

INSPECTION REPORT

FRIERN BARNET SCHOOL

Friern Barnet, London

LEA area: Barnet

Unique reference number: 101345

Headteacher: Mr G C Gosling

Lead inspector: Elizabeth Charlesworth

Dates of inspection: 26th – 29th April 2004

Inspection number: 258635

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 - 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	744
School address:	Hemington Avenue Friern Barnet London
Postcode:	N11 3LS
Telephone number:	020 8368 2777
Fax number:	020 8368 3208
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Rubinstein
Date of previous inspection:	5/10/1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Friern Barnet School is a small 11-16 comprehensive school in North London, recently awarded performing arts status and Artsmark Gold Award. Most pupils come from within a few miles of the school, although a small number travel in from the home counties. There is considerable mobility among pupils, with around 10 per cent leaving and joining the school other than in Years 7 and 11; there are a number of service families, whose children choose this school, about 80 asylum seekers and refugees, and a small number of Traveller children. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is above the national average. Attainment on entry is below average, with more pupils at the bottom than at the top of the ability range. The number of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, is well above average. The majority of their needs are related to emotional and behavioural needs. Almost half the school population has a mother tongue other than English, from Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia, and between 30 and 40 are at an early stage of learning English.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19532	Elizabeth Charlesworth	Lead inspector	
15181	Meg Hackney	Lay inspector	
23393	Brian Dower	Team inspector	English
6044	Roger Perkins	Team inspector	Mathematics
31385	Neil Gillespie	Team inspector	Science
17156	Edward Graham	Team inspector	Design and technology Special educational needs
27082	Geoff Henshall	Team inspector	Citizenship Modern foreign languages
24127	Jim Kidd	Team inspector	History
19983	Haydn Webb	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
31660	Marianne Young	Team inspector	Music
33711	Mike Hird	Team inspector	Physical education
32572	Kate Evans	Team inspector	English as an additional language
2866	Robert Battey	Team inspector	Art and design
15485	Roger Butler	Team inspector	Religious education
32215	Andy Phillips	Team inspector	Geography

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Education

102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 7JX

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school providing a **good** standard of education for its pupils. Good leadership has introduced innovative features, creating consistency across the curriculum. Teaching, learning and achievement are good. The school gives **good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' achievement is good because they are well taught by dedicated experts.
- The strong leadership and governance foster good working relationships and a high level of racial harmony, which promote effective learning.
- The arts, English and physical education, including very good enrichment, make a significant impact on the cultural and educational development of pupils.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils, who are new to the English language, is very good, but not all teachers understand how to meet their various needs in full classes.
- Heads of faculty know their areas well through the rigorous process of self-evaluation, which they undertake.
- Within its very good arrangements for the professional development of staff, the school makes an excellent contribution to initial teacher training.
- The school is not meeting in full the requirements for a daily act of collective worship or for the teaching of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education.

The school has made **good** progress since its last inspection. Though the school does not provide a daily act of collective worship there has been an improvement in pupils' spiritual development and attitude to learning. The extended leadership team and creation of faculties have significantly improved the communication at senior and middle management level.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 11 results

Performance in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
	E	D	D	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 9.*

Though results at the end of Years 9 and 11 are not rising as fast as results nationally there is a discernible improvement in standards seen in work during the inspection. Pupils in Year 9 have lower attainment on entry than the years either side and more pupils join the school during Years 7 to 9 than is typical, many new to England and the English language. In work seen during the inspection, standards in Year 9 are **below average** overall, though in art, music, physical education and drama they are above average, average in science and close to average in English and modern foreign languages. **Achievement is good** because pupils are challenged in their learning and helped, through rigorous assessment, to improve their performance. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve well because of the support and encouragement of the support faculty.

GCSE results in 2003 were below average, though average when compared with schools with similar prior attainment. Standards of work seen during the inspection are generally **average**. In mathematics and modern foreign languages they are below average, but in music they are above average and well above in art and drama. In religious education, standards are well below average throughout the school. Achievement is **good** because pupils are well supported in their studies and their mostly good attitudes to learning encourage them to strive for high standards.

Pupils' **attitudes and behaviour are good**, leading to very good working relationships. Attendance is above the national average as a result of the strenuous efforts of staff to encourage **good attendance**. Pupils' **personal development is good**: spiritual development is satisfactory, moral and social are good and cultural development is very good in that pupils celebrate the rich diversity of the many cultures which make up the school community.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good**. Pupils benefit from the emphasis on well-planned lessons and the sharing of lesson aims promoted by the National Strategies in Key Stage 3. Pupils learn well because they know what is expected of them and benefit from the helpful comments about how to improve their work. The teaching of pupils, who have learning and language needs, is good when they are taught in small groups. However, not all teachers understand how to meet their needs in whole classes.

The curriculum is **good** throughout the school and caters well for the different needs of all pupils. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have access to a broad range of courses and the timetable is arranged so that each pupil can study their preferred courses. The curriculum for religious education fails to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus adequately and arrangements for a daily act of collective worship are inadequate. However, the school already has plans in place to rectify these shortcomings in the very near future. Pupils eagerly take part in a very good range of enrichment activities and the school's commitment to and provision in the arts has recently been recognized in the award of specialist performing arts status and the Artsmark Gold Award. Standards of care, health and safety are good. Pupils receive good support, advice and guidance from their teachers. Pupils, who are new to the school and to the English language, are given very good support within the whole area of pupil support. Arrangements for pupils to express their views about the management of the school are not well established. The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents and communicates with them regularly.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership of the headteacher and other staff with posts of responsibility is **good**. Management is **good**, a particular strength being the way the school monitors its performance and uses the information to implement ways of raising standards. The school provides many opportunities for staff to develop their professional expertise, for example, through the extended leadership team, whose main focus is on improving pupils' learning. Within the context of very good professional development, the school makes an excellent contribution to initial teacher training. Governance is **good**. The chairman and many members are new to the governing body. They support the leadership and management of the school well, using their knowledge to challenge the school effectively.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

A small proportion of parents responded to the pre-inspection invitation to make their views known. They are generally satisfied with the quality of education provided. Pupils generally enjoy the activities, which the school provides, especially in arts and sport, but feel that their views are not always taken into account. They also commented on the poor state of repair of the building, particularly the toilets, and inspectors agree with these comments. Pupils, who are newly arrived in England, very much appreciate the help they are given to become fluent in English and are welcomed into the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards and results.
- Ensure that all teachers cater for the needs of all learners.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the contents of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education are taught in full to all pupils.
- Implement statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards of work by Year 9 are **below average** and **average** by Year 11. Achievement throughout the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good, especially for pupils who remain in the school for five years.
- Standards in physical education, design and technology and music are above average and well above average in art and design.
- Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve well.
- Pupils reach well below expected levels of attainment in religious education.

Key Stage 3

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 9 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.6 (31.1)	33.4 (33.3)
Mathematics	32.1 (32.3)	35.4 (34.7)
Science	29.9 (31.6)	33.6 (33.3)

There were 144 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Commentary

1. Though results in tests and examinations at the end of Year 9 and Year 11 are not rising as fast as results nationally, there was a discernible improvement in standards observed in work during the inspection. Year 9 test results in 2003 fell from their 2002 level. This was because the attainment of pupils on entry to the school was lower than in the years before and after. In addition, more pupils joined the school during Years 7 to 9 than is typical, many of these being new to England and to the English language.
2. The evidence from inspection is that standards at the end of Year 9 are below average overall. In art and design they are well above average and in music, physical education and drama are above average. Standards are average in science and close to average in English and modern foreign languages.
3. The school admits a high proportion of pupils, who are new to learning English, including asylum seekers. Many of these arrive at various times during the year and a high proportion of them are not ready to take standard assessment tests. However, these pupils make good progress in acquiring fluency in English. This is particularly true within the English department due to the good support from and collaboration with the support faculty.
4. Achievement is good because pupils are challenged in their learning and helped through rigorous assessment to improve their performance. In music, achievement is very good, since pupils make rapid progress from a very low starting point. The school has worked hard to implement the recommendations of the National Strategies for Key Stage 3 in English and mathematics and also across the other subjects of the curriculum. The impact of this has been particularly marked in science, where pupils are challenged to tackle work at the higher National Curriculum levels. In art and design, achievement is good because boys and girls are given a good balance of two- and three-dimensional work, giving everyone a chance to discover their individual strengths.

5. The school has only recently been able to appoint specialist teachers in religious education. Consequently, there has been consistent under-performance in the subject, which is only now being put right. Good teaching is helping to change pupils' attitudes. Although standards are well below average, almost 40 pupils think well enough of the subject to choose it for GCSE next year, comparing favourably with single figures in the present groups.
6. Because the school does not yet monitor the progress of gifted and talented pupils it is not possible to distinguish their achievement from that of their peers. There is little specific provision through extension materials in lessons and planned enrichment activities.

