

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BISHOP CHALLONER COLLEGIATE BOYS' SCHOOL**

Hardinge Street, London E1

LEA area: Tower Hamlets

Unique reference number: 133289

Headteacher: Mrs C Myers

Lead inspector: Mr P Matthews

Dates of inspection: 2 – 6 February 2004

Inspection number: 258567

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Comprehensive  
School category: Voluntary Aided  
Age range of pupils: 11-16, currently 11-14  
Gender of pupils: Boys  
Number on roll: 274

School address: Hardinge Street  
London  
Postcode: E1 0EB

Telephone number: 0207 790 3634  
Fax number: 0207 702 7398

Appropriate authority: Governing Body  
Name of chair of governors: Mr D Regan

Date of previous inspection: None

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Bishop Challoner Catholic Collegiate Boys' School is an 11-16 comprehensive school which currently has students on roll in Years 7 – 9. The headteacher (and almost all the governing body) are also responsible for an established Catholic girls' school, which has a mixed sixth form, on the same site in a quasi-federated manner. It is expected that the school will increase its size from three forms of entry to four from September 2004 and will eventually have 600 students on roll. The school admits students with high levels of socio-economic disadvantage; 44 per cent of students entitled to free school meals is well above national averages. The school is subject to regular, very serious vandalism from outside the school. On entry students have attained below national averages. Seventeen per cent of students do not have English as a first language. The percentage of students identified as having special educational needs, including the number who have a statement of special educational need, is broadly in line with national averages.

The school buildings are temporary and were created for September 2003. Previously, students had been housed in very inadequate accommodation at some distance from the girls' school.

There are advanced plans to completely re-build the school (and the associated girls' school) to create "The Learning Village" open to the local population for educational purposes beyond the school day. Funding for this project will come from both the Diocese of Westminster and

the Department for Education and Standards (DfES). Work is expected to commence later in 2004. Girls and boys will continue to be educated separately until the age of 16.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
5393	Peter Matthews	Lead inspector	
14214	Gillian Smith	Lay inspector	
15079	Anthony Boys	Team inspector	Science
32379	Robert Brewster	Team Inspector	Mathematics
23268	Kevin Corrigan	Team inspector	
12408	Alan Frith	Team Inspector	Modern foreign languages
31685	Valerie Girling	Team Inspector	Art and design
1421	Keith Gould	Team Inspector	
15051	Lynne Kauffman	Team Inspector	Design and technology
1153	Stephen Lavender	Team Inspector	Geography
8052	Ken McKenzie	Team Inspector	Information and communication technology
23016	Terence Morrison	Team Inspector	English
4126	Clive Parsons	Team Inspector	
4351	Jeanne Strickland	Team Inspector	
28002	Susan Taylor	Team Inspector	Special educational needs
33015	Richard Winter	Team Inspector	History Physical education
8911	John Witchell	Team Inspector	Music

The inspection contractor was:

PBM Brookbridge and Bedford Ltd  
 13A Market Place  
 Uttoxeter  
 Staffordshire  
 ST14 8HY

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

**Bishop Challoner Collegiate Boys' School** is a good school which gives good value for money. It has a number of very good and excellent features. No students have yet taken external examinations but the students are achieving well in English, mathematics and science and very well in information and communication technology (ICT). Teaching is good in most subjects and students have positive attitudes to learning and their new school.

The headteacher and her senior staff have a very clear vision for raising standards further and for the future physical development of the school.

#### **The school's main strengths and weaknesses are**

- The headteacher provides excellent, visionary leadership.
- Day to day leadership and management of the school is particularly strong and effective.
- Students are making good progress, from a low base, towards national standards.
- Procedures for ensuring students' care, welfare, health and safety are very good.
- The school is very inclusive – all students are equally valued but opportunities to respond to students' views are limited.
- Insufficient use is made by teachers of assessment to plan for the needs of higher attaining students and to inform all students how to improve.
- The spreading of good practice, particularly in managing student behaviour, is underdeveloped.

#### **How the school has improved**

There has not been a previous inspection by OFSTED. However, the local education authority reviewed the school in 2003 when it was in its previous accommodation. Although that review was positive, great progress had been made since that report.

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED**

**Overall standards are in line with national standards by the end of Year 9 and the achievement of most students is good.**

Students are achieving well in most subjects with the exception of modern foreign languages. Students in Year 9 are achieving standards close to or in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science, having entered the school with below average results for Year 6. Literacy skills are developed across most subjects as well as in English. Students' ICT skills develop quickly because of the carefully planned programme of work. Students with special educational needs make similar progress compared with other students, as do students with English as an additional language. Higher attaining students have insufficient challenge in some lessons.

**Students' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.** The school has a strong ethos which promotes the value of every individual student. Attendance is good. Students are overtly proud of their school and speak

warmly of their teachers. The students' very positive attitudes mean that there is very little bullying and few racial incidents. Exclusions are consequently very low.



## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good.**

Teachers are knowledgeable, plan lessons carefully and manage students' behaviour well. Although the school's leaders analyse student data well, this analysis is used insufficiently by teachers so that the work provided does not always match the needs of students. Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to the progress of students and are well managed by teachers. Relationships between teachers and students are very good which contributes significantly to the students' positive attitudes.

The school provides equal access to a good range of curricular opportunities. Students are beginning GCSE work in ICT in Year 9. Opportunities for extra-curricular activities are very good and are very much welcomed by students. Accommodation is satisfactory but the library facility has yet to open. Resources are satisfactory. The school cares very well for its students and gives them good support and guidance. There are insufficient opportunities for students to express formally their view about the school. Links with parents are satisfactory. The school is developing strong links with the local and extended community, including many volunteers from local large firms who are reading and numeracy partners for many students on a weekly basis.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are very good.** The leadership of the headteacher, focussed on raising standards and on developing a multi-school campus in the near future, is forward-looking and excellent. Those who are in day to day charge of the school are highly visible and well-known to all students. They set the tone for the school, provide excellent role models, and are very well respected by students. Planning is very effective and the school knows itself well. Subject leadership is good but the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning by those teachers is less well developed than the monitoring by senior managers. The chair of governors provides very good support and challenge to the school. There are many newly appointed governors. In the past, governors have been good in planning strategically and in holding the school to account. The school complies with statutory requirements except for minor omissions in the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents. The school's contribution to the training of new teachers is excellent. There is a good range of professional development opportunities for staff but the school has not systematically shared the very good practice of some teachers with others.

In a very short time leaders have created a school which has learning at its centre and of which students are very proud.

## **PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

The few parents who completed questionnaires or attended the meeting with the lead inspector were positive about the school and were delighted with its move to its current accommodation. They felt their boys were benefiting greatly from the new school. Students were very positive about their school.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Ensure all teachers make the best use of assessment data in planning lessons, thus providing more challenge for higher attaining students.
- Develop further opportunities for students to express opinions and share in the development of the school.
- Enable teachers with less secure behaviour management skills to learn from those teachers in the school who are experts in this aspect of teaching.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS**

#### **Standards achieved in subjects and courses**

**Overall standards are in line with the national expectation**, and students make good progress in most subjects. The students achieve well in relation to their attainment when they enter the school.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The students' progress in developing their ICT skills is considerable.
- Achievement is good in English, mathematics and science.
- Higher attaining students make satisfactory progress, but are not challenged enough in some lessons.

