

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **NORHAM COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE**

North Shields, Tyne and Wear

LEA area: North Tyneside

Unique reference number: 108628

Headteacher: Mrs L. Halbert

Lead inspector: Mr D. Cox

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 May 2004

Inspection number: 258714

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

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### **Terms used in this report**

*Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 are at **Key Stage 3**, having transferred in most cases from their primary schools after Year 6. Students in Years 10 and 11 are at **Key Stage 4** of their education. Students in Years 7 to 11 follow courses and Programmes of Study set out in the National Curriculum. A course of religious education is a requirement for all ages at school.*

*At the end of Year 9, students aged 14 take national tests in English, mathematics and science. In all subjects of the National Curriculum, teachers also make their own assessments of what the students know, understand and can do at age 14. At the end of Year 11, students aged 16 may take examinations in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (**GCSE**). Others may follow courses leading to the award of the General National Vocational Qualification (**GNVQ**) or the National Vocational Qualification (**NVQ**).*

*Inspectors judge the **standards** reached by students by comparing their attainments with national test and examination results, or by the levels of performance expected for students of the same age nationally. The judgements about students' **achievements** reflect whether they are doing well enough. These judgements take account of the educational **value added** over time. In this report, similar schools are defined as those having similar standards at the start of each stage of learning.*

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Comprehensive  
School category: Community  
Age range of students: 11 - 16  
Gender of students: Mixed  
Number on roll: 899

School address: Alnwick Avenue  
North Shields  
Tyne and Wear

Postcode: NE29 7BU

Telephone number: 0191 2005062

Fax number: 0191 2005065

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Philip Newsham

Date of previous inspection: 27 April 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Norham Community College is about the same size as most other secondary schools and educates students between the ages of 11 and 16. The college is situated in North Shields, Tyne and Wear. The college is in an area of social deprivation, many of the communities where students live demonstrate a range of features of significant disadvantage and this is reflected in the high proportion of students who are eligible to claim free school meals. The college population reflects a wide socio-economic background but is well below average overall. The college's intake is comprehensive and represents, in the 899 students on roll (a large increase in the roll compared to the previous inspection report, 751), the full range of abilities. There are slightly more boys than girls.

The percentage of students' mother tongue not or believed not to be English is low and there are two students that need support. The percentage of students identified as having special educational needs is above average and the percentage of students having statements of Special Educational Need is well above average. Most students are on the register have moderate learning difficulties and social and emotional and behavioural needs. The college has a designated unit (Communications Resource Base) to cater for students with speech, language and communication difficulties. Currently there are 24 on roll, 13 of whom are on the autistic spectrum. Overall attainment on entry is well below average.

The college is a specialist technology college, it is also part of the Excellence in Cities programme. The college has gained awards for Investors in People and also the Granada Award for Community Involvement. The college is part of the 'extended schools' programme.

Over the last two years there has been an unusually high turnover in teaching staff.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10297	D. Cox	Lead inspector	
9974	D. Singh	Lay inspector	
33139	M. Wilson	Team inspector	Mathematics.
19596	B. Treacy	Team inspector	English.
4145	C. Harrison	Team inspector	Science.
15208	A. Briggs	Team inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT). Music.
8090	F. Turns	Team inspector	Art and design.
8552	W. Hart	Team inspector	Design and technology.
15462	C. Blakemore	Team inspector	Geography. History.
24887	Y. Salmons	Team inspector	Modern languages.
4317	K. Madrell	Team inspector	Religious education. Citizenship.
18462	B. Jones	Team inspector	Physical education.
3943	D. Innes	Team inspector	Special educational needs.

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

The college provides a **satisfactory** standard of education and **satisfactory** value for money. Teaching, students' achievement and management are satisfactory; leadership is good. Leadership of the headteacher is very good.

The college's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher, together with the senior leadership team, is providing inspirational leadership and there is a clear strategy for moving the college forward.
- Below average attendance has an adverse effect on students' achievement.
- Many students have weak literacy skills that are a barrier to their achievement in many subjects.
- The way that the college organises its curriculum is both exciting and highly innovative. The 'extended school' provision is excellent.
- The achievement of students in the communications base is excellent in terms of learning and personal development.
- Students' achievement in ICT is unsatisfactory in Years 10 and 11 as a result of very little teaching of ICT.
- Students' achievement in music is unsatisfactory because they do not receive their full statutory entitlement.

Progress since the previous inspection has been **satisfactory**. Many of the key issues have been resolved successfully although weaknesses remain in improving students' literacy and ICT skills. The college has gained many national awards and has introduced an innovative curriculum. Standards are rising in line with the national trend in Years 7 to 9 but below the national trend in Years 10 and 11.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Performance compared with:		all schools			similar schools
		2001	2002	2003	2003
Year 11	GCSE/GNVQ examinations	D	E	E	E

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
For Year 11, similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 9.*

Students' achievement is **satisfactory**. Standards are well below average by the end of Years 9 and 11. Levels of literacy and numeracy are well below average. Weak levels of literacy and below average attendance adversely affect standards and achievement in many subjects. Students achieve very well in drama. Within the 'extended college' scheme, many students achieve well. Students achieve exceedingly well in the communications base as a result of the high quality care and attention they receive. Students' achievement in ICT is unsatisfactory in Years 10 and 11. Students' achievement in music is unsatisfactory.

Results in the 2003 GCSE examinations were well below average and students' achievement would appear to be poor. However, this masks a complex picture. Because of the remarkably wide curriculum in Years 10 and 11, 18 per cent of students last year did not study for eight GCSEs (this is much higher than the norm) but many took more appropriate qualifications which currently are not included in national benchmarks. For those students who did sit eight GCSEs, their achievement was satisfactory. The trend in results is below the national trend but more and more students at Norham are taking alternative qualifications that do not count towards national benchmarks.