Key Stage 4

Standards in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11 in 2003

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining five or more A*-C grades	38 (37)	52 (50)
Percentage of pupils gaining five or more A*-G grades	83 (86)	91 (91)
Percentage of pupils gaining one or more A*-G grades	90 (93)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	29.2 (30.1)	34.7 (34.8)

There were 145 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Commentary

7. GCSE results in 2003 were below average, although average when compared to schools with similar prior attainment. In English and information and communication technology (ICT), results have been consistently in line with the national average in recent years. In English, this is to a large extent due to the increased fluency of pupils, whose mother tongue is not English, and their greater understanding of the course requirements. Science results in 2003 were well below average, as were physical education results. However, the latter represented the best individual results for the lower-attaining pupils, who chose the subject. In art and design and in music, pupils did better overall than expected and better than in their other subjects.
8. Standards of work seen during the inspection are generally average. In mathematics and modern foreign languages, standards are below average, but in music they are above average and well above in art and drama. In religious education, where the locally agreed syllabus has not been taught in full, standards are well below average. The quality of written work in physical education is a particular strength of the examination group, while good achievement in team sports and the quality of technique make the standards of all pupils above average.
9. Achievement is good overall because pupils are well supported in their studies and their mostly good attitudes to learning encourage them to strive for high standards. In art and music, the cumulative effect of good progress in developing basic skills and deepening understanding is resulting in very good achievement. In science, where a new curriculum has been introduced, pupils are benefiting from the modular approach. In German, where boys did better than girls in the 2003 results, speaking is holding back progress, making pupils' achievement only satisfactory.
10. The achievement of ethnic minority pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, is in line with the rest of the school. Those, who have been in the country only a short time, do not take GCSE exams, but because of the good progress they make in learning English they are well prepared for taking up examination courses when they proceed to further education.
11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. Their achievement is good because of the careful identification of learning needs and the level of

support provided by teachers and support assistants in the classroom and through withdrawal lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Relationships are **very good**. Attendance is **good** and punctuality overall is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils' good attitudes have a positive influence on the standards they achieve.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language respond very well and value the diversity of the school population.
- Pupils behave well and are polite and self-disciplined.
- Pupils value the school's positive ethos and its good range of arts and sports activities.
- There is a good monitoring system designed to improve attendance.
- There are very good relationships and a high level of racial harmony among the adults and young people.

Commentary

12. The majority of pupils have a good attitude towards school. They are interested in and enthusiastic about being involved in the range of activities provided. Pupils with English as an additional language and those new to the school are very well integrated and they respond very well to the very good induction arrangements. Relationships throughout the school are very good and a significant strength is the harmonious way in which pupils of different cultures relate to each other. Pupils are confident to ask their teachers for help with difficulties in academic work and also to discuss personal problems.
13. Pupils from ethnic minority groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, asylum seekers and Traveller pupils, feel very much part of the school community. Many express their enjoyment of the diversity of the pupil population, saying that it is one of the best aspects of the school.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	6.3
National data:	7.2

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.8
National data:	1.1

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

14. The school has worked hard to improve attendance, which is now good and above the national average. Good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance ensure that absence is quickly tracked by first-day contact with parents. Registration is prompt, but a few pupils are persistently late in the morning.

Exclusions

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	314	20	1
White – Irish	9	1	0
White – any other White background	101	2	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	18	5	2
Mixed – White and Black African	8	1	0
Mixed – White and Asian	10	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	16	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	67	3	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	19	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	16	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	15	0	0
Black or Black British – African	59	7	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	7	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	49	2	0
No ethnic group recorded	35	19	0

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

15. The number of permanent and fixed-term exclusions is low. The school works hard to support disaffected pupils within the school and only excludes where there is no alternative.
16. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good overall and has improved since the last inspection. Although strategic planning for the delivery of these aspects is inconsistent across departments and faculties, the school's *Reflections* initiative provides a comprehensive programme, linked to calendar events, which recognises and celebrates pupils' talents and achievements. Moreover, the well-planned assemblies foster pupils' spiritual development and pupils are encouraged to play an active part in these sessions. The school does not meet the requirement for a daily act of collective worship, but the *Reflections* programme and the opportunities for pupils to consider deeper questions across the curriculum result in satisfactory spiritual development. In English, for example, pupils spend time discussing the impact of apartheid on human self-worth.
17. Moral development is good. There are few exclusions and the intervention policy, the tiered report system and the effective role-models provided by the teaching staff, described as 'dedicated' by pupils, encourage good behaviour from pupils, who adopt a mature approach to their studies and to their classmates. Similarly, social development is good. Collaborative work is a feature of most lessons and the very impressive enrichment programme allows pupils to work together outside the formal classroom.
18. The cultural development of pupils is very good and is a strong feature of the ethos of the school. The *Comenius* programme in modern languages, for example, comprises links with

schools in Finland, German and Italy. Pupils also speak highly of the school's emphasis on participation in the arts, and music, dance, drama and art figure extensively in the annual summer arts school. The understanding and celebration of other cultures is inherent in everything the school attempts to do and, as one Year 11 pupil commented, 'we learn about other cultures and celebrate their achievements through our everyday friendships, too'.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching, learning, and the curriculum are all good, influenced by the implementation of the National Strategies for Key Stage 3.

Teaching and learning

Learning is **good** because pupils are taught **well**. The school's arrangements for assessing pupils' academic and personal development are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' observation of each other ensures that the effect of National Strategies is consistent across the whole school.
- Inspirational teaching makes pupils want to learn.
- Specialist support for pupils who speak English as an additional language, is good, but not all teachers understand how to assess and cater for their needs.
- The review days are an effective means for form tutors to take part in evaluating pupils' progress against their targets and giving advice on how they can improve their work further.
- There is very good assessment practice in music, English, physical education and science.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 95 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (3%)	27 (28%)	35 (38%)	28 (29%)	2 (2%)	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.

19. The school has put a great deal of effort into implementing the recommendations of the National Strategies for Key Stage 3. As a result, most lessons begin with teachers setting out what they intend pupils to learn and then reviewing the learning at the end of the lesson. This careful planning gives pupils a much clearer idea of the purpose of their learning and engages them in their learning. Teachers ensure good practice is shared by observing each other.
20. The hallmarks of the excellent teaching observed are the way teachers understand the learning needs of their pupils, the high level of challenge for all pupils and the way teachers inspire pupils to want to learn more. The result is pupils, who are eager to learn, to take up the challenge and to work and support each other.
21. Most teachers are expert in their subject and this has a particularly marked effect in art and design, drama, music and physical education, where teaching overall is very good. Teachers have very high expectations and pupils rise to the challenges teachers set them. In their marking, teachers give guidance on how to improve and pupils say they find this very motivating.
22. In the few unsatisfactory lessons, it was the slow pace and the ineffective management of pupils, which resulted in unsatisfactory learning.

23. The school has made a decision to use its limited financial resources to put support for pupils with English as an additional language into a few departments at a time; the intention is for the well-qualified and experienced support faculty to work with all subjects over time. In the targeted departments and in the lessons dedicated exclusively to the teaching of English as an additional language, there are examples of good and very good practice. English is one such department where active partnerships have been developed. For example, in a Year 11 class, the partnership teaching that took place between the teacher and the manager for ethnic minority achievement was good. Good joint planning ensured that all pupils learnt well and that there were high expectations for all pupils. As a result, all pupils were confident and took an active role in the lesson, discussing openly their personal views and understanding, challenging each other and the teachers, were productive in their work, and so made good progress.
24. In other subjects, where teaching assistance is in place, teachers make effective use of the support. However, not all teachers are confident about meeting the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language, and subject staff do not take full advantage of the advice and expertise of the ethnic minority achievement team. Therefore, there is often too little designing of learning tasks to enable all pupils to understand the lesson without additional support. This results in a lack of continuity and consistency of approach for the pupils. Whilst teachers' marking in pupils' books for those pupils who speak English as an additional language is positive, it does not give enough constructive or specific guidance to the pupil on how to improve their work.
25. There is a good team of teaching assistants and teachers of pupils with special educational needs providing good support in the classroom and through withdrawal lessons to focus on specific learning difficulties. However, where there is no support in class, not all teachers plan work and resources, which meet pupils' needs.

