.

126. Religious education is well managed by a recently appointed specialist teacher who has revised schemes of work in line with the Cambridge Agreed Syllabus. Good enrichment opportunities include the effective use of the library book collections, and curriculum related visits. However, teachers' marking does not consistently focus on the expected outcomes of the Cambridge Agreed Syllabus, and the GCSE in ways that would help them reach even higher standards. Currently, little use is made of ICT to support the curriculum.

127. The subject was not inspected in the previous short report so no judgement about improvement can be made.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE standards are consistently high and students achieve very well.
- Teaching is good and assessment procedures in Years 10 and 11 are effective in helping students reach high standards.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- The positive atmosphere, environment and working relationships in lessons.
- Teacher assessments are less secure at the end of year 9.

Commentary

128. Overall, results in the GCSE examinations have been consistently above average and in graphics and resistant materials, they are well above the national average. Both girls' and boys' attainment is above the national average. The proportion of students gaining A to G grades is very high and the proportion of both boys and girls attaining A* and A grades, is almost three times the national average.

129. By the end of Year 9, standards are above national average with students showing a good range of designing and making skills. They make good progress and achieve well when compared to their design and technology capability on entry to the college which is in line with national average. Their recall of technical information is good and good products, which include elements of individual design, are produced in a variety of materials.

130. By the end of Year 11, students' standards are well above national average reflecting very good achievement. Coursework is structured very well to address the requirements of the examination. Design folders include a good range of graphical techniques, with good use of computer-generated work, and students' practical skills and technical knowledge are very well developed. All students, including those who have special needs, show confidence in using a range of materials and processes and use a wide range of research, analytical and evaluative techniques well. Design work often shows individual and creative flair, incorporating good levels of technical knowledge and final products are manufactured to a high standard in all of the design and technology subjects.

131. Teaching and learning are both good overall with some very good teaching practice. Teachers use well-planned programmes of work. They plan and deliver effective lessons using a wide range of teaching methods often involving project work and as a result capture the interest and involvement of students of all levels of ability. A particularly strong feature of good teaching is the use of teachers' technical knowledge to support individual students in their class work. Time is used appropriately although less use is made of end-of-lesson plenary sessions to share and consolidate new learning. Students with special educational needs progress at a rate that matches that of other students and levels of concentration, development of knowledge and skills, are high. In Years 10 and 11, students are actively engaged in a variety of interesting and challenging activities because teachers structure programmes of work, and plan lessons very well. Teachers are particularly well informed about the requirements of the courses they teach. The pace of learning is always brisk and clear and teaching and learning objectives are met.

132. Students' attitudes to the subject are very good. A strong feature of all lessons is the way in which students show interest, work co-operatively and concentrate for long periods. Homework is used well to reinforce learning. Marking and assessment procedures are very good for GCSE courses because they are thorough and encourage students to improve their work. However, in years 7, 8 and 9, procedures for marking ongoing work, and final teacher assessments at the end of year 9 are less secure.

133. The head of department leads and manages the department very well. He provides very clear vision and direction and has created a structured and supportive environment in which teachers and students are effectively and sensitively monitored and well supported. The broad and balanced curriculum provides very good access to a wide range of design and technology experiences and provides good opportunities to support the development of literacy, numeracy and computer skills. These experiences include successful participation in national technology competitions. The working environment is good, but health and safety risk assessments could be more rigorous.

134. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is good.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

Provision for art and design is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE results improved in 2003 and these improvements in standards and students' achievement have been sustained in current GCSE classes.
- Good links with arts groups and artists who work with students.
- In Years 7-9 some students do not achieve as well as they should.
- Accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory and there is insufficient use of ICT.

Commentary

135. Results in GCSE examinations in 2002 were well below average. There were few higher grades and both boys and girls achieved less well in art than in their other subjects. The results in 2003 were much improved and above average with a greater percentage of higher grades.

136. Students come to the college with standards above national average and most make satisfactory progress. Standards in Year 9 are above average and overall, students achieve appropriately. However some do not achieve as well as they should, particularly some boys who find it hard to sustain their concentration.

137. In current GCSE groups standards are above average and students are clearly making good progress. A number of students benefited from some additional activities arranged in partnership with national arts organisations. One student talked with great interest and enthusiasm about a visit she made to rehearsals of Rusalka performed by Opera North. The opportunity to talk to set designers and performers provided insights into their work and also material for future work. In one class some large scale, vigorous charcoal drawings of vegetables demonstrated confident and rhythmic lines. In another, students' presentations to the class, demonstrated advanced skills of enquiry and critical evaluation. Boys generally worked hard in lessons but were less well organised in managing their homework.

138. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 7-9 and good in Years 10 and 11. The more effective teaching is characterised by teachers' knowledge of the GCSE course, how it is assessed and what students must do to achieve their target grades. This influences their planning and provides the basis for good quality guidance on how to improve. In Years 7-9 practice is more inconsistent. Examples of work and demonstrations serve the groups well. However the standards that individual students are expected to reach, based on their previous performance, are not spelt out clearly enough nor made explicit in teachers' lesson plans. As a result, some students do not have a thorough understanding of what is expected of them or how to improve. Furthermore, though teaching is never less than satisfactory, teachers did not always organise their lessons or manage behaviour in the most effective way. The lengthy explanations and some restless behaviour of some of the less focused boys limited the amount of practical work and slowed the rate of student progress.

139. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff share high expectations and this has led to improved examination results. Provision in Years 7-9 is less strong. Staff share classes though not necessarily best practice regarding work schemes and teaching and assessment practice. Specialist accommodation is dirty, untidy and in poor decorative order and lessons are taught in inappropriate areas. Resources are inadequate so students buy packs of materials and there is no ready access to computers.

140. The subject was reported on in the previous short inspection so no judgement about improvement can be made.

Drama

This subject, which makes a **very good** contribution to students' learning and achievement, was sampled during the inspection.

Main strengths

- Very high standards are obtained in GCSE.
- Teachers use a strong combination of techniques and explore emotional, spiritual and moral themes that contribute very well to students' personal development.
- Excellent extra-curricular and performance opportunities exist.
- No significant weaknesses exist in provision.

Music

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well in the examination groups.
- Students have well established performance skills.
- Teaching is good, particularly by the specialist.
- The leadership and management of the department are very good.
- The use of information communication technology programs is effective in promoting students composition skills.
- Students' positive attitude to the subject contributes significantly to their progress.
- In Years 7 to 9 students listening skills are not as well developed as other skills.
- Students understanding of music from other cultures is less developed.

Commentary

141. Results in the most recent GCSE music course examination were well above average. These high results have been consistently maintained over recent years. A high proportion of students is entered early for the examination at the end of Year 10

142. Students join the college in Year 7 with varied previous musical experience and have overall below average skills. However with the benefit of good teaching, teachers' high expectations and the additional time allocated for the subject in Years 8 and 9 by the time students reach 14-years-old they are at the expected level at this point in the academic year. However because of this good achievement and students' positive approach to the subject it is likely that many will exceed this level by the end of Year 9.

143. Students' performance skills are well established, accurately playing a sequence of chords that are rhythmically correct to fit with a melody. They use their improvisation skills confidently in their creative work in compositions that are beginning to show development and originality. This was evident in their Blues compositions creating compositions in the correct idiom with inventive improvised sections. Listening skills are not so well developed, students experiencing difficulty recalling the styles of music they have listened to. The department is aware of this and is developing strategies to promote and widen students' appreciation of a range of music. Students' understanding of music from other cultures is under developed. Students with special educational needs are fully integrated into lessons and make good progress.

144. The attainment of students in the GCSE examination groups in Years 9 and 10 is well above the level normally seen. The majority of students are committed instrumentalists and their achievement is very good. Most students have completed at least one composition. They have a good understanding of the structure of their compositions composing pieces in a variety of different styles. They have good knowledge of the structure of major and minor chords and use them effectively in their compositions. Students have a well established historical understanding and a developed sense of chronology discussing knowledgeably different styles of music and the main composers for those periods.

145. The overall quality of teaching is good; two lessons seen were very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. In the most effective lessons learning was exciting, teachers conveying their passion for the subject inspiring students by using information technology skills to demonstrate a style of music and ways to develop improvisation skills. Students responded with enthusiasm to this approach developing a good understanding of how to use of a *riff* as the basis of a composition. Teachers have good relationships with their students. This was most evident in the after-college GCSE group. Here the teachers' relaxed approach created an ethos where students are confident to contribute to discussions and seek help when needed leading to very good learning and understanding. On the occasion when teaching was less effective the planning of the lesson lacked practical activities. The non-specialist teacher did not have sufficient subject knowledge to develop the topic to promote students understanding. As a consequence students lost interest and became restless and learning was slowed.

146. The management and leadership of the subject are very good. The head of department has an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject, the need to continue to provide support for the non-specialist teacher and a clear vision about future developments.

147. The subject was not reported in the last short inspection so no judgement of improvement can be made.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality of teaching and learning results in good progress in lessons.
- The proportion of students attaining A* to C grade passes at GCSE is improving.
- The good attitudes and behaviour of students helps promote a positive atmosphere in lessons.
- The good achievement of students at the end of Year 9 and Year 11 is enhanced by good quality extra-curricular provision.
- Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 are not effectively moderated.

Commentary

148. Results in the GCSE examination have declined since the previous inspection and were just below the national average in 2002. Provisional results in 2003, however, show a considerable improvement in the proportion of A* to C grades passes. More focused teaching and good leadership of the department have halted the declining trend over the last three years. Prior to this year, there is no departmental analysis of data available. Hence, it is not possible to comment on differences in performance of groups of students.

149. By the end of Year 9 standards are average for the majority of students in games. In hockey, individual skills and techniques are secure for the majority of boys and girls but teamwork skills are less well developed, particularly in terms of movement off the ball. In rugby union, the majority of boys are developing their tactical skills and techniques well. In netball, most girls understand the principles of both feint and sprint dodge movements. However, the use of signalling to help passing accuracy is not well developed. Achievement by the end of Year 9 is good for all groups, because good quality teaching has improved their standards, which on entry were below what was expected for their age.