Students' personal development and their overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **good**. Students' attitudes and behaviour are good and complemented by their constructive and purposeful relationships. These qualities are fostered by the good provision for personal development, which ensures most students continue to learn in a calm, friendly and welcoming environment. Attendance is improving, but still below average. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The college provides a **satisfactory** quality of education. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers prepare their lessons very well and use engaging activities to motivate students. They manage students very well so that students know what is expected. Teachers do not focus enough on improving students' levels of literacy. Marking does not always inform students of how to improve their work. Teaching within the communications base is excellent. The quality of the curriculum is unsatisfactory because it does not meet statutory requirements although the curriculum is remarkably broad and relevant. Good attention is given to the care and welfare of students.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The quality of leadership is **good**; the leadership of the headteacher is very good. Management is satisfactory. Governance of the college is unsatisfactory. The headteacher, together with the senior leadership team, is providing inspirational leadership and there is a clear strategy for moving the college forward. Leadership and management of the special needs department are very good. The leadership of ICT, music and literacy is unsatisfactory. Governors do not monitor the work of the college rigorously enough and not all statutory requirements are met.

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

*Comments are based on those students and parents who responded to the questionnaires or attended the parents' meeting.* The college has the confidence of parents. Parents' views indicate that their children settle in well and staff expect students to work hard although they do have concerns regarding behaviour and being kept informed. Students are also supportive of the college; the student council and the 'buddies' ensure students are listened to, treated equally and with respect.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve students' attendance.
  - Implement strategies to improve students' literacy skills.
  - Improve students' achievement in ICT.
  - Improve students' achievement in music.
- and, to meet statutory requirements:
- Ensure students have their full curriculum entitlement.
  - Provide a statutory collective act of worship.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Students join the college with standards of attainment that are well below average and by the time they leave college their standards remain well below average; achievement is satisfactory.

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

- Below average attendance has an adverse effect on students' learning and achievement.
- Many students have weak literacy skills that are a barrier to their achievement in many subjects.
- Students achieve very well in drama because of the very good teaching they receive.
- Within the 'extended college' scheme, many students achieve well.
- Students achieve exceedingly well in the communications base as a result of the high quality care and attention they receive.
- Students' achievement in ICT is unsatisfactory in Years 10 and 11 as a result of insufficient access to ICT.
- Students' achievement in music is unsatisfactory because they do not cover the requirements of the National Curriculum.

#### **Commentary**

1. By the end of Year 9, standards are well below average in most subjects with the exception of citizenship, history, German and religious education where standards are below average. Standards are average in art and design, drama and physical education. Students achieve very well in drama and well in art and design, German and religious education. Achievement is satisfactory in all other subjects with the exception of music where it is unsatisfactory.
2. By the end of Year 11, standards are well below average in English, geography, ICT and music. Standards are below average in all other subjects with the exception of physical education where they are average. Students achieve well in mathematics, science, German, religious education and business studies. Their achievement is satisfactory in all other subjects with the exception of ICT and music where it is unsatisfactory.
3. Students achieve very well in drama because of the very good teaching they receive. Students are enthused by the teaching and appreciate the extra work put in by teachers during whole-college productions and concerts; this motivates them to achieve very well.
4. The standards observed during the inspection do not always match with the 2003 GCSE examination results. The main reason for this is the high turn-over in teaching staff in the past year. For example, last year, GCSE results in history were low but standards seen during the inspection were below average; this is because the new staff have focused on strategies for raising standards and improving achievement.
5. One great strength of the college is the 'extended college' scheme. Many students who have become disaffected with education or who are vulnerable are provided with a safe and secure environment in which they can be reintegrated into college life. Many of these students achieve well and gain qualifications.
6. Students with special educational needs achieve well because teachers match work well to the needs of these students. The achievement of students in the communications base is excellent in terms of learning and personal development. They are properly pleased with successes in classroom studies and in activities which include trampolining and hosting events such as



coffee mornings for teachers, parents and visitors to the college. The small number of students with English as an additional language achieve very well because of the well targeted support they receive.

7. The college's attendance rate remains below the national average, despite the significant improvement in recent years, and absenteeism continues to have an adverse effect on achievement. The effect of absenteeism can be seen in many subjects, with large gaps in students' coursework.
8. Standards of literacy are well below average and have an adverse effect on the standards attained in many subjects. The college's strategy for teaching literacy across the curriculum is unsatisfactory because practice is inconsistent. The work of many students is marred by errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar but many of these are overlooked in teachers' marking.
9. In music, students underachieve because they do not receive their full statutory National Curriculum entitlement. Whilst students have great fun making music, large sections of the National Curriculum are missing and parts of the GCSE course are not covered adequately.
10. Students underachieve in ICT in Years 10 and 11 because the college does not ensure all aspects of ICT are covered for all students because they are not taught the requirements of the National Curriculum. Students are not provided with enough opportunities to practise ICT skills within subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.4 (30.3)	33.4 (33.3)
mathematics	31.8 (31.5)	35.4 (34.7)
science	30.7 (30.8)	33.6 (33.3)

*There were 190 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	24 (22)	52 (50)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	85 (82)	91 (91)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	93 (91)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	25.7 (24.7)	34.7 (34.8)

*There were 177 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

11. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were well below average in English, mathematics and science. Students' achievement is satisfactory given their results when they were in Year 6. The trend in results is in line with the national trend.
12. Results in the 2003 GCSE examinations were well below average and students' achievement would appear to be poor. However, this masks a complex picture. Because of the remarkably wide curriculum in Years 10 and 11, 18 per cent of students last year did not study for eight GCSEs (this is much higher than the norm) but many took more appropriate qualifications which currently are not included in national benchmarks. For those students who did sit eight GCSEs, their achievement was satisfactory. The trend in results is below the national trend but more and more students at Norham are taking alternative qualifications that do not count

towards national benchmarks. The college set very demanding targets last year for GCSE but fell short of these targets.