Assessment

26. The school's assessment arrangements are having a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
27. On-going assessment is conducted thoroughly and constructively by most subject teachers, who keep pupils informed about how well they are doing and what they must do to improve. This enables them to respond to pupils' individual needs in their lesson planning. Such good practice is not universal, however. In a fifth of the lessons seen, the marking and oral feedback did not give those pupils whose home language is not English and those who are gifted and talented or have special educational needs, the strategies they need to improve their work.
28. Information collected about pupils, who are admitted mid-term, is detailed and provides valuable insight into the educational, social and linguistic background of the pupil. This helps to inform assessment procedures and the appropriate placement of the pupil in classes.
29. There is good monitoring and testing of pupils with special educational needs. Record keeping is good and reviews are undertaken to ensure learning needs are fully analysed and catered for. Pupils receiving support are tested annually to monitor progress and to make sure that the school provides support at the right level.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**. There is a **very good** range of opportunities for enrichment. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very good provision for students with special educational needs.
- An extensive range of visits to places of interest enhances very good opportunities for enrichment.
- The small size of classrooms leads to small class sizes, which has a positive impact on pupil achievement.
- Provision for religious education and collective worship is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

30. The curriculum for Years 7 to 9 caters well for the different needs of pupils. National Strategies for Key Stage 3 are well established across the curriculum. However, the school is not effective in evaluating these developments on a regular or systematic basis in order to assess the impact on the pupils' learning or to continue the best features into Years 10 and 11.
31. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have access to a good range of courses and the timetable is arranged to enable each pupil to study their preferred choice of subjects. Programmes of study are regularly reviewed, with increasing focus on introducing performing arts opportunities across the curriculum. The good work experience arrangements and the recent introduction of more vocational opportunities through double award engineering and ICT is preparing the pupils well for employment or further study.
32. With the appointment of the new manager for ethnic minority achievement there has been a marked increase in the number of pupils taking GCSE qualifications in their home language. These pupils often attain very good results, even when examinations are taken as early as Years 9 and 10. However, whilst the school funds the examination fees, there are no facilities at Friern Barnet School, so pupils currently have to travel to a neighbouring school to take them.
33. The school fails to meet adequately the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, nor are there adequate arrangements for a daily act of collective worship. Gifted and talented pupils are identified, but the provision is not yet in place and there are not enough opportunities for them to excel.
34. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs through a suitable combination of in-class support and withdrawal in small groups. The school has a wide range of alternative curricular provision and partnerships with local colleges, recognising the many different needs of pupils throughout the school.
35. In Year 11, good support is provided for the pupils when they are deciding on their options for study post-16. The school works with the *Connexions* adviser to provide mentor support to targeted students. Careers education and guidance for younger students is in place and supports the pupils' future roles and life in a diverse society. Satisfactory use is made of business, industry and the wider community to broaden the pupils' understanding of employment opportunities open to them.
36. Sex and relationships, along with related health issues, are comprehensively and effectively covered in the school's personal, social and health education programme. The themes of drugs awareness and alcohol are similarly well covered.
37. Pupils enjoy and benefit from a very good range of enrichment activities. There is an extensive range of visits to places of interest in different parts of the country and abroad. These include theatre trips, a local dance festival, art workshops, concerts, and visits to First World War

battlefields and various museums in London. Regular booster classes and homework clubs for many subjects are well attended. A small number of pupils belong to the horticultural club; they took pride and pleasure in showing their produce and plants to inspectors. The annual activities week gives pupils a chance to learn new skills. This broadens their understanding and enjoyment of subjects beyond those normally studied in the classroom.

Accommodation, resources and staffing

38. The school has sufficient specialist staff to teach the curriculum. Any problems of recruitment and retention are tackled quickly and often in a very enterprising way, such as recruiting from overseas or retaining students, who have undertaken school experiences during their teacher training. Staff are well qualified and experienced. The school is well supported by trained teaching support staff. Teaching assistants for pupils with special educational needs are deployed well and linked to specific subject departments to provide the maximum support and guidance for teachers. The liaison strategy with departments enables the quick sharing of information when issues arise.
39. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory. Classrooms in the older part of the school are small, which has caused the school to restrict the size of classes. However, the smaller class sizes have a positive impact on pupils' achievement. The pupils told inspectors that they were unhappy with the state of the toilets, a statement with which inspectors agreed, but plans have already been drawn up for refurbishment, which should be completed for the new school year. The school is looking forward to providing a dance studio as a result of its recently awarded status as a performing arts college.
40. The accommodation for special educational needs, used as a staff base and withdrawal area for teaching, is cramped. The department is also short on resources, with very limited ICT provision to extend and enhance learning with a range of software programmes for specific learning difficulties. The stock of book resources is not extensive enough to meet the needs of all pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Standards of care, health and safety are **good**. Pupils receive **good** support, advice and guidance from their teachers. **Satisfactory** arrangements are made for involving pupils in the school's work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good and trusting relationships with their teachers.
- Pupils, who speak English as an additional language, receive good pastoral and academic support.
- Health and safety issues are well monitored by good procedures.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for by the support faculty, but insufficient support is provided during main school lessons.
- Induction arrangements for pupils of all cultures are very good.
- Pupils receive very good advice and guidance about options and careers.
- The school council is not sufficiently well established to ensure that pupils have a voice in the life of the school.

Commentary

41. The school's procedures for ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils are good, and involve regular monitoring and risk assessments. Child-protection procedures meet requirements and all staff are kept aware of the school's responsibilities through clear guidelines. The very good relationships and the school's positive and supportive ethos help to raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Pupils who speak English as an additional language, are very well integrated and they speak highly of the support they receive from staff. The staff of the support faculty are very caring of pupils with special educational needs and provide a very happy and safe

learning environment. However, on their return to main school lessons, the support provided for pupils with special educational needs is too limited. This frequently has a negative effect on their progress and quality of behaviour. Disaffected pupils are well supported by an alternative curriculum or by attendance at college courses designed to help them progress into the world of work.

42. Pupils are confident that their form tutors, heads of year and the headteacher know them well and that their progress and achievements are well monitored and assessed. They understand the successful system of target setting and find the annual progress interviews with senior staff very helpful. Pupils in Year 9 and their parents receive very good support and guidance when considering subject and career options. The very good induction arrangements, including for those who join part-way through the year, ensure that pupils of all ethnic backgrounds are quickly integrated into the life of the school.
43. At present, insufficient opportunity is provided to involve pupils in decision-making or to seek their views and ideas for improvements to the school environment. Although the school council has recently been restructured and includes pupils who are new to the school and new to learning English, this is not yet well enough established to provide a strong forum where pupils are able to take responsibility and have a voice in the management of the school.
44. Staff from the ethnic minority achievement team understand the challenges faced by pupils and staff alike, and effectively support both through joint planning, provision of dictionaries and other resources and in-class assistance. Support is currently targeted at English, mathematics and science, addressing identified weaknesses in attainment.
45. Partnerships with the English department have been developed to ensure a more strategic way of working that, in time, will raise subject staff awareness and confidence to meet the needs of such pupils. Subject and support staff are now routinely working together to develop schemes of work, produce learning resources, including resources that encourage use of a pupil's first language, and teach in partnership.
46. The care, guidance and support in place for ethnic minority pupils and those, who speak English as an additional language, is good. Staff in the support faculty, including a multi-lingual teaching assistant, are well qualified and experienced. The introduction of a new 12 week induction programme for pupils new to learning English and a well-equipped team teaching base are beginning to have an impact on the pupils' ability to access the curriculum. Through discussions with pupils, who are new to learning English, and those of traveller heritage, it was evident that they feel supported and secure in the school. They know who to turn to in the school should they experience problems and are confident that these will be resolved. They are aware of their targets for improvement and are generally aspirational and ambitious for their educational achievements. For example, one student interviewed wants to be a doctor and has already discussed this with her science teacher, another wants to be an engineer and has discussed this with the head of faculty for technology. A traveller pupil was keen to continue talking to inspectors at the end of an interview about his education, the support and guidance he has received from his head of year and the learning support unit, the progress he has made and the GCSE subjects he is aiming to take.
47. The head of faculty for support and the manager for ethnic minority achievement run homework and study clubs three times per week for all pupils who speak English as an additional language. Pupils speak very highly of these initiatives, saying that the staff assist in coursework and general issues for school life. The clubs improve their use of written and spoken English, and raise their confidence to take an active role in mainstream lessons and to join other clubs at school. On arrival at school, pupils are paired with another pupil, who speaks their home language. Pupils say this helps them to settle into the school, find their way around and make friends.
48. The school has established the Fantome Centre for pupils with behavioural problems. This is an excellent facility for the school that is managed by a very caring and supportive manager.

There are well-established procedures for the referral of pupils to the centre. Pupils are assessed and individualised programmes agreed with clear targets for returning to mainstream lessons. Indications are that this strategy is a positive approach to behaviour management and is reducing the exclusion of pupils from school. The centre also makes use of additional support, for example, through the provision of anger management courses.

49. When pupils return to mainstream lessons from the centre they are not effectively monitored, tracked or supported to re-integrate them. This leads to some pupils returning to the centre for further support when incidents occur.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **satisfactory** partnership with parents. The **very good** links with other schools enrich the curriculum. There are **satisfactory** links with the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of parents are supportive.
- The parent-staff association is pro-active in its support for the school.
- Regular communication with parents provides helpful information.
- The provision of translations for parents of ethnic and linguistic minority groups is insufficient.
- Parents of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are involved well in assessments and reviews.
- The annual reports are good and ensure that parents are kept well informed about pupils' targets and progress.
- Very good links with other schools and colleges promote opportunities for joint activities and further education.