#### **Commentary**

1. The current Year 9 students entered the school with National Curriculum test results in English, mathematics and science that were below the national average. The students have made good progress in these subjects so that standards in them by Year 9 are closer to or in line with national expectations. The students achieve well and evidence from the inspection suggests that the school is moving towards reaching the very challenging targets set for 2004. Students had a wide variety of experiences in the other subjects in their primary school, but they are making good progress and achieving well in most. Achievement in modern foreign languages is a significant exception.
2. Strategies to improve the students' literacy are incorporated into their work across the curriculum, as well as in English. Teachers are aware of the need to emphasise correct vocabulary, for example, and key words are displayed in many classrooms. This good focus on language and literacy benefits all students, but is particularly important in supporting those for whom English is an additional language and in ensuring that they make good progress in lessons and achieve well. Although standards of numeracy are below average, students are sufficiently competent to enable them to progress in other subjects. The students' ICT skills develop at a very good rate as a result of a very carefully planned programme of work. Computers are being increasingly used well to support and enhance teaching and learning in most subjects.
3. Individual education plans are no longer produced for students with special educational needs and have been replaced with progress reports. These are less informative about the specific learning difficulties that students have but they do provide a good assessment of students in lessons. It is not yet possible for the school to demonstrate the progress that these students have made towards meeting their targets over a longer period of time. Students with special education needs progress at a comparable rate to their peers. Students with English as an additional language make good progress. A wide ranging programme of activities has been developed for gifted and talented students which makes a valuable contribution to their broader achievement. Sometimes these higher attaining students have insufficient challenge in lessons to maximise their progress.
4. Good use is made of data to review the performance of students and to set individual, group and whole school targets. This has tended to focus around standardised tests, but increasing weight is being placed on the students' national curriculum test results. This development needs to continue so that all departments are consistently using this data to analyse student progress and to ensure that lessons meet fully the needs of all students.

## **Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Attendance is good. Students' attitudes towards school are good; they behave well during lessons and at other times. There are very few exclusions. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are overall good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students have positive attitudes towards learning and they behave well during lessons.
- There is little bullying and teachers act quickly to resolve any such incidents whenever they do occur.
- Students respond very well to teachers' high expectations of their behaviour and there are very few racial incidents; exclusions are very low.
- Attendance and punctuality are good.
- Students' personal development is good. Provision for their spiritual, moral and social development is good; it is satisfactory for their cultural development.
- Senior staff and form tutors encourage and promote students' personal development successfully.
- There are missed opportunities to enhance students' cultural development in some subjects.

### **Commentary**

5. As part of the inspection, parents were asked to complete a questionnaire that requested their views about numerous areas of school life. Just over ten per cent of parents returned their form; this level is well below average. The respondents are pleased with almost every area of the school's work and there is little they would like to change. Around one in five, however, was concerned about the general standard of students' behaviour and the level of bullying. Inspectors do not feel there is cause for concern. Students behave well during lessons and at other times; only a small minority challenge their teachers' authority and this is usually when the work is not closely matched to their needs or ability. During discussions, boys of all ages say they are really proud to be able to attend Bishop Challoner Collegiate Boys' School. They like and respect their teachers, warmly describing them as 'wicked' and 'really cool'. They feel well looked after during the school day and especially appreciate the way that teachers give up their time to help them with their work or to listen to their concerns or worries. Students' 'can do' attitude to life and learning helps them to make good progress in their work. Many students of all ages enjoy taking part in the wide range of extra curricular activities with sporting clubs, such as football and basketball, being especially popular.
6. One section of the students' pre-inspection questionnaire enquired about the level of bullying and racist abuse in the school. Over half of those who responded stated that such incidents do indeed occur. Inspectors followed this up during formal and informal discussions with students and staff and through examination of the school's records. When asked about this, students say that many of the incidents they were referring to were, in fact, occasions when friends fell out or had a disagreement. They also said that incidents of sustained bullying are rare and that teachers act quickly to resolve such situations. The school's records support their view. In a short time, the school has created an atmosphere of very good racial harmony. Students of all ages represent a very wide range of ethnic groups and racial incidents are very rare; indeed, there have been only two such incidents over the last year. The school excludes students as a very last resort and the number of exclusions is very low. This is a reflection of the school's commitment to the education of all its students and teachers' determination to meet their individual needs. Students with special educational needs have positive attitudes towards their work and usually behave well in lessons. They behave very well in the Learning Support Unit if they are withdrawn from lessons.

**Ethnic background of pupils****Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	125	2	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	23	4	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	29	3	0
Black or Black British – African	42	2	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	15	1	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	13	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	9	0	0

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

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.9	School data	0.7
National data	7.2	National data	1.1

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

7. The figures above should be treated with caution as they compare the attendance of students who were in Years 7 and 8 last year with the national average for students in Years 7 to 11. The figures for last term's attendance indicate that the school's attendance rate is broadly in line with the national average. This is a considerable achievement for a school which serves an area of significant social deprivation. Most parents are committed to ensuring that their children attend school regularly and punctually. The school uses its administration staff effectively to follow up and monitor absence. It works very well with the Education Social Worker to improve the attendance and punctuality of individuals and is fully supportive of the borough's new policy of not authorising any term-time holidays. Students' good attendance helps them make the most of what the school has to offer and contributes to their good achievement.

8. Students' values stem from the Roman Catholic faith in which most of them have been brought up and from the very firm caring example provided by the head of the boys' campus and his deputy, which is consistently supported by the other members of the pastoral team. Students are keenly aware of their part in this pioneering school. They respect each other's different backgrounds and clearly know the difference between right and wrong. In the best assemblies and registration periods, the students respond with joy and feeling to the opportunities to celebrate their faith and reflect on the day they have spent in school. The chaplain has an effective role in enhancing students' spiritual development. The personal, social and health education programme developed by the head of the boys' campus has a positive impact on students' personal development and subjects such as science and design and technology also make a useful contribution. For example, in a design and technology lesson in Year 7, the teacher allowed an extended discussion to take place on the use of rules for safety, referring to rules in society and how they relate to Christian belief, with the students keen to talk about the importance of taking responsibility for one's actions in order to lead a good life.
9. The head of the boys' campus has made a good start in setting up structures for students to take responsibilities within their year group and to begin contributing their ideas about improving the school. Cultural differences are explored and celebrated through work in food and textiles. Most other subjects make a satisfactory contribution to students' cultural development but do not always take the chances offered by the schemes of work and the richness of cultures within the school to enrich students' experiences to the greatest extent possible. For example, in art and design most cultural references are to western European artists.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Provision for the care, welfare and safety of students is very good. The good quality of the teaching enables students to learn well. There are insufficient opportunities for students' opinions to be taken into account by the school's leaders.

### **Teaching and learning**

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All teachers have good, often expert, subject knowledge and produce well structured and, in many cases, creative and stimulating lessons.
- Students learn well because in most lessons teachers plan stimulating activities.
- Teaching is very good in ICT and design and technology.
- Very positive relationships between students and teachers, and between students, are very good.
- Very good lessons are characterised by challenge, stimulating activities and high expectations.
- Teaching is generally unsatisfactory where lively students are not managed effectively.
- Assessment does not contribute sufficiently to teachers' planning in most subjects; it is not clearly focused enough on helping students improve.