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

Students' attitudes and behaviour are good and complemented by their constructive and purposeful relationships. These qualities are fostered by the good provision for personal development, which ensures most students continue to learn in a calm, friendly and welcoming environment. Attendance is improving, but still below average. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Attendance is below average and adversely affects achievement.
- The moral development of students is very good.
- Good attitudes, behaviour and effective relationships mean that students want to learn.
- Students' personal development is well promoted and there is a strong sense of community in which all students are included.
- Exclusions have fallen in comparison with previous years.

### **Commentary**

13. The headteacher's influence is very evident in the college's work to promote students' achievement and personal development. With her team of dedicated staff she ensures that all students continue to have a thirst for knowledge and behave appropriately. Staff and students value each other and pursue their interests in learning by participating in different sports, visiting places of interest and extend their learning through the 'breakfast' club and after college clubs. This partnership helps to raise students' self-esteem and confidence, and ensures a stimulating environment for learning, both inside and outside lessons.
14. However, in some lessons and around the college there are a small minority of students who find learning difficult and are easily distracted. They can be noisy and sometimes boisterous but good teaching and classroom management, as well as the good discipline of more mature students, ensure that the good behaviour is fast becoming the norm. As a result, exclusions since the previous inspection have fallen.

### ***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	883	111	5
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	5	1	0

Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
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The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

15. Social development is good. Most students are able to demonstrate an understanding of the effect of their actions on others. There are many opportunities for students to show initiative and behave responsibly both in and outside of lessons. For example, work experience in Year 11, the 'buddy system' and college council. During the inspection, a significant number of very mature and confident Year 7 and 8 students, ensured visitors were responsibly escorted to their appropriate destination. These experiences have a stimulating effect on students' moral and social development and ensure they become responsible citizens of the college and wider community.
16. Breakfast, break and lunch-time clubs provide social opportunities and safe havens for those who want or need them. Each adds to students' enjoyment of college and enriches their contacts with other students and adults such as teachers, mentors and learning support assistants. They contribute significantly to the ethos of the college as a community which cares about all its members.
17. Students' personal development is good. The college provides a planned programme of assemblies which support students' personal development well. Personal development is also well developed in religious education and through the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programmes. Students are well aware of right and wrong actions and most have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. The spiritual development of students is satisfactory. Religious education provides many good activities promoting the spiritual development of students but similar opportunities are not found in other subjects. Overall, students' cultural development is good. A range of visits extends students' cultural knowledge and understanding. Cultural development is promoted well in modern languages, religious education, history and geography. In religious education there is a well-planned element of multicultural education in lessons, but most other subjects have not approached this systematically.
18. Attendance has significantly improved since the previous inspection, but some parents and students do not value the education system and fail to support the college policy on attendance and punctuality. This situation affects teaching and learning, achievement and the personal development of a significant minority of students. Despite this drawback, the college has a number of proactive strategies which are working effectively to improve and promote attendance. However, more rigorous action is needed to discourage internal truancy and ensure all students to arrive on time for lessons and registration.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (2002-2003) (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.6	School data	1.3
National data (secondary)	7.2	National data (secondary)	1.1

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

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The college provides a satisfactory quality of education. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The quality of the curriculum is unsatisfactory because it does not meet statutory requirements although it is remarkably broad and relevant. Good attention is given to the care and welfare of students.

**Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory as is assessment.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers prepare their lessons very well and use engaging activities to motivate students.
- Teachers manage students very well so that students know what is expected.
- Teachers do not focus enough on improving students' levels of literacy.
- Teaching within the communications base is excellent.
- Learning support assistants are effectively deployed and provide a high standard of resource.
- Teachers do not make enough use of ICT.
- Teaching is very good in drama in Years 7 to 9 and as a consequence students achieve very well.
- Marking does not always inform students of how to improve their work.
- Students are underachieving in music because of unsatisfactory teaching.

## Commentary

19. The quality of teaching in Years 7 to 9 is very good in drama. It is good in all other subjects with the exception of English, mathematics, design and technology, ICT and physical education where it is satisfactory and music where it is unsatisfactory.
20. In Years 10 and 11, teaching is good in all subjects except English, design and technology, geography, ICT and physical education where it is satisfactory and music where it is unsatisfactory.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 126 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (2)	26 (20)	52 (41)	37 (30)	6 (5)	3 (2)	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.*

21. A key feature of the most effective teaching is the thoroughness of teachers' planning so that students are motivated and engaged fully. Teachers use a wide range of interesting and imaginative resources and activities to attract and hold students' concentration. They make full use of all the various ways in which students learn. Focused questioning challenges students and requires them to think about issues. Teaching is enthusiastic and knowledgeable.
22. A strength of the teaching is the classroom management of students, which is very good; teachers create an environment in which students want to work. Teachers manage students very well so that students know what is expected and respond positively to the challenges provided. Teachers build positive relationships with their students. As a result, the large majority of lessons are characterised by good behaviour and a productive working atmosphere where learning is valued.
23. The teaching of special educational needs students is good. Teaching within the communications base is excellent. Learning support assistants are effectively deployed and provide a high standard of resource, preparation and student support, and also help with work display. Assistants have a good understanding of the students with whom they work and use their skills well to help students to learn. When taught in full classes, students with behavioural problems in particular respond well to their guidance. They concentrate and behave well which benefits their own learning and that of their classmates.
24. In drama, students' achievement is very good because there is a valuable emphasis upon improving communication skills. This includes non-verbal communication as well as speech.