Commentary

50. The school works hard to build a partnership with parents and keeps them well informed through regular helpful communication, open evenings and target-setting days. Although the school positively encourages parents from ethnic and linguistic minority groups to support their children, the confidential provision of interpreters and translations of communications is not made readily available to them. This does not ensure that all parents fully understand how well their children are performing. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to attend all assessment and review meetings and they are helped by staff to understand their children's individual education plans. The majority of parents are supportive, but there are some, who find it difficult to maintain a partnership with the school. Reports to parents are good. They contain clear, helpful information about progress and target setting and both parental and pupil response is encouraged. The parent-staff association is a small group of parents, who are making a considerable contribution to improving the school's environment through the re-decoration of classrooms and fundraising to provide additional learning resources. The school is keen to take account of parents' views and to act upon them. An annual questionnaire is sent to parents, although there is limited response.
51. The school's links with other schools and colleges, including an international link, are very good. These make a strong contribution to the curriculum and to pupils' experience. There are close links with Woodhouse College, to which many pupils transfer, and joint courses and sports activities with local primary and secondary schools. The school has satisfactory links with the community, including the BBC and a large national department store, who help pupils with interviewing techniques and employment prospects.
52. Partnership with parents from ethnic or linguistic minority groups is satisfactory. Although there are key objectives within the school improvement plan and the ethnic minority achievement action plan and policy handbook for improving links with parents, particularly written communication, there was very little evidence of this in practice.

53. The school has active links with a neighbouring school, allowing pupils to take GCSE qualifications in community languages. The number of pupils taking up this opportunity has risen over the past year from nine pupils to thirty-five.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher and other staff with posts of responsibility is **good**. Management is **good**. Governance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The extended leadership team and the faculty structure successfully place great emphasis on improving pupils' learning.
- The school monitors its performance regularly and in detail, using the information effectively to implement strategies for raising achievement.
- There is a very good programme for the professional development of staff and the contribution to initial teacher training is excellent.
- Leadership is very good in a significant number of departments.
- Some senior managers do not always have enough time to fulfil their duties.

Commentary

54. The extended leadership team comprises staff with a wide range of expertise and experience. Its members, making good use of the faculty structure, give an effective lead to the school on improving the quality of pupils' learning. The good leadership of the headteacher is instrumental in providing the foundation for the work of the team. Collaborative work is a strong feature and non-teaching staff play an active part in the team's emphasis on the regular assessment and evaluation of the school's performance. Smaller class sizes have long been a feature of the school. Recent financial pressure to increase them has been withstood and a decision made to maintain them. Teaching and learning have improved as a consequence. However, several senior managers now need more time to discharge their responsibilities.
55. Effective performance management procedures are fully in place. There are very effective arrangements for the induction of newly qualified teachers and also for more experienced staff, who are new to the school. Professional development of staff is very good, with an emphasis on training in the very latest theories on learning styles and teaching methods, to meet the needs of all pupils. Moreover, the school strives to support teachers, who are planning for professional advancement. It offers them additional responsibilities, so that they may gain more experience in their chosen specialist areas. Newly qualified teachers, who trained in the school, staff completing their teacher training and professionals from the local university all speak very highly about the excellent provision for those wishing to enter the profession.
56. Leadership and management are very good in English, science, art, music, physical education and special educational needs. Key features of the provision in these areas are the very effective systems for evaluating performance, which are having a strong impact on raising standards.
57. The head of the support faculty provides very good leadership and management and works well in partnership with the manager for ethnic minority achievement. Together, they demonstrate clear vision for improvement, have a common sense of purpose, and motivate staff and change practices in other departments. This results in clear guidelines for mainstream staff on the rationale for allocating support, for assessment procedures for pupils new to learning English, and a very good, informative register of pupils, who speak English as an additional language. The team's action plan outlines clear, realistic goals, with assigned responsibilities and timed outcomes that are already contributing to school improvement and raising standards.

58. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides very good leadership and management of the department, initiating developments to improve the provision for pupils. The local education authority has provided very good advice and guidance for the development of learning support.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	2 632 230	Balance from previous year	195 564
Total expenditure	2 855 462	Balance carried forward to the next	-27 668
Expenditure per pupil	3 817		

59. Financial planning is good. Governors are actively involved and the school’s business manager is efficient and effective. Recommendations from the recent audit report have been implemented. The 2003/04 delegated budget allocated to the school was insufficient to fully cover ongoing teachers’ costs. The school has managed its consequent deficit budget judiciously. The large deficit anticipated for 2003/04 has been significantly reduced. The school reviewed its priorities for spending the previous year’s surplus and also introduced prudent cost-cutting measures. These actions have not affected pupils’ standards adversely. At this stage, the school is continuing to timetable six classes in each year so that its significant number of small-sized classrooms are not overcrowded. As a result, pupils’ good learning is being maintained. The school has effective procedures to ensure it obtains best value. For example, cleaning costs have been significantly reduced. The school provides good value for money despite its above average expenditure per pupil.

Governance

60. The governing body is very effective in shaping the vision and direction of the school. Although many governors are new to the role, they are very committed and have a good understanding of the school’s strengths and areas for development. The chair and vice-chair of governors are very well informed about the school’s performance and statutory duties. Governors are very positive in their challenge and support for the headteacher and school management team and are well briefed about the work of the faculties and the progress of initiatives. There is a school governor attached to each faculty, including the learning support faculty, the governor of which is fully aware of developments in learning support and monitors progress regularly.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' levels of achievement by the end of Year 11 are very good.
- Pupils achieve well because of very good teaching and their own positive attitudes to learning.
- There have been significant improvements since the previous inspection because of the high quality of the leadership and management.
- There has been a declining trend in girls' Year 9 test results compared to girls nationally.

Commentary

61. The proportion of pupils obtaining a grade in the A* to C range in the 2003 English language examinations was the same as the national average. This represents very good achievement when account is taken of pupils' well below average standards of attainment on entry to the school. Such high levels of achievement have been maintained over the last three years and are an improvement on the progress pupils were making at the time of the previous inspection. This is particularly so for the boys, whose standards have improved significantly. Pupils whose heritage language is not English do well and the most competent pupils of all backgrounds attain at grades A* and A. The high grade A* to G pass rate testifies to the very good progress made by pupils with special educational needs.
62. Pupils who entered the school at the beginning of Year 7, and who were not at an early stage of English language acquisition, did well in the national tests at the end of Year 9. Their results were below average, but levels of achievement were good considering their levels of attainment at the beginning of Year 7. Few pupils attained at the higher Levels 6 and 7. In recent years there has been a persistent decline in the performance of girls compared to their national counterparts. The performance of the boys has been variable.
63. The standard of written work seen in Year 11 during the course of the inspection meets national expectations and achievement is very good. Pupils who have English as an additional language, are attaining well because they have had sufficient time and support to develop a command of the language in all its complexities. The least competent pupils are also progressing well and their work is of a standard to attain GCSE grades. The quality of the written work seen in Year 9, although below average in standard, is a significant improvement on what was attained in the recent national tests and represents good achievement. There is proficient use of computers by all pupils as a means of improving the quality of writing and as a research tool. Pupils' attainment in developing reading, speaking and listening skills and their achievement in these areas of their work match the profile for writing. They are confident and articulate when speaking in groups and they listen well and show respect for each other's views. They are not, however, at ease in speaking fluently and at length in large groups and in more formal situations.
64. Achievement is very good because of pupils' attitudes to their learning. They arrive at lessons well prepared and keen to succeed academically. There were a small number of pupils in some of the lessons seen, who were not so disposed, but they were managed effectively by their teachers and made good progress in their lessons. Pupils form good working relationships in the classroom and are supportive of each other. They appreciate the quality of their teachers' planning and the way in which the teaching approaches are modified to meet their individual needs. Teachers' explanations are clear, their questioning to test understanding is rigorous and they have the ability to convey their own enthusiasm for the

subject to their pupils. A wide range of teaching resources is used and many of the teacher-produced learning materials are of a very high standard. There were some lessons seen in which the teacher gave too little time at the end of the period for pupils to reflect on and share their learning with each other and, where appropriate, to evaluate the quality of others' work. Overall, however, teaching and learning are very good.

65. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. There is a strong sense of common purpose in the department's work and teachers collaborate effectively as a team. The subject leader is rigorous in his analysis of the subject's performance and taking action to raise performance, especially in relation to the improved attainment now seen in Year 9. Pupils' progress is monitored and evaluated at regular intervals and action taken to address underachievement. There are systems in place for teachers to share good practice through observing each other at work. At the present time, the school's setting arrangements in Years 10 and 11 restrict teachers' ability to move pupils from one teaching group to another. There have been significant improvements since the previous inspection and there is the capacity to do even better because teachers are self-critical and look for ways to extend their expertise.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

66. Pupils enter the school with below average English language and literacy skills. This is because there are many boys and girls, whose heritage language is not English, and others, who have special educational needs. The literacy co-ordinator has worked closely with her teaching colleagues to address the weaknesses and as a result of their efforts pupils leave the school with average literacy skills.
67. The measures taken to bring about these improvements have focused on training opportunities for the teaching staff and the provision of resources to enable pupils to improve their writing and speaking skills. Members of staff from the Ethnic Minority Achievement team, however, are not involved in the planning or delivery of the strategy for literacy across the curriculum.
68. Within subject areas there is much good practice for the school to build upon. In science, all pupils, including those whose home language is not English, and those with special educational needs, are encouraged to talk about their work and to explain clearly what they observe in the natural world. They do so enthusiastically and with a good command of the specialist terminology. Provision for pupils to develop their literacy skills is very strong in music, and in mathematics it is kept to the fore in teaching. In modern foreign languages and in English there is an emphasis in the teaching on pupils' understanding of the structure of language and, as a result, pupils have satisfactory communication skills when they leave school. There are subjects, however, where scant regard is paid to pupils' language needs in the teaching and where marking does not correct written inaccuracies in spelling, punctuation and grammar. There is not that whole-school drive from the top to ensure that every teacher adopts the good practice of the majority. The challenge facing the school is to ensure that good practice becomes routine across all subject areas. Achievement is satisfactory.