### **Commentary**

10. The overall effectiveness of teaching is good across all three years. Teachers are knowledgeable, many having an expert knowledge of the subject content and assessment requirements. Teachers manage students very well and promote a pleasant but productive learning environment for students. Stimulating lessons are planned well. Relationships between students and teachers and between students is very good, and in the latter case ensure that students work collaboratively in pairs and groups. Teachers work productively with learning support assistants and ensure that students with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language learn well.
11. Very good lessons, but none that were judged excellent, were observed across most departments. In a Year 9 ICT class on logos, the teacher's very well planned lesson challenged students sufficiently to ensure that they found the lesson stimulating and, as a consequence, they made very good progress. In physical education, well structured lessons, authoritative delivery and very good management of students ensured all students made progress in developing their individual and team skills. Students' excellent attitude to very good design and technology lessons, as well as the teacher's high expectations and clarity of delivery, ensured students found the lesson interesting and productive. This was evident for example in Year 7 lessons involving designing and making jigsaws using computer programmes. Very good lessons in mathematics are characterised by very good planning, brisk delivery and very good classroom management as seen in a Year 7 lesson on algebraic terms.
12. Four unsatisfactory lessons were observed, two of which were in music, one in Year 8 and one in Year 9 where the lack of musical activity and failure to manage challenging student behaviour led to unsatisfactory learning by students. Similar shortcomings were observed in a Year 8 science class and Year 9 Spanish class. However, learning overall is good. Students' acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding is generally good, as is their application and productivity. However, their capacity to work both individually and collaboratively is only satisfactory, especially where opportunities for independent learning and evaluation are limited and when teachers do not integrate student-centred activities into lessons.
13. Teachers are aware of the students with special educational needs in their classes through a combination of informal and formal methods. Specific information about individual students is sometimes provided. Individual education plans are no longer produced and have been replaced by progress reports, which are less informative about specific difficulties. They do, however, provide good on-going assessment of students in lessons. Some teachers plan their lessons well and adapt teaching strategies and resources for students with special educational needs. However, this practice is variable. Teaching assistants provide good, and sometimes very good, support. They are developing expertise within subject areas and are usually placed in the smaller, lower sets. Most teachers plan well for their use and work closely with them, but others do not. There are good links with a range of outside agencies to provide information about individual students.
14. Assessment is satisfactory overall. There are examples of very good practice in ICT and science where the marking of work sets individual students targets for improvement. However, in some subjects, data on current performance is underused in planning and in English teachers' marking gives too little emphasis to what needs to be improved and how to do so.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 49 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	16 (33%)	18 (37%)	12 (24%)	3 (6%)	0 (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.*

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is good. Very good opportunities are provided for enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities. The accommodation is satisfactory, as are the resources to support learning.

## **Strengths and weaknesses**

- A good range of courses in Years 7 to 9 with clear pathways identified for next year into Years 10 and 11.
- An impressive range of curriculum enrichment activities.
- Accommodation is new but temporary. It is unsuitable for indoor physical education and has no library facilities at present. It well looked after and is enhanced by the attractive way in which the school grounds are planted.



## Commentary

15. The school provides equal access to a good range of curricular opportunities. The curriculum is regularly reviewed formally by the curriculum committee of the governing body but also through annual consultation and faculty or departmental reviews. The curriculum provides a good range of opportunities in Years 7 to 9 with students beginning ICT Year 10 courses in Year 9. The curriculum for the first cohort into Year 10 and 11 offers a wide range of choices including leisure and tourism, media studies, economics, sociology, and business studies and students are able to take 10 examination subjects.
16. Opportunities for enrichment are very good with a varied and interesting programme of experiences for all students. Most subjects have a range of clubs, and some, including sport and music, attract large numbers of students. During the inspection, there were some exciting, high quality experiences for students in basketball and other sports. Students spoke with pride about their involvement in the school 'musical' and a significant number elected to rehearse independently in the music department. The school makes good use of additional funding to provide extension opportunities for gifted and talented students and there is open access to all activities for all those who wish to take part. Visits by external speakers, including leading politicians, are well established and valued. Participation by students in an annual retreat contributes significantly to their spiritual development. Frequent trips are organised out of school, but students do not yet work regularly with visiting artists in school.
17. Students with special educational needs have access to the whole curriculum including extra-curricular activities. They are withdrawn from classes for additional literacy work.
18. Although the school has a high proportion of students with English as an additional language, few are early stage learners. The initial assessment of their needs is carefully carried out. Students are withdrawn from classes for additional support but the absence of a dedicated base for this work is a gap in provision. Resources are limited and ICT is underused in this support. The progress of these students is well documented but opportunities are missed for a whole school approach, particularly for those students who are competent orally but who need more help in raising their levels of writing.
19. The accommodation is new but temporary. It is well looked after. The facilities for indoor physical education are unsuitable for many activities due to the low ceiling height. There is no library facility at present but there are plans to subdivide an ICT room to create one. Attractive displays in classrooms and corridors provide areas of interest for students to look at as well as celebrating achievement. The school has managed to maintain specialist staffing overall in the face of challenging recruitment difficulties. However, there is a lack of specialist staffing in geography to support the curriculum. Curricular resources have improved and are satisfactory or better in all faculties except art and design where there is a lack of ICT and visual resources. ICT resources are excellent.

## Care, guidance and support

Procedures for ensuring students' care, welfare, health and safety are very good. The school provides good support, advice and guidance for its students. Arrangements for seeking the views of its students and involving them in its work and development are satisfactory.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works very effectively to secure the health and safety of its students.
- Students have good access to a wide range of adults and agencies who help them with any personal difficulties and guide them to fulfil their potential.

- A good start has been made in setting up systems for consulting and involving students in the work and development of the school.

### **Commentary**

20. The premises manager, together with his team, is vigilant and conscientious in making sure that the new building and site are safe, clean and well-maintained. The team of lunchtime staff work effectively together to provide good care for students including first aid treatment. The school pays very good attention to encouraging healthy eating and healthy living. A nutrition policy has been written in consultation with food technology staff and it is implemented very successfully under the leadership of the head of the boys' campus. Fizzy drinks and carbohydrates are kept to a minimum and enjoyment in healthy food is promoted by theme days such as the Mexican lunch during the inspection. Healthy living is promoted well in the curriculum, for example in science and Spanish.
21. There are many strengths in the school's arrangements for supporting and guiding students from transfer from primary schools through to taking public examinations at the end of Year 9. The head of the boys' campus and his pastoral team are dedicated to helping the students in their care to overcome any barriers to learning and achieve as well as they can. The school employs its own learning mentor to visit primary schools and support targeted students, including those with special educational needs, who find the transition to secondary school difficult. Business mentors are used effectively to raise literacy skills in Year 7. Teaching assistants are sensitive to the changing needs of students with special educational needs and provide good, and sometimes very good, support in lessons. Year leaders undertake individual mentoring, with academic guidance becoming a focus in Year 9. A learning mentor employed by the borough's new Excellence in Cities project is used very well to support students who are identified as potential underachievers ahead of the National Curriculum tests. Students have very good access to personal support services provided by the chaplain and counsellors.
22. The new school council has held one meeting so far in which the student-elected representatives discussed their ideas about a number of issues raised, mainly concerning food! Most students are satisfied that the school is interested in their views. The head of the boys' campus is very well aware, for example, of their wish to have as much access to ICT facilities as possible and has responded by providing eight out-of-class sessions per week. Students who have a statement of special educational need are invited to attend their annual review, although not all do so.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

Links with parents and other schools are satisfactory. The school is successfully establishing links with the local community.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are very pleased with the work of the school and there is little they would like to change.
- The school is successfully establishing links with the local community and makes very good use of its strong links with business to support students' learning.
- The school keeps parents well informed about the progress their children are making.