25. When teaching is unsatisfactory or less effective, it is characterised by teaching being slow to engage students' interests. Whilst the vast majority of students quietly get on with their studies, some students become bored and, in consequence, misbehave. Teachers do not always inform students what learning is to take place and occasionally, lesson time is not efficiently used.
26. Marking is superficial and fails to address the errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar in students' work and does not provide them with the guidance, or the insistence upon high standards, that students need if they are to improve. There is not a consistent approach to improving students' literacy skills.
27. The use of ICT across the college is inconsistent. In geography and history, the Internet is used well for research and appropriate information is selected and presented using word processing and presentation software. However, in most other subjects, teachers do not provide students with enough opportunities to use computers. Not enough use is made of computers to help students with the presentation of their work or to improve literacy skills.
28. In music, whilst overall the teaching is unsatisfactory and results in unsatisfactory learning, there are times when it can be exciting and inspirational. However, this level of excitement rarely continues because planning is weak and work is not modified to meet the needs of all students. Many lessons do not fully involve all students. Teaching does not always have learning at its core and there is frequently not enough focus on achievement.
29. The college has a wealth of high quality data on the attainment and achievement of students. The use of such data is satisfactory. The picture is an improving one as a result of the college currently implementing a range of effective strategies covering all aspects of assessment, recording and reporting. Good departmental assessment practice was seen in science, physical education, modern foreign languages and religious education but it was unsatisfactory in music. The use of National Curriculum levels and assessment criteria is also inconsistent across the college.
30. The college makes very good use of information provided by national and other tests taken before or just after students enter the college to identify students needing special help. It responds well to concerns expressed by teachers and parents. An up-to-date register of students is maintained which accurately indicates different levels of difficulty and how they are being tackled. This represents improvement on faults identified in the previous report.

## **The curriculum**

The breadth and relevance of the curriculum is good but it does not meet statutory requirements and it is therefore unsatisfactory overall. There is a good range of extra clubs and activities. The college has adequate resources, staffing and accommodation. The college fails to provide a statutory act of collective worship.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- In Years 10 and 11, there is a remarkable range of courses for students to choose from.
- The 'extended school' scheme is excellent.
- The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 does not meet statutory requirements for ICT.
- There is not a consistent approach to improving students' literacy skills.
- There is very good provision for students with special educational needs in Years 10 and 11.
- The college is innovative in its approach to the curriculum.
- The curriculum does not meet statutory requirements for music.
- The range of extra activities is good.
- The college does not provide a daily act of collective worship.

## Commentary

31. The way that the college organises its curriculum is both exciting and highly innovative. Central to the college's philosophy is that the curriculum should meet the needs of all students. Curriculum innovation is excellent. For example, the 'extended school' scheme integrates the education, medical, social and human services that are essential to meeting the needs of students, young people and their families on college premises or at nearby locations. This scheme is bringing vulnerable students back into education and in some cases these students are now acting as mentors for other students.
32. In Years 10 and 11, there is a strong emphasis on vocational education. Vocational courses include 'Increased Flexibility' courses. There are very good links with local colleges that provide students with the opportunity to follow courses in hair and beauty, animal care and other relevant courses.
33. There is good provision for extra-curricular activities. From the early morning breakfast club which many students attend through to after college clubs, students have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities; the numbers involved in activities of all types is in excess of that usually seen in schools. As well as clubs catering for students' interests, there are also many extra academic classes. There are also a good range of musical, drama and dance activities which occur after college.
34. The college's strategy for teaching literacy across the curriculum is unsatisfactory because there is such inconsistency. However, a more coherent approach is now being taken although the impact has not yet been felt across the college.
35. The college does not meet statutory requirements for ICT in Years 10 and 11 because the requirements of the National Curriculum are not adequately covered for all students. In music, National Curriculum requirements are not met.
36. Provision for students with special educational needs is good overall; the curriculum makes very good provision for these students in Years 10 and 11 and offers an appropriate range of courses which are relevant to students' needs. Width of choice is increased by the availability of work-related courses taught in combination with local colleges and schools. Students can also choose an increasing number of GCSE courses and successful ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) courses provide interest and challenge. The timetable has become very flexible so that at this stage students can follow combinations of courses which increasingly meet their individual wants and needs. Lower attaining students in Years 7 to 9 are taught in smaller groups than others; sometimes in English very much smaller. This concentration into smaller groups enables efficient use of resources including deployment of learning support assistants. Withdrawal from lessons for help with learning basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics is kept to the essential minimum and care is taken to avoid harm to progress in subjects from which students are withdrawn. Withdrawal, often on a one-to-one basis, helps to build students' confidence, as well as raise levels of performance.
37. The learning support centre has been successfully developed as a means of helping students returning from exclusion to be reintegrated successfully into the college. It helps others to avoid exclusion or provides time in which problems which have interfered with learning can be solved.

## Care, guidance and support

The quality of care, welfare and support and guidance is good. The provision promotes personal development well and motivates students. The college has good systems for seeking students' views. The student council and the 'buddies' ensure students are listened to, treated equally and with respect.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The work of staff is rightly valued by students and parents and ensures students are well supported, trusted and cared for.
- Careers education is good and enables students to make informed choices about their next stage of education, training and employment.
- The arrangements for child protection are secure and contribute significantly to the welfare and well-being of students.