Example of outstanding practice

Pupils new to the school and the English language are welcomed as they are helped to acquire a command of English.

The key features of an excellent lesson were the many opportunities for pupils to learn in their preferred styles and the ways in which pupils with English as an additional language were encouraged to develop their skills. Pupils waiting outside for the lesson to begin were looking forward to the session and told the inspector how much they enjoyed the activities. The teacher's questioning was superb and pupils of different ages were fascinated by the starter activity, which involved them changing places with their classmates according to numbers recognised. Pupils were treated with dignity, yet were required to work very hard and answer a wide range of questions. The excellent classroom display and the variety of resources ensured that all pupils were fully engaged: indeed they smiled throughout the lesson and adopted a most mature approach to their studies. A range of methods, electric pace, relentless questioning and full support for each individual led to pupils making outstanding progress, not only in English, but also in number recognition.

Modern foreign languages

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Years 7 to 9.
- The department has eliminated the unsatisfactory elements identified at the previous inspection.
- Teaching has improved through applying more consistent teaching and learning strategies.
- There is clear leadership and direction.
- Marking in exercise books is not sufficiently consistent.

Commentary

69. In 2003, the results of teacher assessments in Year 9, with half the year group taking French and half German, were average, with girls outnumbering boys by two to one at Level 5. Standards at GCSE in 2003 were below average in French and well below in German. Although boys did not perform as well as girls in French, they were in line with the national average for boys, whereas girls were below that for girls.
70. Standards seen in pupils' work in Year 9 are average. All pupils exhibit a good standard of accuracy in their speaking and writing, and those with special educational needs make good attempts at extended writing. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve as well as their peers. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 9 are already using past and future tenses with confidence. Average- and many lower-attaining pupils are gaining Level 5 accreditation, with extended work. This represents good achievement. The implementation of the National Strategy for Key Stage 3 is helping to raise standards.
71. Standards at the end of Year 11 are below average as the improvements brought about elsewhere by the implementation of the Key Stage 3 strategy have yet to work through. Higher-attaining pupils are making good progress in their written coursework, in content, and range of vocabulary and construction. At other levels there is a good standard of accuracy where care is taken, though standards in speaking are not as high as those of writing. Pupils enter the school with below average English language and literacy skills. This is because there are many boys and girls whose heritage language is not English, and others who have special educational needs. The literacy co-ordinator has worked closely with her teaching colleagues on developing spoken language and as a result of their efforts pupils leave the school with average literacy skills.
72. Teaching and learning are good and a third of lessons seen were very good. The implementation of the National Strategy for Key Stage 3 has promoted a more consistent approach to teaching, eliminating the unsatisfactory teaching highlighted at the previous inspection, and helping to raise the attainment of boys. Teachers know their subjects well, focusing on what they expect pupils to learn, reviewing and evaluating their learning at the end of the lesson. Pupils are challenged through a good variety of activities, working

independently, in pairs or groups. There is a strong emphasis on literacy skills and the understanding of grammar, and in both languages, a good balance between the use of the foreign language and English, adapted to the needs of pupils. In order to help pupils at an early stage of acquiring English, who experience difficulty following instructions in English, they are paired with a partner, who speaks their mother tongue. Marking in exercise books is inconsistent, particularly in the frequency of grading in Years 10 and 11, and there is little diagnostic comment. However, the newly introduced self-evaluation sheets are effective in enabling pupils to know how well they are progressing, and how to improve, after each major end-of-unit assessment.

73. Leadership and management of the department are good. The present acting head of faculty is building on the firm foundation established by her predecessor, and, with a committed team, has a clear vision of pupils' learning needs. The opportunity for each member of the faculty to observe another has enhanced the quality of teaching through the experience and sharing of good practice. Despite problems of regular access, the department makes good use of ICT to support pupils' learning. It also offers effective support, in collaboration with the support faculty, for pupils to obtain qualifications in their mother tongue.
74. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. "This is now a department".¹ It has enjoyed a relatively long period of stability. There is good planning, with firm policies and detailed schemes of work. The improvements in pupils' confidence, performance, attitudes, progress and expectations have all taken place.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' GCSE results are improving each year.
- Teaching and learning have improved considerably since the previous inspection.
- The different learning needs of Year 7 pupils are not always fulfilled.
- Management of the department is effective, especially in tracking pupils' performance over time.
- The use of ICT is underdeveloped because teachers lack confidence and make too little use of facilities.

Commentary

75. Pupils' results in the 2003 tests at the end of Year 9 were well below average. The pupils who had been in the school since the start of Year 7, achieved results much closer to, although still below, the national average. Overall, results were below those of pupils in similar schools. GCSE mathematics results were below average in 2003, but have been rising faster than nationally since 2001. They are expected to improve again in 2004. Test and examination results were largely confirmed by the standard of work seen in lessons and in pupils' work. Pupils achieve satisfactorily throughout their time in school because teaching and learning are satisfactory. They enter the school at a below average level and achieve standards by the end of Year 11 that are approaching the average.
76. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and are much better than at the time of the last inspection; there were no unsatisfactory lessons. A small proportion of teaching and learning in Years 10 and 11 is good or very good. Pupils who are new to the English language, are well supported, particularly when designated assistance is available. Pupils with special educational needs are also well supported. Teachers have a secure knowledge of their subject, so pupils steadily develop skills and understanding. There is effective use of ideas from the National Strategy for Key Stage 3 in all years, which engages pupils' interest and sharpens their thinking. For example, in a very good Year 10 lesson on co-ordinates and reflection of shapes, the teacher encouraged pupils to show their answers on personal whiteboards so that misconceptions could be quickly spotted and sensitively discussed. In a

¹ This refers to the comment in the previous report: "This is not a department"

few cases, teachers spend too long on presenting information without involving pupils sufficiently. In others, pupils routinely come to the front of the class to show their solutions, not only gaining confidence themselves, but also engaging other pupils effectively. Teaching is least successful in Year 7. The pupils in these classes have a wide range of ability and their needs are not met fully. Higher-ability Year 7 pupils especially tend to coast because they are not challenged sufficiently.

77. Leadership of the department is satisfactory. There is a positive sense of purpose aimed at raising pupils' achievement. Management is good, with extensive monitoring and acting upon information from assessment. Pupils who underachieve are identified and helped to improve. Extra-curricular provision is good, including booster classes, mathematics club and challenge competitions for higher-attaining pupils. There has been good progress overall since the previous inspection, particularly in teaching and learning. ICT remains underused because teachers need further training to improve their skills. They do not make sufficient use of ICT facilities to support their mathematics teaching.

Mathematics across the curriculum

78. The use of numeracy is satisfactory overall and standards are average. Applications of numeracy are good in history, but unsatisfactory in art and design. Teachers have attended a training day and a whole-school policy has been produced. At present, the school is awaiting the appointment of a co-ordinator to maintain and extend what has been achieved. In history, pupils construct population graphs, analyse the types of injury received by participants in World War I and produce and interpret a time line of Henry II's popularity. Pupils use graphs, charts and data analysis to support their work in geography. In science, younger pupils construct bar charts and line graphs, while older pupils find lines of best fit for experiments on Ohm's Law. In design and technology, pupils use triangulation techniques and perform calculations in electronics. Pupils taking GCSE physical education analyse heart rates and the timings and measurements of athletic performance. In modern and foreign languages, pupils complete a survey on their own pets.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving from the well below average level of test and examination results.
- The head of department has worked effectively and has greatly improved the provision in science.
- Pupils are inspired to learn because of the expert way teachers introduce new ideas through well-designed lesson plans.
- Teachers plan work for the needs of all pupils, who achieve very well at their own level.
- Poor laboratory conditions do not provide a good learning environment.
- Lesson objectives are not clearly stated in some lessons, causing some pupils to be unaware of what they are learning.

Commentary

79. In national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003, results were well below average. GCSE results in 2003 were also well below average. Teachers' assessments were in line with the National Curriculum results in Year 9. However, work seen during the inspection shows that standards are improving and are now average because of the recent introduction of a well-planned curriculum. Work challenges the most able pupils and stimulates the lower attainers.
80. All pupils are set targets for high achievement. Pupils' progress is monitored and checked against these targets. As a result, pupils' achievement is good, but the effect of target setting and checking has yet to be seen in examination results. Most pupils are aware of their progress and are encouraged to aim higher.