### **Commentary**

23. As part of the inspection process, parents were asked to complete a questionnaire in order to gauge their views on several important areas of the school's work. Although parents returned only around ten per cent of the forms, the views expressed were very positive. Although parents have few concerns, around half have reservations about students' behaviour and the

level of bullying and racial abuse. Inspectors do not agree; during the inspection, students were polite and helpful. Although a few lack motivation in their learning, teachers manage these incidents well and do not allow the behaviour of the minority to affect the progress made by the rest of their class.

24. This school takes students from a wide area and relatively few live nearby. It is nevertheless working hard to develop links with the local community, for example, through its Village Club initiative. This is designed to provide diverse opportunities for contact between students of the college and local young people. For example, increasing numbers are regularly participating in Saturday 'Village Club' football games and coaching. In addition, the school is providing adult education classes that are designed to appeal to the local community and more courses are planned. Although it is early days, these efforts are proving to be successful and it is hoped that, over time, the local community will increasingly see the Collegiate School as an important focal point for the area.
25. The school makes very good use of its strong links with the wider community. For example, it is successfully using sport as a medium through which it can support students' reading and mathematical abilities. Innovative links with football clubs enable students to develop their academic skills within a sporting context and these initiatives are proving to be very successful. There are very strong links with the local Education and Business Partnership. It arranges for mentors from industry to come into school each week in order to help students with their reading and mathematics. This project is very well established and students and mentors alike derive great benefit from their regular sessions.
26. Parents receive a written report each term about their children's progress and these provide a very clear picture of how they are getting along. In addition, parents have a formal opportunity each term to speak with their children's teachers and teachers always make time to speak with individual parents if they have a particular concern.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The governance of the school is satisfactory. The quality of leadership is very good. Management is good. The school has quickly established a learning ethos.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher and the good management from other key staff supports effective and inclusive learning.
- The very good leadership of those in day-to-day charge of the school.
- The innovative arrangements the school uses for recruitment including excellent provision for Initial Teacher Training.
- The provision made for continuing professional development is good, although the dissemination of good practice internally is underdeveloped.
- The use of data by classroom teachers is under developed.

**The headteacher's leadership skills are particularly effective and imaginative in relation to the wider world whilst equally focused on the school's core purpose.**

Outstanding leadership is often associated with charisma and larger than life behaviour. However, this headteacher has quietly and very determinedly fought for the best for the students of this, and its associated school. She has doggedly pursued high level officials in the Diocese and DfES to create this boys' school and has obtained accommodation and funding to make it a success. She has shown remarkable vision to pursue the concept of "The Learning Village" and its associated re-building to encompass real community use. Yet, despite the drain on energy that this, and the running of two schools inevitably takes, it is to her that students turn, naturally and happily when she takes the lead inspector on a tour of the school. Students know her, and she knows them – by name, whether they be gifted, troublesome or "average". In her pursuit of

excellence and equal opportunities for all, the headteacher has a profound influence on the lives of all her students and, in many cases, their families too. Her accessibility and visibility, given her strategic work are remarkable.

27. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body has very recently been re-structured following decisions by the Diocese of Westminster, taken in the light of the Nolan report, in relation to the number of terms of office that foundation governors may serve. Because of this, governors' detailed knowledge of the school currently is low. There is clear evidence, however, that, previously, the governors were very effective in shaping the school's vision, particularly in relation to the planned re-building. They regularly held the school to account asking detailed questions of senior managers through their curriculum committee. The chair of governors, who is very experienced in the role, provides very good support and challenge to the school. He and the headteacher have a shared vision for raising further standards of achievement. The large number of new governors are of good quality and, under the leadership of the chair of governors, they will be able to continue to be effective. The school has an effective Race Equality policy and the governing body has clear arrangements for monitoring its implementation.
28. There are a small number of minor statutory requirements that are not met. These include minor omissions in the school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents.
29. Bishop Challoner Collegiate Boys' School is now only in its third year of existence. Senior staff and others have, in a very short period of time, established a powerful learning ethos. The school's move on to the girls' school site has been managed with great efficiency.
30. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. Her inspirational leadership sets a clear vision for the future of the school as a highly innovative and outward looking institution. She passionately believes that all children can achieve and that education can make a significant difference to young people's lives. The leadership team has created a very good and inclusive climate so that the school is an effective learning organisation. Senior staff are highly regarded by the students. They are splendid role models. Students respond well to their firm but considerate guidance. The clear vision held by the team is communicated well to and shared by all adults in the school. Elsewhere good role models motivate and influence both students and staff. The day-to-day interactions between staff (both teaching and other members of staff) demonstrate a mutual respect for each other. Each student is clearly known well by at least one member of staff. Staff are successful in including all, even those who may not respond well to school. Other key staff provide good support for leadership. Subject leadership is generally good in all subjects.
31. Planning is very effective. The school knows itself well. Very good development planning, supported by very effective self-evaluation, enables the school to appropriately identify what need to be done and achieved in the future. The development of the federation of two schools, and the plans for 'The Learning Village', attest to this. The school improvement plan is comprehensive, contains appropriate targets and is closely linked to department plans. Planning for improvement at department level is generally good. The work of heads of department in managing their subject areas is generally good. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Management throughout the school is good. Good and effective day-to-day routines have been quickly established on the new site. It is to the immense credit of staff that the school is up and running so quickly after the move.
32. The school's leadership provides very well for enrichment opportunities for all students beyond the school day and has ensured that the curriculum to be offered in Year 10 suits the abilities and aspirations of the students.
33. The school has a large number of student teachers who come from a wide range of institutions. It is able to report that almost all enter the teaching profession successfully. This

extensive provision has also led to a number of appointments from Newly Qualified Teachers who, having learnt their craft with the school, have been keen to take their first posts at the school. The school's contribution to initial teacher-training has been excellent.

34. Although the school has a large number of unqualified teachers almost all are those with overseas teaching qualifications. Once again the school has been able to successfully induct these teachers into the school. These new staff are complemented by a large number of teachers with considerable experience: over 50 teachers have spent more than two years at the school and over 30 teachers more than four years. More than 60 teachers have five years or more teaching experience. There have been, and continue to be staffing difficulties: governors have attempted to fill deputy headteacher vacancies to no avail on several occasions. They find it very difficult to attract candidates with the necessary Roman Catholic background. As a consequence, there are a number temporary senior leadership posts. Some middle management posts have been difficult to fill, in particular mathematics and ICT. Overall, in very difficult local circumstances and climate, the school has been very successful in recruiting and retaining teachers.
35. The school has fully embraced workforce reforms. This is a developing area but a number of initiatives have been enacted. These include, for example, lighter teaching loads for new staff, meetings restricted to one hour per week and the use of staff other than teachers to invigilate public examinations. Those returning from a period of ill-health are interviewed so that their return is more comfortable.
36. All staff undertake a good range of continuing professional development. Several members of staff are completing masters and doctorate degrees and three members of staff are undertaking headteacher qualifications. Performance management has been carried out well and includes non-teaching staff. The provision for staff development is very good and influential in retaining good staff.
37. Financial planning and control are good. The school's financial arrangements are unusual and complex because of the existence of the quasi-federated girls' school under the same leadership and management. Because of this, the school sensibly commissioned an independent audit. The report was very affirmative of the arrangements and the minor matters to be addressed are completed or clearly in hand. The balance of expenditure on staff, resources and so on are carefully planned and variances from local education authority averages are appropriate. The bursar has a very good grasp of the complexities of the work and shows initiative in developing clear accountable systems to cope with the complexities. The school has demonstrated a clear grasp of the principles of best value in commissioning services. The school has also planned well to provide excellent ICT provision which is still developing further. All those who support the school's work administratively do so effectively and efficiently.
38. The school gives good value for money because students are achieving very well, having entered the school with below average attainment, and because of the very low socio-economic background from which the students come.

**Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	782,747
Total expenditure	797,671
Expenditure per pupil	4,312

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-53,336
Balance carried forward to the next	-67,826

## **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**

- The quality of the teachers' classroom management, and the enthusiasm and commitment they engender, encourage positive attitudes to learning.
- Teaching is particularly good, where the students are effectively challenged in their learning.
- There is a shared commitment by staff, and planned improvement, to raise standards of students' attainment, but some management structures are not established firmly enough to be effective.
- Teachers do not always use assessment to plan to meet the needs of all students, especially the higher attaining students.

##### **Commentary**

39. Standards are close to national expectations. Students enter the school with relatively weak writing skills, but the schemes of work and the National Literacy Strategy are helping to improve upon their writing. The progress of students, including those with special educational needs, or English as an additional language, is good. The students respond to the quality of teaching as well as to the encouragement and support of the teachers. They have a positive attitude to their learning.
40. By Year 9, students have made good progress from the standards they achieve at the start of Year 7. They are able to recognise the main features of different forms of language, and are aware of their intended audience. Students are taught to write in a variety of forms. Ideas are developed, and suitably arranged for the intended purpose. Vocabulary has been extended. Sentence structure is more complex to extend meaning, and appropriately organised into paragraphs. Students are accurate in their spelling and in their use of punctuation. Higher attaining students are creative in their use of language, complex irregular words are spelt correctly, and their writing is further extended. Lower attaining students, including those with special educational needs, and with English as an additional language, write with confidence and accuracy. Students speak clearly and fluently, and listen well. They read accurately, but often without sufficient expression. Students are increasingly confident in retrieving and collating from a range of reading matter, and in the skills of inference and deduction. Year 9

students, considering the topic “Travel”, were able to coherently explain their views, as well as extract information to present it in a different format.

41. Overall, teaching is good. The teachers are confident in their subject knowledge, and plan effectively to meet the needs of the curriculum. They set clear objectives, and prepare a variety of activities that generally balance the key skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Classroom management is a particular strength. Teaching is particularly good when the questioning of students is challenging, and the pace of the lesson causes them to work hard. It is less effective when the planning does not meet the individual needs of students. Homework is regularly set, and is used to extend, or reinforce, the learning that has occurred in the lesson. The marking of students’ writing is regularly undertaken, but does not sufficiently inform students how they are doing or how they might improve. Information and communication technology contributes to students’ language skills, but is not fully utilised.
42. The head of English has a clear sense of direction, and a commitment to high standards, that is shared with the other teachers, some of whom are recently qualified. Relationships are very good, with new and supply teachers being well supported. The performance of the department is analysed, and improvements incorporated into the development plan. These reflect the ethos of the school. There are some aspects of management that have not been developed sufficiently. Procedures are in place for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, but these are not sufficiently systematic or rigorous. Documentation is not sufficiently developed. For example, schemes of work do not identify the learning outcomes for students of different abilities, or the opportunities for students’ personal development.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

43. The National Literacy Strategy is incorporated into work in English, and is implemented into the school curriculum. Subject areas have recognised the strategy in their schemes of work, and in the planning and teaching of lessons. For example, in history, the schemes of work and lesson plans have a particular emphasis upon literacy skills and are used to good effect in both class and homework. Students’ standards of writing are generally weak on entry to the school. Teachers are aware of the need to emphasise correct vocabulary, and key words are displayed in some classrooms. For example, in music, teachers regularly reinforce spelling, punctuation and specialist vocabulary in lessons. Successful strategies to develop students’ literacy skills include the provision of creative writing classes by the English department, and the reading support programme, including reading partners. The literacy strategy is supported by advice from the local education authority. Procedures to monitor and evaluate the application of the school’s literacy policy and its impact upon standards of students’ literacy have yet to be fully established.
44. Students generally read fluently, although often without sufficient tone and inflection to emphasise meaning. Opportunities exist for students to develop reading through the boxed sets of fiction available in classrooms, and the encouragement, for example in English, to read aloud from both fiction and non-fiction texts. All students, in English, were given a personal reader upon entry to the school. Most students speak confidently and listen well. They are responsive to teachers’ questioning, convey their opinions clearly, and appropriately use specialist terminology. Most students by Year 9 are beginning to use Standard English in formal situations. Students’ writing is generally varied and interesting, and spelling and punctuation accurate. Dictionaries are well used in English lessons. Students’ literacy skills develop throughout their schooling, and benefit by the planned intervention in many subject areas.

### **Spanish**

Provision in Spanish is **satisfactory**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- In most lessons, teachers have excellent command of the language they teach.
- The teaching of students with lower prior attainment is good, but there is not enough challenge for higher attaining students.
- ICT is included in schemes of work, but has not yet made an impact on the quality of students' work or motivation.
- Teachers do not make enough use of attainment data either to help students improve or to analyse the department's strengths and weaknesses.



## Commentary

45. There are no teacher assessment data or any GCSE results, because the first group of boys has only reached Year 9 this year. Standards seen in lessons indicate that most students are working at levels which are below average. There has been a lack of continuity in the teaching of Spanish to boys, owing to difficulties in recruiting staff in the last two years. Consequently, their progress is lower than expected. Even half way through Year 9, they are unfamiliar with past and future verb tenses and lack fluency when practising basic structures. Nevertheless, the department is now fully staffed and achievement in lessons is currently satisfactory and motivation is good. Boys with special educational needs achieve well because of skilled and well-focussed support both from teachers and specialist support staff.
46. Teaching is satisfactory with good features. Its main strength is the good teaching of students with low prior attainment who find learning difficult. This is based on strong and positive relationships between teachers and students and the use of well-focussed strategies for learning. Teachers use the foreign language for long periods in lessons and employ a range of methods to introduce good literacy skills, often using games and competitive activities. Teaching of students with higher prior attainment is weaker. At this level, teachers provide too little challenge and too few opportunities for students to express themselves orally without support or to develop skills in independent writing. It is rare for students to use Spanish to find things out or to deal with unpredictable situations. They make little use of the Internet and do not make the most of opportunities offered by new technology. Students receive little guidance on learning independently. When asked, boys often know how well they are doing, but not what they should do to move up to the next level. One said, "Persevere, because it's easy to say the words when they're on the board, but if someone asked you to speak Spanish in the street, you wouldn't be able to."
47. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The team, two of whom are new, works well together. The good development plan, containing appropriate, measurable targets and sensible strategies, projects an ambitious vision, focussing on raising attainment. The department understands the importance of improving the quality of teaching and has planned good strategies for doing so. They include costs, mechanisms for monitoring, and the development of ICT, which is currently under-used. The timescales for monitoring are not precise and there is insufficient feedback to teachers, especially on raising expectations with higher attaining students. Data on students' performance are not analysed in sufficient detail and the targets students set for themselves are not focussed on course content.
48. Boys in Year 7 learn French. The standards observed in lessons and in students' exercise books are close to the national average and represent satisfactory achievement. The small amount of teaching observed, with boys of low prior attainment, was very good. Higher attaining boys are challenged appropriately, which means that practice in this respect is better than in other areas of the department.

## MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' high expectations contribute to raising standards.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is improving the teaching.
- Skilful questioning provides opportunities to promote understanding and develop literacy skills.
- Use of ICT by individual teachers is developing but is not embedded formally in the faculty's work to benefit teaching and learning fully.