### **Commentary**

38. Relationships between students and the adults who work with them in classrooms, the breakfast club, through after college activities and through assemblies are based on trust. Students are taught to be thoughtful, caring and sympathetic towards others. They know who to turn to if they have problems and value the system of rewards and the time teachers give to activities outside lessons. Teachers recognise and celebrate students' achievements. They encourage and achieve mutual respect, cooperation and commitment from students in their care. This enables students to learn in a calm, safe and secure environment, as well as develop a sense of belonging to the college community.
39. The college has a wealth of information on students' personal developments. The pastoral team use this information well to guide students on aspects such as option choices in Year 9 and post-16 options.
40. The careers provision provides students with good information, advice, support and guidance, and ensures they achieve their potential. The provision is being reorganised to offer a more challenging and comprehensive package.
41. The inspirational support and guidance offered by heads of year, pastoral leaders, senior team and the learning mentors ensures that barriers to learning facing lower attaining and disaffected students are removed to enable all students to learn in a tolerant, organised and constructive way. Students are listened to, and are taught to value others and their teaching and learning, and to attend regularly and on time. This level of support and guidance enables most students to become mature and responsible learners and has enabled the college to reduce exclusions.
42. Child protection arrangements which are implemented in a professional, sensitive and caring manner and ensures that vulnerable students learn in a caring, safe and secure environment.

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

The college enjoys a very productive relationship with other educational establishments and the wider community. These arrangements support students' welfare and well-being, achievements and their personal development. The relationship with parents is improving and is generally satisfactory, but some parents are less supportive and this effects students' learning and personal development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The college works very hard to develop and sustain its work with the wider community.
- The college works tirelessly to involve parents by seeking, valuing and acting on their views.
- Some parents are not as supportive as the college would like and condone absenteeism.

### **Commentary**

43. Links with local communities and organisations are very good, overall. The college's 'extended school' programme does much to support, develop and enhance the wider educational needs of students and the wider community. A great deal has been achieved though the Excellence in Cities grant to employ and train the 'learning mentors' and the family liaison worker. Their work



has enabled the college to build bridges with the local community, support vulnerable students and their families, improve relationships with parents, reduce exclusions and improve student attendance. However, a small minority of parents still condone absenteeism.

44. These invaluable contacts have ensured an extensive network of specialists, social, community and youth workers and education welfare officers, as well as the business community and the Connexions team. The partnership has enabled the college to open its doors and embrace the community by introducing the community to improved opportunities for training and employment and developing a more trusting relationship between the community and external agencies.
45. The college has also sustained and developed its work with other educational establishments. Students are provided with a rich and varied alternative curriculum, which enables them to achieve through vocational courses and move on to further education. The college offers training for new teachers and courses for mature and disabled members of the community, which supports teaching and learning and provides the college community with an opportunity to learn alongside older and disabled members of the community.
46. Parents are regularly involved in supporting the education of their child. Following consultation with parents, the format for students' annual reports has been changed to ensure improved reporting of students' achievements. Parents' consultation evenings include more opportunities for parents and tutors to agree student targets and more time allocated for a thorough discussion of the student's report. These new arrangements are ensuring more effective communications with parents.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership of the college is good; the leadership of the headteacher is very good. Management is satisfactory. Governance of the college is unsatisfactory.

Statutory requirements for ICT and music, and for a daily act of collective worship are not met.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher, together with the senior leadership team, is providing inspirational leadership and there is a clear strategy for moving the college forward.
- The leadership of literacy across the college is unsatisfactory.
- The leadership of ICT and music are unsatisfactory and result in students underachieving.
- The quality of leadership and management of the special needs department is very good.
- Effective leadership of German results in students achieving well.
- Governors do not monitor the work of the college rigorously enough.

### **Commentary**

47. The college is continuing to go through a period of transition. The current headteacher has been in post for two years. The headteacher has a highly visible presence around the college, and is approachable to students and teachers. Her vision for the college is very clear and staff speak of her enthusiasm, energy and determination to create an environment within which every one of the students feels valued, respected and able to succeed. The college is involved in many partnerships with neighbouring schools. The arrangement is mutually beneficial allowing schools to both share and bring back development ideas. This 'networking' is key to the headteacher's vision for the college, one in which Norham is a leading partner in educational developments and a focal point for working with the community.
48. The headteacher has been successful because she has the support of a good senior leadership team. In recent months, changes have been made to strengthen the team and,

together, their skills and expertise complement one another. This team knows the strengths and weaknesses of the college well. A quite exceptional part of the college is the 'extended school' which is led and managed very well. This exciting development is key to the success of some students who had been switched off education previously.

49. There is a clear strategy to move the college forward. This includes not only plans to improve the provision for ICT and music but also to further develop strong and effective partnerships with other schools and agencies.
50. The college runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. There is a hardworking and dedicated support staff team who serve the college well. Communications are effective, particularly with parents who can be assured of a rapid response when they contact the college. The financial management of the college is good. There are effective procedures in place for monitoring expenditure and making informed decisions about college priorities. The college is also very effective in seeking additional resources and uses these effectively to improve its overall provision. However, whilst systems and procedures are clear, policies such as those for marking and literacy are not always applied consistently.
51. There are examples of effective teamwork among staff. For example, in German, effective leadership, supported by a strong committed team, is moving the department forward with clear direction resulting in good achievement. New leadership in history is bringing about an improvement in standards and achievement. On the other hand, the quality of leadership of the literacy strategy, of ICT and of music is unsatisfactory.
52. The quality of leadership and management of the special needs department is very good. Within a short time, the co-ordinator has significantly improved the work of the department. Strengths have been built upon and needs have been identified and met. Delegation of responsibilities has led to the development of a cohesive team which works well together to improve the learning of students.
53. The governance of the college is unsatisfactory. Governors fail to meet their statutory curriculum responsibilities of providing ICT and music, nor do they ensure that students are provided with a statutory daily act of collective worship. The governors have a sound knowledge of the college but are not actively involved in monitoring its work or being a 'critical friend' to the senior leadership team.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	3369272
Total expenditure	3351707
Expenditure per pupil	3800