81. Overall, teaching and learning are good. Pupils clearly enjoy science and they are complimentary about their teachers who have established a strong working relationship with their pupils. Teaching is inspirational in a few lessons, such as where some lower attainers were helped to understand factors that affect electromagnets, because the teaching was graphic and the investigations were easy to comprehend. Teachers' enthusiasm within the classroom encourages pupils to produce some very good work by setting high targets. Features of the good teaching include the fast pace of lessons and high expectations of behaviour resulting in good learning. Worksheets are carefully designed to allow those pupils who speak English as a second language, to have full access to learning and achieve well. Pupils are enthusiastic and skilled in using ICT and they acquire good investigation skills where fair tests and reliable results are gained.
82. On a small number of occasions, where behaviour is not well managed, progress in lessons is slow and pupils underachieve. In a few lessons, the purpose of the lesson and links, which relate one part of the lesson to another, are not clearly stated, so pupils do not understand the work they are doing and are unsure of their achievement.
83. Leadership is very good. The department is well organised and pro-active in managing improvements. Good management has ensured that there is an effective strategy in place so that improvements in curriculum planning and teaching strategies that have been made recently will continue. The head of science has introduced secure and well-researched schemes of work, which have already had a major impact on the good learning now seen in lessons. There is a very good range of textbooks suitable for all pupils.
84. Laboratory equipment is well maintained by technicians, who are competent and contribute to the success of the department. However, the laboratories are dated and have poor work surfaces. Despite this, teachers do well to make the most of these facilities. Although the use of ICT in science is well developed, data projection facilities are very limited. Plans are in place to install electronic whiteboards this year.
85. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Recent changes have had a positive effect in producing the higher standards seen in lesson, worksheets are very good and ICT facilities have continued to improve.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good scheme of work ensures that the National Curriculum requirement is met in Years 7 to 9.
- Assessment is good and pupils' progress is monitored well.
- Teaching and learning are good in the groups opting to study ICT to GCSE.
- ICT is well led and managed.
- Limited resources adversely affect the quality of learning.

Commentary

87. In teacher assessments in 2003, at the end of Year 9 results were below the national average. In GCSE examinations in 2003, the proportion of pupils gaining grades A* to C was near the national average. The proportion gaining a grade A* to G was below the national average. Current standards are well below national expectations. Work seen in science, where pupils were using ICT to record an experiment, was better than this. Standards are in line with expectations for pupils, who study ICT beyond Year 9. However, the majority of pupils in Years 10 and 11 are not taught this subject to National Curriculum requirements. These pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding do not go beyond those learnt in Years 7 to 9. Some use and practise the skills already learnt, but they are not able to tackle the more advanced skills demanded by the statutory curriculum.

88. Many pupils start in Year 7 with well below average skills, knowledge and understanding of ICT. Achievement is satisfactory, so by the end of Year 9, they have kept pace with the increasing levels of difficulty. Progress is more rapid in Years 10 and 11 for those pupils working towards GCSE qualifications. Their achievement is good. The achievement of the large number of pupils with special educational needs is such that they make satisfactory progress, as do pupils with English as an additional language. This is because of the good help and attention they receive when they are working individually on their computers. Boys and girls achieve equally well, but more boys than girls choose this subject as a GCSE option.
89. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons taught by the subject specialist are good. The department has suffered from staffing problems for some time and the lack of continuity has adversely affected the quality of learning in the long term. Learning is satisfactory because the curriculum now has many interesting elements designed to capture the pupils' imagination. However, younger pupils have less time given to the teaching of ICT than is normally expected in schools. This impedes the quality and quantity of learning as there is not enough time to ensure that topics are fully grasped and practised. Lessons are taught with enthusiasm and care, which ensures that all pupils are fully included in the learning process.
90. A recently appointed specialist leads the subject to a good standard. He has worked hard to establish better teaching and monitoring strategies in a short period of time. The management of the subject is good. All the pupils are regularly assessed to National Curriculum levels of attainment and their progress is monitored against their predicted targets. The facilities are limited, but they are well organised, so that there is access to the computers out of formal lesson times. There are also special study clubs that further improve pupils' learning and appreciation of ICT. A network manager provides further support for learning by maintaining the network to a good standard.
91. Since the last inspection there has been satisfactory improvement in spite of staffing difficulties. There has been an increase in the number of computers. This has led to a more positive attitude among pupils towards this subject than previously reported. The downward trend in attainment has now halted. At the time of the last report, all pupils were taught ICT in Years 10 and 11.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

92. Provision is satisfactory, although opportunities are missed to use ICT to enhance and extend pupils' studies. Particularly lacking are commonplace uses, for example, a database to record, manipulate and plot data or a spreadsheet for modelling and problem solving. However, there is evidence of good work in design and technology, where the pupils use a special subject website to gain information and support. However, control technology is not studied as fully as it should be. A good example of the seamless integration of ICT in other subjects was seen in a history lesson. The teacher enabled the pupils to research the recent history of South Africa and combine what they had found in a single article together with illustrations. Here, the pupils were enhancing their skills and understanding of the subject itself and of ICT. In geography there is similar good practice. A good lesson was seen where pupils presented their work experience in French, using PowerPoint. However, in music, computers are not used fully to write, edit or play back compositions. In addition, the potential of ICT for helping pupils with poor literacy and numeracy skills is not fully realised.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good relationships exist between staff and pupils.
- Most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes and motivation towards their work and make good progress.
- Leadership of the department gives clear direction to the team.
- Assessment and marking are not used systematically to tell students how they can improve their work.
- Work is not tailored to the individual needs of all learners.

Commentary

93. Pupils' work in the current Year 9 is almost in line with the national expectation. They have made satisfactory progress since they joined the school with standards as expected. At the end of both Years 9 and 11, the standard of work seen in lessons was just below national expectations. The latest GCSE results in 2003 were marginally below the national average, and whilst fluctuating in recent years, they are much improved since the last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress and their rate of achievement is also satisfactory.
94. Teaching overall is satisfactory. Where teaching is good, lessons are well planned to capture the pupils' imagination and sustain their concentration. In a few lessons, pupils lose interest when too much time is given to one activity or where students, whatever their ability, are not required to complete work to a high standard. In the best lessons, the teacher extends pupils' thinking and knowledge. They allow them time to reflect and prepare extended answers as well as allowing pupils to learn from one another's experiences, as a consequence they learn a good deal and make progress. This was characterised in a Year 11 lesson, with pupils preparing insightful and detailed presentations from different pressure groups to the issue of logging in the rainforests of Papua New Guinea. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, it is characterised by inadequate planning, expectations that are much too low and a narrow range of activities for students. There are few activities involving paired or group work, which does not allow students to have in-depth discussions. Teachers do not always provide work to challenge and interest the most and the least able pupils, as well as those for whom English is an additional language.
95. Assessment information is not used effectively and does not contribute to pupils' learning. Worthwhile homework is regularly set, but the marking of this and other work is generally unsatisfactory. Because of this, most pupils do not always know what they need to do to improve.
96. The department is developing a comprehensive set of ICT-based resources to support pupils' GCSE fieldwork assignments and works very effectively with the special educational needs department to provide additional support to less able pupils. The leadership of the department is good in that the head of department knows where he wants the department to go and is effective in building a team. However, the day-to-day management is only satisfactory as two of the areas of weakness identified at the time of the last inspection, assessment and the adaptation of work to pupils' ability, have not yet been fully tackled.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Years 7 to 9 and at GCSE, standards are below average.
- Individual support for pupils experiencing difficulties and for those with English as an additional language is effective.
- ICT is not consistently used as a learning tool.
- Systems for assessing pupils' work in Years 7 to 9 are not robust enough.
- The curriculum in Year 7 does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to consider the nature of evidence.
- Display in the departmental area is good and there are a variety of historical visits for pupils in Years 7 to 9.

Commentary

97. By the end of Year 9, standards are below average, but girls perform at a higher level than boys. Weak literacy skills have an adverse effect on pupils' attainment and many youngsters find the use of historical terminology difficult. There has been no consistent pattern of performance at GCSE for the past three years, but standards have generally been below average. However, because teachers now place more emphasis on group discussion and on work designed to meet the needs of all abilities, standards, particularly in Year 10, are rising. More competent pupils approach source material with confidence and demonstrate good skills in interpretation and evaluation. In both Years 10 and 11 there are examples of coursework of A and A* potential.
98. Achievement in all years is at least satisfactory and, from below average levels of prior attainment in Year 7, pupils make limited progress in the knowledge and understanding of the modules they cover. Where activities are varied, a significant minority of pupils make good progress in questioning the evidence available to them and often surprise themselves at what they can do. During a lesson on women's rights at the end of the First World War, for example, pupils were able to role-play interviews in relation to the Women's Social and Political Union and to question the definition of pacifism.
99. Teachers try hard to motivate their pupils and vigorously encourage them to play an active part in class discussion. On occasions, however, although their behaviour is good, pupils are not interested by the subject matter of history lessons because teachers do not use the best methods to engage pupils' interest. However, classroom management is good and, when teachers experiment with their methods, in a lesson on evacuees, for example, pupils respond positively and thoroughly enjoy the proceedings. Support for individuals is a strength and pupils with English as an additional language receive specially designed worksheets that assist them in their literacy development. Teachers recognise that the curriculum in Year 7 now needs to be amended in order to introduce pupils more quickly to the nature of evidence. They realise too that assessment practice in the first three years does not encourage effective target setting. Nonetheless, teaching is satisfactory overall and teachers demonstrate a secure knowledge of their subject.
100. Leadership and management are satisfactory and have provided an impressive historical display and a wide range of extra-curricular visits to the First World War battlefields, for example. Classrooms are small, but the walls are adorned with pupils' work. ICT is a developing strength, but is not used consistently across the department.
101. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory and positive features mentioned in the last report have been maintained. Because teachers are willing to take advantage of and act upon external advice, the department is well placed for future success.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 10 and 11, other than those in the examination option group, fail to receive religious education in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus and this failure leads to considerable underachievement.
- Good and very good teaching leads to pupils making significant gains in knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and practices, whilst also developing a range of skills.