- Teaching strategies lack variety to maintain interest among more boisterous groups.

## Commentary

- Standards of work seen are in line with the national average. Test results shows good progress being made by students whose ability on entry to Year 7 is below the national average. Students make good progress in lessons and over time. Data from internal assessments and inspection evidence indicate that performance will be close to the national average in this year's public examinations.
- Overall teaching is good with some very good lessons seen. Teachers have high expectations of their students, presenting them with work that offers a good challenge. Able Year 7 students could collect algebraic terms well but had yet to include index notation. Able Year 9 students could use tree diagrams in three stages in probability problems and were able to apply their knowledge confidently to higher level GCSE questions. Lower ability students gained considerable pleasure from their success in being able to convert vulgar to decimal fractions with the use of a calculator. Firm class control and good relationships established the appropriate atmosphere for learning. Students' attitudes are good. They work well together when required and make the effort necessary for good progress. They achieve well. Good planning ensured focused teaching with effective use of time. Learning was reviewed in effective plenary sessions. Teachers' good use of questions encourages students to develop their understanding. Homework is used well to support learning. Books are regularly marked with appropriate comments of correction and encouragement. Students with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress.
- Good work with support staff ensures that students on the school's list of those with special educational needs make the progress of their peers. However, better use of individual education plans would benefit the students involved. Those students with English as an additional language are making good progress.
- Individual teachers make good use of ICT to support learning and access to ICT facilities in mathematics is good. The scheme of work does not identify all the relevant opportunities for the use of ICT. Literacy skills are developed well. Correct use of vocabulary was insisted upon, with care being taken to ensure understanding. Speaking skills were developed when students were encouraged to explain answers in front of their class, something they did with confidence.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good. The school has managed a very difficult period of staffing recruitment well. Many staff in the faculty are new to teaching in England. Effective support from senior management, together with good relationships, is helping them to become established. Faculty documentation shows that teaching is monitored thoroughly; lesson observations confirm impact on practice. There is good use of assessment to benefit teaching and learning. A very recently appointed head of faculty is proving to be a good role model with his calm, effective approach. He has clear ideas about how to develop the teaching and learning further within the faculty.
- Staff are very committed to helping their students succeed. They give freely of their time in after school classes to prepare for examinations. Many students attend these classes. Classes are run during holidays to assist with coursework and to offer further support in the preparation for public examinations.
- Accommodation is satisfactory although the need for staff to use a variety of teaching rooms is inefficient. The faculty is well provided with resources, including text books.
- This is the first inspection of the school in its present form. Because of this, it is not possible to evaluate progress.



## Mathematics across the curriculum

57. Students' mathematical skills are used in the various areas of the curriculum, graphs in science or tessellations in graphics for example. While those skills are below average they are good enough to permit progress in the different subjects. The development of mathematical skills using the opportunities occurring across the curriculum would bring real benefits to learning. Plans to do this should the present staffing position be maintained have much to commend them.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong and effective leadership has provided a clear focus on the quality of education and raising standards.
- Good teaching and the students' positive attitudes to work ensure that achievement is good.
- The students' progress is effectively monitored in order to set individual targets for improvement.
- Work is marked regularly but standards of marking vary between teachers so that students are not always given enough advice on how to improve.

### Commentary

58. Students and teachers benefit from the good leadership and management of a dynamic head of faculty, who has provided a strong focus on achievement and raising standards. Teachers are given guidance on suitable methods and the quality of teaching and learning are monitored, so that good practice can be shared. This allows teachers to plan lessons that meet the broad range of needs found in many classes. In the most effective lessons there is a good level of challenge for all students, with skilful questioning that probes their understanding and encourages them to think more deeply about the science involved. These classes are well managed, with good behaviour, self-discipline and very positive attitudes to work from the students. This ensures that practical work is carried out responsibly and confidently. A good variety of activities is provided, so that students are kept interested and engaged in their work. Occasionally, when classroom management is not as effective, lessons fail to reach these standards, with a slow pace and lack of challenge leading to some restless or boisterous behaviour. However, teaching and learning are good overall, with some very good teaching, so that the achievement of most students is good, including those with special educational needs. Standards seen on the inspection are a little below average by Year 9, representing good progress for most students, with some reaching above or well above average standards. Most students have appropriate knowledge and understanding of the work they have done in physics, chemistry and biology. Their practical skills are good enough to carry out experiments effectively, although their ability to analyse and evaluate results is not as high. They are given appropriate opportunities to use computer equipment in science and they have the mathematical skills to produce graphs, tables and charts to support their practical work. Science lessons include activities to develop communication skills and most students write well and record their work effectively. However, the students' speaking skills are less well developed, with many using imprecise language instead of the correct scientific terms when answering questions.
59. The students are helped to make good progress by effective assessment that is used to set individual targets for attainment. They are well aware of their target grades and keen to do

well. Routine marking is regularly done although standards vary, with some teachers giving insufficient advice about how to improve.

60. There is no previous inspection report for comparison but the school has made good progress since the appointment of the head of faculty, with improvements to provision that include new schemes of work, assessment arrangements and ICT equipment. Good quality laboratories provide a learning environment that increases student motivation.
61. This is the first year that the school has had students in Year 9 so there are no previous national test results for comparison with other schools.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision for ICT is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are very good.
- ICT resources are excellent, providing a wide range of opportunities for use not only in discrete lessons but also in other subjects.
- The curriculum is very good and covers all National Curriculum requirements.
- Assessment is very thorough and used well to inform planning.
- The poor acoustics in the very large main ICT room provide an unwelcome challenge for teachers and students and can have an adverse effect upon teaching and learning.

### **Commentary**

62. Standards in ICT lessons and in students' portfolios are good overall and sometimes very good. Students achieve well as they make very good progress through a carefully constructed scheme of work, based upon the National Key Stage 3 Strategy for ICT. Teachers make very good use of the excellent resources, which are available in the new building.
63. Lessons are very well planned and good pace is maintained throughout which helps to sustain students' interest and enthusiasm. The work caters appropriately for all abilities ensuring that all can play a full part in lesson activities. Very good use is made of the interactive technology to include all students fully in question and answer sessions, as well as providing opportunities for boys to share their ideas and work with the rest of the class. In a Year 9 lesson with a very lively pace, the very good rapport between teacher and students created an effective working environment in which students were prepared to be adventurous in their choice of text and graphics. They produced interesting and well thought out computer slide presentations to appeal to a specific audience and they used the Internet well to collect information and appropriate resources. The assessment of work is thorough and based appropriately upon National Curriculum criteria, it is also used to inform teachers' planning.
64. Leadership and management are very good, ensuring that this subject has become a very strong feature of the overall curriculum in the new school. Resources have been well chosen and effectively installed making very good use of "wireless" technology. There is an impressive long-term vision for the continued development of ICT in discrete lessons. Students begin a GNVQ examination course in Year 9, and the use of computers to enhance teaching and learning across the whole curriculum is becoming well embedded into subject schemes of work.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

65. The use of ICT across the curriculum is good and improving further. There are numerous opportunities to use ICT in almost all subjects. The use of computers can be exploited to good effect because students have good ICT skills and knowledge which are developed in their ICT lessons in all years. ICT use is promoted very effectively at senior management level, where there is a very clear vision of future needs and developments. The curriculum has been mapped to identify opportunities for the use of ICT to enhance teaching and learning in all subjects.
66. National Curriculum subjects are meeting their obligations to use ICT appropriately in schemes of work. The very good level of resources makes it possible for subject departments to have access to computers in most parts of the school. Most teachers have had training in the use of ICT for teaching in recent years but the turnover of staff provides a continuing challenge. The use of ICT is particularly effective in all aspects of design and technology. Digital technology is also used to very good effect in the PE curriculum. There is very good access to the Internet throughout the school for research. The use of ICT is currently limited in the art department but computers and specialist software are already in school at the time of the inspection and are soon to be deployed. The use of ICT in the music curriculum is underdeveloped.
67. As part of the school's vision to promote greater use of ICT in subjects, several class sets of portable computers have recently been made available for use around the school and more interactive whiteboards are being installed. As with other ICT resources these are very well supported by efficient ICT technicians.