150. By the end of Year 11 standards are average. In mixed hockey lessons, the more capable students have secure all round skills and use weight in passing well to ensure accuracy. Some less capable students, however, are still not changing the use of grip when they change the type of pass they use. Achievement in games is good. Students in the trampoline option group have made very good progress in developing their skills and techniques. Though the course has only been recently included, very good quality teaching and learning means they have achieved very well. Standards in the Year 11 GCSE course are average. Students have a secure knowledge and understanding of

sports-related anatomy and physiology and they are developing well their grasp of health-related fitness. Individual students from across all years have gained representative honours at district level in athletics and two have achieved area representative honours in the national championships.

151. The quality of teaching and learning is good across all years and results in good progress in all lessons. Teachers have a very good command of the activities being taught. The good quality teaching is typified by pace, purpose, progression and challenge. Teachers have clearly benefited from the external support they have received in implementing teaching strategies specific to Years 7 to 9. There is consistent insistence on high standards of behaviour and students are involved in their learning through pair, group work and, in the best practice, through peer evaluation. In a Year 10 GCSE rugby union lesson, for example, boys were involved in teaching their peers how to develop their kicking skills. Students' attitudes and behaviour are good, which helps create a positive learning atmosphere in lessons. All groups of students are therefore able to make good progress in their learning. The use of learning support assistants in Year 9 boys' games lessons was also very beneficial in this respect. Teachers circulate well in lessons and their effective use of praise and constructive criticism makes students aware of their capabilities. The quality of marking of GCSE theory work is inconsistent and students are not always being clearly told what they need to do to make further progress.

152. Recent change of leadership has provided a good vision and sense of purpose for the subject. Though all are recent appointments, staff are working effectively as a team and have a consistent approach to their work. Management is satisfactory – not all procedures are yet successfully embedded, for example, effective moderation of teacher assessments at the end of Year 9. Nevertheless, improvement since the previous inspection has been good - the quality of teaching and learning is good and the decline in standards at GCSE has been arrested.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

There are no courses provided by the college but there are opportunities for some students to attend a link course at a further education institution.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship

Provision in Citizenship is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' make good progress in their personal development and their social and political awareness.
- Extension Days and other projects provide good opportunities for students to develop initiative in broader citizenship skills.
- The different subjects' contribution to citizenship is inconsistent.
- The means of assessing students' progress in citizenship are still being developed.

Commentary

153. Standards meet the current nationally expected outcomes. Four lessons were observed which contained citizenship elements. Overall, students made satisfactory progress. In a very good Year 8 lesson standards were high because of the quality of relationships and good teacher preparation which allowed debate to flourish. In another lesson students made less progress as too much time had to be spent maintaining the concentration of some boys. In a Year 10 lesson groups of students were devising a self-defence leaflet in a follow-up activity to a recent Extension Day theme. Some students also demonstrated good ICT research skills.

154. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some very strong practice. The college aims to deliver the subject in a 'holistic' way across different subjects and activities which makes it more of a challenge to ensure a consistent experience for all students. In the very good lesson students taking part in the Real Game were able to visualise themselves in adult roles and apply decision-making skills. Students correctly explained terms such as 'income tax' and 'mortgages'; higher-attaining students summarised group findings most effectively. By the end of a religious education lesson Year 11 students had gained a good grasp of issues connected with race relations; lower attaining students were, however, reluctant to contribute to discussion. Teaching of citizenship through the form tutor system makes it hard for staff to evaluate teaching and learning, assess the development of skills and achieve continuity in assessment. Students' files contain material, largely non-specific to the subject. Students have an unclear understanding of what citizenship means although they show many of the good qualities of evaluation and decision making.

155. The contribution of departments is inconsistent. Some have identified and boosted citizenship elements in their schemes of work while others are less advanced. There are, however, successful projects which encourage students' initiative and independence. A large number of Year 8 students are involved in a recycling project while other groups go into primary schools to help children learn about personal safety. Other projects include anti-bullying and drink-driving. Some students participate in the Active Citizenship in Schools scheme, which contains a useful opportunity for self-evaluation. The role of the College Forum in providing an effective voice for students is being developed.

156. The co-ordination of citizenship delivered in the way it is presents some challenges though is being done effectively by the very good Personal and Social Education Co-ordinator who distributes materials and evaluates the quality of activities to inform future planning. The team development plan for the current year envisages a number of initiatives to strengthen the subject and to explore assessment options.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the college	3
How inclusive the college is	2
How the college's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the college	3
Overall standards achieved	2
Students' achievement	3
Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the college	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well students learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets students needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-college activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Students' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for students	3
How well the college seeks and acts on students' views	3
The effectiveness of the college's links with parents	3
The quality of the college's links with the community	1
The college's links with other colleges and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the college	3
The governance of the college	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).