Commentary

102. In recent years, the school has entered very small option groups for the GCSE examination and these groups have achieved standards well below the average results of schools nationally.
103. Other pupils in Years 10 and 11 have had a lesson designated as religious education once a fortnight. These lessons have been taught by non-specialist teachers, who have done useful work in contributing to pupils' personal development by for instance showing videos and holding topical discussions. There has been no written work generated in these lessons. In effect, pupils have not experienced religious education and consequently, the school has failed to meet the statutory requirement to provide religious education in accordance with the Barnet agreed syllabus in respect of these pupils. Since last September, for some pupils in Years 10 and 11, and since this January for the remaining pupils in these year groups, religious education lessons have been provided by specialist teachers, who are teaching in accordance with the agreed syllabus. However, the shortage of time for the subject – less than half that recommended by the agreed syllabus – and the expectation that written work is not done, lead to continuing low standards and serious underachievement.
104. The school has not, until this year, assessed the attainment of pupils in Years 7 to 9 and new assessment procedures, introduced this year, are not yet completely reliable. However, on the basis of work seen during the inspection, it is clear that attainment at the end of Year 9 is well below the expectations of both the agreed syllabus and the non-statutory national expectations. Much teaching of religious education in the year preceding the inspection was done by temporary, non-specialist teachers and this is likely to account for the low attainment and under-achievement by pupils in Years 8 and 9.
105. Currently, achievement in lessons is satisfactory for pupils in Years 7 to 9 and this is raising standards, albeit from a very low base. Achievement by pupils in the examination option group is good.
106. Teaching and learning are now good, since the subject is taught by two experienced and innovative teachers. One of these teachers only joined the school at the beginning of the calendar year. Lessons are now characterised by good planning and good relationships, so pupils are engaged and enthused by the work they do. Both teachers also have experience of teaching English, bringing from that subject methods promoting literacy for all pupils and of particular benefit to pupils learning English as an additional language. In a very good lesson seen with a Year 8 class, the importance of Jesus to Christians was approached through a reading of a poem by G.K Chesterton. Although the class initially found the poem incomprehensible, very skilful teaching guided them through a collaborative working out of both a literal and a metaphorical understanding of the poem. Pupils' work is now assessed regularly, and marking is regular, encouraging and helpful to pupils.
107. Leadership and management of religious education are now satisfactory overall and leadership of the subject is good. For this academic year, a very experienced teacher has been put in charge of the subject. She has greatly increased the numbers opting to take the examination course both this year and next. Much subject documentation has been recently

produced and systems to monitor pupil progress and the quality of teaching and learning are being put in place. These improvements in the management of the subject, if sustained and developed, should impact positively on standards. There has been satisfactory improvement in this subject since the last inspection report, with most concerns raised by that report having been addressed to some extent.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations.
- Leadership unites teachers in a common sense of purpose to raise standards.
- Assessment in Years 7 to 9 is used to track and monitor pupil progress and attainment.
- The innovative subject website supports teaching and learning.
- The use of computer-aided design and manufacture is not embedded in the curriculum.
- There is no extension of the experience of pupils through extra-curricular activities or industrial links.
- The use of display is not effective in promoting high standards and expectations of designing and making.

Commentary

108. The results of teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2003 show that standards are close to the national expectation for design and technology. In lessons, standards are above expectations and achievement is good. This is because there is a good focus on producing quality products and pupils gain a good breadth of experience, using a wide range of practical skills and materials. Design skills are developed well. However, pupils have a limited experience of computer-aided manufacture.
109. GCSE results in 2003 were below the national average for all the design and technology courses. However, in the two previous years, results in resistant materials courses had been well above the national average. In lessons, standards are just above average and achievement is good. In Year 11, the lack of interest and motivation of a few pupils is having a negative impact on the standards achieved. Where standards are good, for example in product design, concepts are creatively explored and they are graphically well presented, with pupils making good use of ICT. This good practice is not effectively shared across the department so as to raise standards. Computer-aided design and manufacture is not well embedded to raise the standard of work or to gain higher grades.
110. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Where lessons are good they are planned well, expectations are high and lesson objectives are shared with pupils. In lessons that are satisfactory, planning is adequate, but there is a lack of challenge in the activities. Teachers have a good working relationship with pupils and this contributes to their good progress in lessons. Pupils with learning difficulties, including those learning English as an additional language, are well supported and make good progress.
111. The leadership of the department is good, with effective teamwork and a clear commitment to raising standards. The management of the department is good and there are clear schemes of work and policies in place. Assessment practice is well established and consistent across Years 7 to 9 to monitor and track the attainment and progress of pupils. Information from assessment is also used to inform planning. In Years 10 and 11, assessment is successfully used to inform pupils on actions for improvement. The head of department effectively monitors and evaluates the performance of the department. Development planning is good, with key issues identified to raise achievement. There are no extra-curricular activities or industrial links to extend the learning and experience of pupils.

112. The accommodation for design and technology is good and well organised. The resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory, although there are insufficient facilities for computer-aided design and manufacture. The development of a subject website is an excellent initiative and is already demonstrating its potential for supporting teaching and learning very effectively. Display is generally good, but it is not used to identify clearly standards and expectations for GCSE coursework.
113. There has been good progress since the previous inspection in improving the quality of teaching and establishing good assessment practice in Years 7 to 9. However, there is still too limited use of ICT and there are no extra-curricular opportunities.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Drama

Provision in drama is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and make very good progress.
- Pupils respond with commitment and enthusiasm to the stimulating and challenging teaching.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- There are only limited opportunities for pupils to study the technical aspects of the subject.
- Pupils' learning opportunities are restricted in some lessons because the subject is taught in a classroom.

Commentary

114. The proportion of pupils attaining a grade in the A* to C range in the 2003 GCSE examinations was well above the national average for boys and girls. This represents very good achievement because, until the present academic year, the subject has had limited teaching time in Years 7, 8 and 9, and because pupils come to the school with below average communication skills. It also represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection when attainment was below average and progress was unsatisfactory.
115. Pupils from a rich diversity of cultures choose to study the subject to GCSE level. This enables them to bring different perspectives to their work and to learn from each other through lively discussions. The work seen during the course of the inspection is well above average in standard in Years 10 and 11. Achievement is very good for all pupils, including those whose heritage language is not English and those with special educational needs. The work undertaken with the younger pupils is also of a high standard and their progress is good. Pupils in all years work well collaboratively and are able to communicate ideas and emotions using a range of drama techniques. They have good evaluative skills. The work they do makes a significant contribution to their personal development and the issues they explore through performance contribute to their moral and social awareness.
116. Teaching is very good because it is both stimulating and challenging. The head of department is a subject specialist, who is well supported by an experienced drama teacher. They both put across their own enthusiasm for the subject. They have established very good working relationships in the classroom and ensure that pupils of all competencies are actively involved in preparing for and contributing to performances. Expectations are high. There is good provision for pupils' cultural awareness because of the diverse range of texts used in teaching. There is also a wide range of activities available to pupils outside of taught time to broaden their understanding and enjoyment of the subject.
117. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. Significant improvements have been made to the curriculum in recent years to meet pupils' different needs. The subject has been particularly successful, for example, in getting boys in Years 10 and 11 to perform well

and attain high standards. There is a strong sense of common purpose pervading all aspects of the department's work because of effective teamwork. Rigorous systems are in place for monitoring and evaluating pupils' work and taking appropriate action. There are two areas of concern in the management of the subject. At the present time, resources are not available for pupils to study the technical side of the subject. Secondly, there are occasions when the subject is taught in an English classroom and this restricts pupils' learning opportunities.

118. There is the capacity to improve further on provision because teachers are self-critical and committed to on-going professional development.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards attained by pupils in Year 11 are above average and their achievement is very good.
- High-quality teaching and rigorous planning challenge all pupils to do as well as they can.
- The department provides the best possible musical environment for all pupils.
- Pupils enjoy all the musical opportunities provided.
- Access to computer and recording equipment is too restricted.