## HUMANITIES

### History

Provision in history is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students respond well to good teaching.
- Students are keen to take an active part in lessons and work well.
- Basic historical skills such as interpreting sources and understanding of political issues are developing well.
- Teachers do not always provide learning materials on different levels when there is a wide range of ability in a class.
- Good contributions to students' literacy are made.
- The department works well as a team because they collaborate well over lesson planning and assessment.

#### Commentary

68. Standards in Year 7 to 9 are average and achievement is good because students acquire a satisfactory knowledge of history. They can interpret sources as well as understand and give a balanced view of issues such as those that led to the English Civil War. This results in limited gains in knowledge and understanding.
69. Teaching is good because teachers' explanations are clear, and learning is good because students pick up key words and concepts quickly. However, in a Year 9 lesson on why the Nazis became popular, opportunities to extract evidence on Nazi policies were missed and questions were mainly closed.

70. There is an good emphasis on developing literacy in classwork and opportunities for extended writing in homework are used to good effect. For example, good use is made of key word cards to match terms to meanings and students are taught to use historical terms correctly.
71. Resources are produced that particularly help less able students. However, work that is challenging and extending the more able students is also given to the weaker students and they are not always able to cope with it. In a Year 8 lesson on the Civil War, a writing frame was provided but some found extracting information from the text book very difficult.
72. Students work hard in lessons. However, a few are slow to start because they expect extra help and wait rather than have a go. Teachers expect high standards of behaviour and where the teaching staff are well established students are compliant.
73. Leadership is good because teachers work well as a team to ensure that lessons are planned for sufficient variation and interest. Assessment is thorough. There is a comprehensive individual assessment profile on each student, reinforced by counselling if targets are missed. Progress is reviewed formally every half term and students are shown how they can move from one level to the next.
74. Management is satisfactory because although planning is effective in providing interesting lessons and assessment is thorough, these are not used to such good effect in producing learning materials suitable for all abilities.

## **Geography**

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

### **Mains strengths and weaknesses**

- Current standards are well below national average.
- Enthusiastic and energetic leadership and management are having a positive effect on standards.
- Teaching in Key Stage 3 is not sufficiently focussed on challenging learning objectives.
- ICT is not systematically used across the department and fieldwork investigation skills are not well developed.
- Improvements to the curriculum are beginning to make the subject more relevant and interesting for students as are new resources and an attractive learning environment.

### **Commentary**

75. Standards based on current teacher assessments in Year 9 are well below the national average and targets for this year group are similar. There are weakness in students' ability to use geographical terms accurately and to offer detailed written explanations for geographical patterns and processes. Students ICT skills are not systematically developed in the curriculum and there are too few opportunities to develop fieldwork investigation skills.
76. Students achieve as well as expected in Years 7 to 9. They arrive at the school with relatively low levels of geographical skills and, with good teaching, make satisfactory or better progress especially in upper sets. However, in some sets students' achievement is hindered by a lack of rigour and effective behaviour management in the teaching so that insufficient progress is being made.
77. Teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory with some that is good or very good. The best teaching places emphasis on high standards, is pacy and uses a range of up to date and relevant resources within a very well structured and planned learning environment.

Some of the teaching in the department, however, is insufficiently focused on challenging learning objectives, is not insistent on high enough standards of behaviour and fails to capture students' interest. Where teachers encourage paired or group work, students respond positively, especially when instructions are clear and students are interested.

78. The current head of department is providing enthusiastic and energetic leadership and management which is focused on improving the curriculum by making it more relevant and interesting and on improving teaching in order to improve standards. Departmental monitoring has identified deficiencies in teaching, which are being addressed through a programme of support including that from a local education authority consultant. This is slowly beginning to remedy some of the deficiencies. The department has had a turbulent staffing position over the past few years and this has had a negative impact on standards.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

### **Design and technology**

Provision for design and technology is **very good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Well-planned rooms in an effective temporary situation.
- Very good assessment used to raise students attainment.
- Good provision for all levels of ability through the school setting system.
- Limited access to computers in food and textiles.
- Lack of a design and technology manager to organise the boys' site.

#### **Commentary**

79. In 2003 in Year 9 standards measured by teacher assessment indicated students were below national averages. Work seen during the inspection reflected an improvement since last year and standards now match national averages. The introduction of a very good assessment system to track learning and improved schemes of work have given a greater focus to designing which has raised all round achievement to good.
80. Students across the range of ability and those from different cultural background have some problems with designing because of weaker literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers carefully target the learning of students having difficulties. Very effective use of learning support assistants, often in a team teaching situation, raises students' confidence and ensures all students match their predicted levels of achievement. The small class sizes for lower attaining students are very successful in developing students' design and make skills. A local football club is working with the school on literacy skills which is having a good impact on students' design - although the literacy programme causes some discontinuity in making, when students are taken out design and technology for extra literacy.
81. From Years 7 to 9 students build their basic making skills and learn to design through a range of interesting projects and achievement is good. They use ICT for research and modelling; access to computers is more difficult in food and textiles. In graphics in Year 9, very professional use of computer aided design and manufacture helps students to produce a range of high quality products for packaging. Students enjoy working in groups and an excited buzz of enthusiasm breaks out when group decisions have to be presented back to the whole class. Students are learning to become discerning consumers – this is one of the department's approaches to citizenship for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The varied activities and short sharp targets in lesson make students focus on the task in hand and lessons move at a swift pace.



82. Overall teaching is very good. Teachers work in both the boys' school and the girls' school. The close rapport between teachers, their technicians and learning support staff helps to develop and share ideas to match the needs of all students. This has made a cohesive team and, although design and technology rooms are not together in a suite, consistent high expectation and the demand for accurate, good quality work have helped to raise standards overall. Planning is very good, encouraging independence. Succinct department policies make regular links to the social, moral and spiritual development of all students. Cultural differences are explored and celebrated through work in food and textiles, for example the hats project in Year 7 examines hats worn for religious reasons. Teachers teach across all subjects in design and technology; male staff teaching food and female staff teaching resistant materials. In this way staff role model equality of opportunity.
83. Excellent leadership of the head of faculty based in the girls' school challenges innovation in designing and making, which drives up the quality of teaching and learning. Management is very good but lacks a specific manager in the boys' school to carry the decision-making required to manage design and technology independently on the boys' site.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

### **Art and design**

Provision is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good planning enables long lessons to be fully utilised.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge ensures basic skills are learnt well.
- Inadequate visual resources hinder students' acquisition of knowledge and understanding about artists' work.
- Provision for developing work using computers is inadequate.