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	161301
Balance carried forward to the next	178866

## PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

### SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4

#### ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

##### English

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well below average	Well below average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory

##### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards throughout Years 9 and 11 have improved in the current academic year.
- Work in the department has been revitalised as a result of initiatives taken by the headteacher.
- The teachers in the department are now well focused upon teaching and learning and are keen to move forward.
- Some classes are underachieving because they have been taught by a number of temporary teachers, which has resulted in a lack of continuity.
- Some of the marking is superficial and does not provide students with the guidance they need to raise their standards.

##### Commentary

##### Examination results

54. In 2003, results in the national tests at the end of Year 9 were well below average. In 2003, GCSE results in English were well below average and in English literature they were average. However, the proportion of Year 11 entered for the examination in English literature was much lower than the proportion entered for English and also much lower than the proportion entered nationally for the examination.

##### Standards and achievement

55. Standards at the time of the inspection were still well below average, by the ends of Year 9 and Year 11, but were higher than the levels attained in the examinations for 2003. The reason for this was improved leadership of the subject and increasingly effective teaching.
56. By the end of Year 9 standards in speaking and listening are well below average. Whilst higher attaining students express themselves clearly and are willing to contribute to class discussion, such students are in the minority. The majority of students tend to speak briefly, confuse their tenses and rely heavily upon colloquialisms. Very few understand how to express themselves formally. The limitations inherent in students' oral work are also to be found in their written work. Higher attainers structure their work well but, even so, are often hampered by a restricted vocabulary. Lower and middle attainers write in simple sentences and their work contains many errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Reading comprehension is well below expectations. Students' reading aloud is often hesitant and lacking in expression.

57. In Years 10 and 11, students improve their skills at a rate that means they are still well below the national expectation. Higher attainers learn how to use a more formal style when it is required or to adapt what they write for a specific purpose, for example, presenting thoughts using a “stream of consciousness” technique. However, such versatility is confined to a minority. In general, students rely upon a simple vocabulary and use repetitive sentence structures. Handwriting, especially amongst boys, is poor. Students do not re-draft their work or use dictionaries to the extent that might be expected. Students become increasingly willing to take part in oral work, but their skill resides with being able to communicate with their peer group rather than with a wider audience.

### **Teaching and learning**

58. When teaching is most effective, the teacher is well aware of students’ levels of prior attainment, ensures that the work contains an appropriate level of challenge, that the objectives can be achieved in the lesson, and that all students understand each stage of the lesson. Additionally, the teacher maintains a good pace, allows time for students’ learning to be assessed and provides them with feedback. Lessons are effective when the teacher possesses a good knowledge of the subject and the requirements of the course. This means that students are given a clear understanding of what is required of them and they become better able to evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses. Students’ self-awareness and ability to help themselves is further increased when their work is carefully and accurately marked and the teacher provides guidance on what action needs to be taken if standards are to be raised. Most teachers have good relationships with students and maintain good discipline. This means that there is a secure environment in which learning can take place.
59. When teaching is unsatisfactory or less effective, the work set does not match students’ needs, the pace is too slow to engage their interests and, in consequence, students behave inappropriately. Whilst generally learning support assistants are deployed effectively, on occasions they are not, with the result that students with learning or behavioural problems take up a disproportionate amount of the teachers’ time and attention. Some marking is superficial, fails to address the errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar in students’ work and does not provide them with the guidance, or the insistence upon high standards, that students need if they are to improve. There is less use made of ICT than is normally expected. Very little use is made of dictionaries.
60. The college was not able to appoint a permanent teacher to cover one of the English timetables, with the result that some classes have been taught by temporary teachers since the start of the academic year. Because of the lack of continuity in teaching, together with very limited assessment of students’ written work, students in some of these classes are underachieving.

### **Leadership and management**

61. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was directly overseeing the work of the subject, as the position of head of department was temporarily vacant. Since the start of the academic year, the headteacher has appointed a number of new teachers of English. This has included an assistant headteacher, to be responsible for English and literacy throughout the college, who had not taken up her post at the time of the inspection.
62. The department has undoubtedly benefited from the head’s involvement and been inspired by her determination to raise standards. It has also been given a renewed sense of direction through the involvement of local education authority personnel. Inevitably, however, there has been some lack of day-to-day management and there is not yet a consistent approach to the teaching. However, all the teachers in the department are well focused upon teaching and learning strategies and are keen to move forward.

## Literacy across the curriculum

63. In general, students' competence in literacy is well below average. The college's strategy for teaching literacy across the curriculum is unsatisfactory because there is such inconsistency. However, that is not the whole-picture, since there are examples of good and, indeed, exemplary practice.
64. In German, the meticulous attention that teachers pay to literacy skills in the way they teach the subject ensures that standards are high.

### Example of outstanding practice

**Students of all levels of attainment gain confidence in self-expression because teachers use their fluent German and support students to do so exceptionally well.**

Teachers encourage students to repeat key language chorally and then to develop their own personal sentences in German. For example, in a Year 7 class, the teacher, on opening a window gave *eine kleine Bris* as a model, which students repeated and then individuals enthusiastically expanded this language into full sentences using their own ideas. Students feel secure, valued and successful in forming sentences because the dedicated teachers support them with constant praise.