Commentary

119. Standards are above average by the end of Year 9. Pupils' musical ability is well below average on entry to the school, so their levels of achievement are very good. This is so for all groups, including those pupils, whose heritage language is not English or, who have special educational needs. Currently, boys' attainment is higher than that of girls, a reversal of the situation reported at the last inspection. The standard of work by the current Year 11 is above average. Performance in the 2003 GCSE examination was above average, with many pupils attaining their best grade of all in music. This maintains an improving trend in results over the last three years, with similar achievement by boys and girls. Pupils perform confidently, but many of their compositions use only simple melodies and harmonic patterns. More competent pupils are able to compose showing understanding of texture and compound key signatures.

120. Pupils achieve very well because of the consistent, very good and challenging teaching. This is characterised by comprehensive musical knowledge and teachers' high expectations. They are very competent musicians, able to demonstrate tasks clearly. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are motivated to do their best. Working relationships are strong. Pupils are all involved and enjoy supporting each other through paired and group work. Musical skills are developed systematically because lessons are very well planned. Questioning is rigorous; it is used to reinforce pupils' understanding and use of musical language. Despite an increased number of school computers, there is currently restricted access to them, and none are available in the music rooms. This limits the variety of activities that can be undertaken during lessons. The qualities of current recording facilities are poor. Keyboards lack the facilities for pupils to record and refine their compositions.

121. Leadership and management are very good. There is a clear sense of direction for the department, consistency of approach and strong teamwork. The attainment of different groups of pupils is monitored carefully and this information helps teachers to plan carefully. Through the various extra-curricular ensembles, pupils enjoy the social opportunities of making music together in the school and local community. The department provides a good musical environment for pupils. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good because standards are now higher and the quality of teaching is better.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 9 and are well above average by the end of Year 11.
- Very good opportunities are provided to examine art and design across a wide range of cultures.
- Leadership encourages everyone in the department to strive for improvement.
- Pupils' learning is very well supported by thorough marking and advice on how to improve
- The improvement since the last inspection has been very good.

Commentary

122. On entry to the school, pupils have had a very varied experience of art and design and standards are below average. By the end of Year 9, standards are above average and pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 11, standards are well above average and pupils achieve very well. GCSE results over time have varied, from being at a very high standard to the present well above average standard attained in the 2003 examination. The attainment of boys has improved over time and is now similar to girls.
123. Teaching and learning are very good in all years. Through the good procedures for assessment, use of information, and the very well developed schemes of work, the progress of pupils is well supported. Marking is thorough; although pupils are not always given levels and grades at the time the work is marked. Very good opportunities are given for pupils to develop their work further at lunch times and after school, as well as through well-focused visits. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make very good progress since there is very good inclusion of these pupils in all lessons. Very good attention is given to the development of pupils' literacy skills through displays of key words in the classrooms and the very thorough verbal and written explanations that teachers give regarding both their meaning and their application to the work in progress. Numeracy is not so well developed. There are few examples in pupils' work where it is applied.
124. Under the very good leadership and management of the head of department, there is a very good team approach evident among staff and pupils. This has supported the very good improvement since the last inspection and the consistently high standards. Overall, resources are good. The recent provision of a suite of computers for use by the department will increase the range of opportunities for pupils to use ICT. Opportunities are at present too limited since there is no computer available for use in the classrooms. Very good attention is given to pupils expressing the art and design of their own culture and examining cultures other than their own. High-quality displays around the school demonstrate this curricular strength and are used well to celebrate the pupils' high level of success. For example, a painting of a very high standard, on display in the entrance foyer of the school, expresses very well some of the main influences across time in the development of black culture.
125. Since the last inspection, standards and achievements, in particular that of boys, have improved. The quality of teaching has improved and the pupils' attitudes have improved, now being both very good overall.

Dance

126. Two lessons of dance were sampled. Overall, teaching is satisfactory and though standards are below average, pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Teachers and pupils are enthusiastic about dance, which is an important component of the performing arts college.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision for physical education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because teaching is very good.
- Assessment for learning is used very effectively to monitor progress, set targets and inform planning.
- Pupils have positive attitudes and relationships are very good.
- There is a very good extra-curricular programme and participation levels are high.
- The use of ICT to support learning is underdeveloped.
- The range of curricular provision in Years 10 and 11 is too limited.

Commentary

127. Pupils enter the school with standards lower than expectations and achieve well throughout Years 7 to 9. Standards at the end of Year 9 are above expectations because teaching is very good. A significant number of students reach high standards and show good skills in athletics and batting in rounders.
128. In Years 10 and 11, standards are above national averages and achievement is good. In 2003, standards were below average in GCSE, but a significant number of pupils entering achieve better in physical education than in their other subjects. Achievement is therefore good. Pupils achieve well because teaching is very good. Teachers have high expectations of students' work, behaviour and attitudes, and this promotes good achievement. The pace of learning is always brisk and lessons are well planned with clear objectives communicated to pupils. Each lesson has an element of fitness and emphasises skills acquisition. Selecting and applying these skills and evaluating performance are also included. Attitudes to the subject are good and pupils work hard because they receive plenty of encouragement and support. Very good relationships exist between pupils and between staff and pupils. Teachers have good classroom management skills and good subject knowledge, and use this very effectively to promote learning. Assessment procedures are very good and ensure that pupils understand their targets. Marking provides good guidance for pupils on how to improve the standard of their work. The use of ICT to support learning is underdeveloped. Homework is set regularly and is used effectively to consolidate and extend learning at GCSE level. Careful attention is paid to pupils with special educational needs or, who are new to speaking English. Teachers know and understand the needs of these pupils and provide good support. Development of the provision for gifted and talented pupils is in its early stages. These pupils are likely to benefit particularly from existing links with local sports clubs. The school is benefiting from the emerging role of the school sports co-ordinator. Resources and on-site facilities are good.
129. Leadership and management are very good. There is a clear vision that gives realistic direction to the work of the department in broadening the curriculum and raising standards. The head of department provides an excellent role-model in all her work, particularly in the classroom, through her own commitment and high standards. She provides very good support, when necessary, to both staff and pupils and successfully promotes a collegiate approach to planning. She fully understands the necessity of developing further strategies for formally monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and the potential of increased use of ICT to impact positively on attainment. Additionally, she appreciates the importance of data analysis for informing planning, setting targets and monitoring progress, and the need to extend the range of curriculum provision in Years 10 and 11. Organisation is very good and this is reflected in all departmental documentation. This is a vibrant, hardworking department, which collectively promotes its subject in a very positive manner. It is well placed to make further improvements.
130. Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. The quality of the teaching has improved. Assessment procedures are fully in place. The GCSE course has been successfully

introduced. There is more evaluation by pupils of their own work and extra-curricular provision has been extended.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many examples of good practice in the development and assessment of personal skills.
- Monitoring of the effectiveness of the programme and the assessment model is not sufficiently robust.
- Pupils are not made sufficiently aware of citizenship elements in their curriculum and activities in and out of school.
- There is good recognition of pupils' contribution to the life of the school.

Commentary

131. Attainment shows gradual improvement from Year 7 to Year 9, where over half the pupils are performing as expected or better. These standards are maintained in Years 10 and 11. Achievement in all years is satisfactory.
132. In lessons where citizenship issues have been identified, teaching and learning are good. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, contribute well to discussion. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported by fellow pupils, who speak their mother tongue. In a geography lesson, good use of role-play in presenting the arguments of different factions in an environmental conflict supported good learning. Pupils developed the skills of appreciating the equal validity of conflicting points of view. Although teachers are encouraged to specify the citizenship elements in lessons, the varying degree of awareness on the part of the pupils indicates that this is not done consistently. Lessons seen in some subjects contained citizenship elements, but they were not promoted as such in the planning or teaching. A system of self-assessment helps pupils to evaluate their own learning and enables them to contribute effectively to their annual review. Rewards and recognition for participation in the life of the school contribute positively to the student profiles maintained by the careers team and are also used by pupils as a record of achievement in planning their progression post-16.
133. Leadership and management of citizenship are satisfactory. The recently appointed co-ordinator has inherited a well-established scheme and has acknowledged, and is beginning to remedy, the shortcomings, which have arisen since its inception. The scheme has not been sufficiently reviewed with feedback to and from departments, or evaluated for its effectiveness. The direct contribution of departments to the teaching of citizenship is currently inconsistent and there is uncertainty as to where citizenship and personal, social and health education overlap. The current monitoring of the programme on an annual basis is not frequent enough.
134. **Personal, social and health education** was also sampled. In response to the key issue at the previous inspection, provision is now **satisfactory**. The programme is well put together, with effective workbooks for teachers and pupils. Sex and relationships, as well as drugs awareness and alcohol, are fully covered in all years. In the lessons seen, teaching was good overall. In the best lessons, the approach used by the teachers promoted mature and enthusiastic discussion, which enabled very good learning. This ensured that pupils were effectively fulfilling the requirements of the course. Standards and achievement are therefore satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Teachers are allowed to be flexible about the order in which they teach the content of the programme and in the methods they use. The current monitoring process is not, however, sufficiently rigorous to ensure complete coverage of a whole year's programme.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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