#### **Commentary**

84. Boys in Year 9 are working at a standard that is well below that expected nationally. There has been unsatisfactory learning in recent years due to inadequacies in teaching and poor accommodation. These factors led to poor achievement for boys who are at present in Years 8 and 9. However, a new, stable team of committed and enthusiastic teachers has made a huge impact on progress this year with students of all abilities achieving well as a result. Progress is noticeable, particularly in Year 7.
85. The quality of teaching and learning is good with some very good teaching. Good attitudes of boys contribute significantly to the quality of learning, and students are keen, enthusiastic and interested in their work. Teachers plan well to suit particular needs of students, all of whom need to learn the basic skills of drawing, painting and working with 3-dimensional media. Plenty of individual help ensures that students of all abilities learn well and teaching assistants are used well to support those with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language. Good questioning with opportunities for students to learn and use subject specific language is a strength of teaching but reproductions of pictures used to inform critical and historical work are black and white photocopies of poor quality. This adversely affects students' knowledge and understanding of artists' work. Lots of timed tasks and a variety of activities maintains interest and ensures the brisk pace necessary to make the most use of the 100 minute long lessons. There is no provision for students to develop ideas using computers.

86. The quality of leadership and management of courses is good. All teachers work well as a team and have proved themselves very effective teachers in the short time they have had. There is a clear vision of how to raise standards which is already in action. The effect is that not only are boys now achieving well, but that they are enthusiastic, enjoy their art lessons and many attend the lunchtime and after school clubs. Lively displays of artwork with informative labelling enhance the school environment and increase self-esteem in boys. Lack of technician support is affecting inclusion in the curriculum of some activities and media that take time to prepare and clear away, due to the logistics of time management.

## Music

Provision in music is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has made swift progress in establishing a good department, built on energetic and committed teaching.
- The open access policy encourages many students to develop their own musical skills and interests in lessons, at lunchtimes and in a variety of enrichment activities.
- Standards are generally in line with national expectations, but are lower when there is a lack of emphasis on practical music making.

### Commentary

87. Since the department has opened with new accommodation and teachers, standards have been established that are in line with national expectations. A carefully planned scheme of work, shared with the girls' school, provides opportunities for students to compose and improvise in a variety of styles from raps to ground basses. Most of the classes undertake the same activities, but those in top streams work at a faster pace. The students' knowledge about music, including keywords and concepts, is good. In practical activities they compose expressively, memorise familiar tunes and refer to notations when appropriate. Although students in the lower classes often benefit from additional support, the slower pace in lessons observed resulted in less practical achievement where their musical potential was not realised. Students' achievement and participation in extra-curricular work are gaining momentum. Many students took part in the recent musical production, a growing number participate in choral and instrumental activities and several have formed their own bands where their music-making is characterised by a real sense of ownership.
88. The quality of teaching and learning, though satisfactory overall, has some good features as well as areas where development is needed. At best, teaching is rigorous, relevant and energetic. Questions are carefully crafted to promote students' understanding and response. Classroom organisation, including behaviour management is also good, although it is not always linked to musical activity. Resources and accommodation are well used and levels of display are excellent. Care is taken in planning lessons, but during the inspection, activities were often curtailed through lack of time. Sometimes too much time was spent in introducing the topic and copying the aims, which reduced the amount of practical work. Opportunities for students to come together as a whole class and assess their progress are sometimes too limited. Many students, especially in the higher streams, are keen to learn. They treat the instruments with care and work well and independently in adjacent practice rooms. On the one occasion where boys sang, they responded enthusiastically. There is scope for more singing to be introduced, especially with those groups where practical work is currently limited. Use of information technology is currently restricted to electronic keyboards, but the department is keen to utilise computers once they are available. Formal assessment procedures, with appropriate links to National Curriculum levels and requirements, help students to understand their progress.
89. Leadership and management of music are good. The department is fully integrated with the girls' school and teachers in both schools work supportively in developing the music provision. Together they have generated a positive ethos for learning with strong leadership. This has helped to establish music as a serious subject. The school now has an opportunity to build on the popular music skills of the principal boys' teacher.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Overall the provision in physical education is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students select and apply their skills and tactics in progressively more demanding situations.
- They strive to perfect their performance because teachers insist on high standards.
- They learn effectively when working in small groups because teachers undertake regular and accurate assessments of their capabilities and modify tasks accordingly.
- Teachers have good knowledge of their students, derived from careful observation.
- Teachers have high aspirations and a clear sense of purpose.
- On site facilities are inadequate for a growing school.

### Commentary

90. Students' achievement is considerable between Years 7 and 9 because knowledge is used well to match tasks to the students' capabilities. The students acquire and develop skills as result of both very good demonstration and knowledgeable instruction. Standards improve as a result of effective feedback sessions. In gymnastics and basketball, the teacher makes extremely effective use of a video camera during the lesson to play back examples of the performance of selected groups of students. This helps to ensure quality of the exercise and enables students to learn how to improve their performance. Students are positive about physical education lessons, stemming from teachers' high expectations and enthusiasm. They develop their understanding of fitness and health as a result of teachers' good example. Teachers extend the skill levels of the higher attaining students very effectively by example and encouragement. Teachers expect high standards and build extra skills into the routines. Students work hard because they can choose how to best achieve a technique, for example, their own ways of travelling across a mat or which balancing technique to use. Lessons are very carefully planned to balance physical exercise with consolidation of knowledge and understanding. Students learn very well because teachers explain techniques clearly and check on students' knowledge of muscles and how to exercise them. Students can organise themselves well and understand how to do exercises without prompting.
91. Leadership and management are very good because there is a keen sense of purpose and this has ensured that teams have reached advanced stages consistently in inter-school competitions.
92. Indoor facilities are limited and access to outdoor facilities is difficult and this may adversely affect standards as the school grows.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education is **good**. Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and promotes positive attitudes and relationships amongst students.
- The school provides enrichment activities that enhance personal, social and health education and citizenship education.
- Citizenship is not yet woven systematically into schemes of work in other subjects.

## Commentary

93. Personal, social and health education, and citizenship are taught on a weekly basis by form tutors. They follow a comprehensive scheme of work that covers a wide range of topics from bullying and drugs awareness to health and sex education. All students develop their knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens and are beginning to develop their skills of enquiry by participating and taking responsible action. The profile of the subjects is high, and the approach has been approved by the Citizenship Foundation.
94. In lessons, students demonstrate high levels of achievement, promoted by good teaching. At best they are developing critical thinking skills in discussing moral issues. Attitudes and relationships are positive, there is much enthusiasm for the topics covered and students are encouraged to reflect on aspects of citizenship. Most non-specialist teachers make good use of time, are well organised, build their lessons on carefully grafted plans and deliver a brisk pace with varied activities. Lessons are less effective when there is insufficient time for students to discuss ideas or develop their enquiry skills.
95. The school continues to enrich personal, social and health education and citizenship lessons with the frequent use of guest speakers and a range of activities. These include study clubs, religious retreats and fund-raising events, which are shared with the girls' school. During the inspection an Arsenal Double Club visitor, who gave a stimulating talk to Year 8 students, clearly captured the attention and imagination of the students. Although there is a School Council, it has not yet reached its potential of enabling students to take significant responsible action. While the programme of work promotes good teaching and learning, there is hardly time to cover all the requirements of citizenship as well as personal, social and health education in the short lessons. Citizenship issues are evident from time to time in other subjects, but they are not yet woven systematically into schemes of work.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>School grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the sixth form and the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	8
Cost effectiveness of the sixth form / value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Students' achievement	3
<b>Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Students' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for students	3
How well the school seeks and acts on students' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	3