Students speak and write with reasonable accuracy, and they can remember what they have learned because they have developed very good awareness of language patterns through reading. This is because clear, word-processed displays of German grammar and vocabulary, and laminated desktop guidance sheets are at hand for reference if required during speaking and writing tasks. Additionally, students benefit from the teachers' colour coding on the board which highlights the complex noun and verb endings; for example, in a Year 8 lesson about food and drink, past participle forms such as *gegessen* and *getrunken*. Students present their work well and their writing reflects confidence evident in their speaking.

The teachers' exceptional interest and pleasure in their students' success creates very good relationships in which classroom communication thrives. All students regardless of their level of attainment leave German lessons with high self-esteem, having communicated confidently with others, and developed an appreciation of how language works, which they can then apply to other areas of learning.

## Modern foreign languages

### German

Provision in German is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Below average	Below average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching of language awareness contributes significantly to students' literacy.
- Students achieved well in GCSE in 2003.
- All students achieve well because of consistently good teaching and learning.
- Lack of personal text books limits students' home study opportunities.
- Students do not have sufficient information on their routine progress.

## Commentary

### Examination results

65. Results in the GCSE examinations were average and continue a broadly average trend. This represents good achievement considering students' low literacy on entry to the college and additionally, the college enters a wider ability range for German than is the case nationally.

### Standards and achievement

66. In the past year, continuity of learning in Years 9 and 11 has been disrupted by prolonged staff absence, which is now resolved. The current Year 9 students are confident listeners and speakers, and have mastered German noun and verb forms well as appropriate for their ability. They write competently and even the lowest attaining students make good progress in forming basic sentences. The highest attaining Year 9 students reach average or, occasionally, above average standards. Standards in Years 7 and 8 are rising. Students in the current Year 11 have developed a sound topic-based vocabulary and can speak and write confidently using basic forms of present and past tenses. Gifted and talented students and those with special educational needs achieve well. ICT used within teaching and learning is satisfactory. Students have very good attitudes to learning which contribute to their good achievement.

### Teaching and learning

67. The department contributes exceptionally well to students' literacy development. In all years, students speak confidently because teachers use German consistently and plan frequent conversation practice in pairs. Teachers explain grammar and sentence structure clearly, skilfully referring to informative displays. In Years 10 and 11, students achieve well because they receive invaluable examination guidance. However, teachers do not always inform students what learning is to take place and occasionally, lesson time is not efficiently used. Assessment is satisfactory; although short-term individual progress is carefully monitored, students have insufficient information on their longer-term achievement, and there is little routine reference to National Curriculum levels. The lack of text books limits home study for middle and upper sets.

### Leadership and management

68. Clear vision and direction are provided for the exceptionally committed team. Some aspects of departmental planning require speedier action. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection. All students now achieve well, and the quality of teaching is much improved.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well below average	Below average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Good
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Good

Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers aid students' achievement by planning lessons well and having a good understanding of mathematics.
- The use of the 'three-part' lesson gives students a variety of activities which assists in their learning.
- Higher attaining students are not always challenged enough.
- There is an insufficient use of ICT to support learning.

## **Commentary**

### **Examination results**

69. Results in the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 9 were well below the national average. Results in the 2003 tests were higher than those attained in 2002. The GCSE results in 2003 were below average and were better than those in 2002.

### **Standards and achievement**

70. The well below average standards at the end of Year 9, are as expected given the students' well below average standards on entry in Year 7. By the end of Year 9, higher attainers generate terms of a sequence well and write accurately an expression to describe the  $n^{\text{th}}$  term of an arithmetic sequence. Lower attainers construct bar charts and pictograms to represent data from tally charts. By Year 11, achievement is good, as the students' standards are better than they were in Year 9. This is due partly to the impact of the numeracy strategy and the use of more specialist teachers in Years 10 and 11. In Year 11, the higher attaining students factorise expressions including quadratics by removing common factors. They understand the difference of two squares when rationalising a denominator. Lower attaining students understand basic percentages and convert fractions with a denominator of 100 into percentages. In the process of finding the percentage, the students mentally multiply and divide by 100.

### **Teaching and learning**

71. Teachers aid students' achievement by planning lessons clearly and having a good understanding of mathematics. However, only in the better lessons are students told the content of the lesson and how long they have to carry out the activities. In these lessons, students are welcomed formally into the room where they wait quietly to be seated. This sets the appropriate learning atmosphere and behaviour is accordingly good. The use of the three-part lesson gives students a variety of activities that assist their learning. However, the finishes are not as effective as they could be to engage interest and recap learning. In the majority of classes higher attaining students are not specifically challenged. However, in one Year 11 revision class, the teacher differentiated the work very well to meet the needs of the students. The two groups had appropriate, challenging tasks and received very good support, ensuring all could achieve well. In Year 7, students' self-assessment for learning is developmental. Students are beginning to know how well they are doing, but are unclear on what their target is or how to achieve it. Homework is regularly set though there are inconsistencies. Helpful, constructive marking to support student learning is carried out, although this is better in some classes than others.

### **Leadership and management**

72. Since his recent appointment, the head of department has implemented several new developments. Teachers work hard to raise standards and there is good teamwork with effectively delegated roles. However, ICT is not used sufficiently as a teaching resource to assist the raising of standards. Performance data is used to identify and monitor students'

achievement. However, this does not fully embrace the use of value-added data to further substantiate targets. Links with other schools have been developed to learn and share best practice.

### Mathematics across the curriculum

73. Across Years 7 to 11, the standards of numeracy are well below average. The teaching of mathematics as a basic skill in all subjects is satisfactory. The mathematics department has consulted with other departments to establish where and how numeracy is used. For two weeks in the autumn term there is a focus on numeracy in all subjects in Year 7. In science, graphs are constructed well and calculations are practised. However, in the majority of other subjects, numeracy has not become sufficiently embedded in their daily provision to sufficiently raise further the students' numerical skills.

### SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well below average	Below average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students do better in GCSE examinations than might be expected, given their test results when they enter the college.
- Students' practical and investigative skills are better than their standards in other aspects of science.
- Students have weak literacy skills and find it difficult to give precise written answers to unfamiliar questions.
- Teachers are well informed and enthusiastic and generally establish very good relationships with students.
- The department works well together as a team and shares a determination to raise standards.
- The new scheme of work for Years 7 to 9 does not yet meet fully the needs of the various groups of students.

### Commentary

#### Examination results

74. In the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 9, results were well below the national average. These results have been rising, but more slowly than the national trend. Results in the 2003 GCSE science examinations were below average and similar to the results for 2002.

#### Standards and achievement

75. Almost all students have at least a basic understanding of the topics they are currently studying. However, many students, even in higher sets, find it difficult to express their understanding clearly when answering unfamiliar questions. They know the meaning of specialist scientific words but often use 'everyday' words incorrectly. Nevertheless, higher



attainers often gain standards that are better than expected for their age. For example, some students in Year 9 have good, detailed understanding of the breathing process and the structure of the lungs. Students' practical and investigative skills are better than their skills in other aspects of science.

76. At the end of Year 9, students do as well in tests and examinations as might be expected, given their test results when they entered the college. Several of the teachers in the department have only been in the college for a year. The good teaching currently seen in Years 7 to 9 has not yet been established long enough to have a full impact on students' achievement. Hence achievement is satisfactory at present rather than good, as might be expected in response to such teaching. Students achieve well through Years 10 and 11 so that, by the end of Year 11, their GCSE results are better than expected in relation to their standards when they joined the college.

### **Teaching and learning**

77. Teachers have good subject knowledge and provide clear explanations of new ideas. They enjoy their subject and share their enthusiasm with students. Teaching and learning are slightly better overall in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7 to 9, where the new scheme of work has not yet been fully adapted to ensure that students in each group learn as effectively as possible.
78. Teachers use a wide range of interesting and imaginative resources and activities to attract and hold students' concentration. They make full use of all the various ways in which students learn. For example, in a very good lesson for Year 10 lower attainers, students were required to hang coloured cards on a 'washing line' to help them remember the colours shown by universal indicator with acids and alkalis of various strengths. In a Year 11 lesson, students had to memorise and re-draw a picture showing the essential facts about the use of fertilisers; it was all part of an enjoyable team game but also provided valuable revision of the facts students needed to remember.
79. In the occasional unsatisfactory lesson, the teacher had only been teaching the students for a short time and did not plan enough activities so that students did not learn as much as they should have done during the lesson.

### **Leadership and management**

80. The head of department leads his team by example, particularly in his enthusiasm for the subject, his high expectations and his determination to raise standards. The department contains several relatively new members of staff but teachers, learning support assistants and technicians already work well together as a team. The department makes particularly good use of help and advice from outside the college in order to enhance its development. There is a very good range of teaching skills within the department although there is not yet enough observation by teachers of each other's lessons to share their particularly successful techniques.
81. Since the time of the previous inspection, the department has undergone several changes, notably the recent changes in staffing. Teaching is now good but this has yet to have a full impact on test and examination results. Hence, although results remain similar to those at the time of the previous inspection, the department has, in fact, made satisfactory progress since that time.

### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

ICT is taught as a discrete subject in Years 7 to 9. In Years 10 and 11, examination courses are offered in GCSE ICT and the new Applied ICT GCSE. One lesson of the applied course was sampled. In this lesson, students achieved well because the teaching was good and had prepared the students well for the forthcoming written examination. Coursework indicated that standards were below average and better than those of the students studying the full GCSE course. Students not

following an examination course rely on their other subjects to cover the National Curriculum requirements but this is unsatisfactory overall.

### Information and communication technology

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **unsatisfactory**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well below average	Well below average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Leadership	Unsatisfactory
Management	Unsatisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Unsatisfactory

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Management does not ensure all aspects of ICT are covered and as a result many Year 10 and 11 students underachieve because they are not taught the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- In the best lessons, students achieve well because of excellent use of resources and a rich variety of tasks.
- Teachers are not using accurate assessment information to set targets or to monitor achievement.
- The planning for individual students' needs within some lessons is not good enough because teachers do not always match the work accurately.

### Commentary

#### Examination results

82. Results in the GCSE ICT examination were below average in 2003.

#### Standards and achievement

83. In Years 7 to 9, students make sound gains in their skills of using computers because they are presented with a series of lessons based on the new national strategy. Higher attainers access software confidently and move information from one application to another. They manipulate text and import images but their understanding of the theory associated with the subject is very low. Lower attainers are very dependent on teachers for guidance and struggle to cope with formulae and interrogating databases because work is not always matched to their needs. Students are familiar with the use of the Internet and simple word processing but their achievement is restricted by their poor literacy skills that often prevent them from entering information accurately.
84. By the end of Year 11, the students following the examination courses produce presentations of average quality. They have adequate project management skills that they use to solve spreadsheet-based problems. They produce well-presented examination coursework and use Internet search engines well. They are not as good at checking their work for errors and modifying it. Girls present their work better than the boys do and their work is also organised more logically and efficiently. Students with special educational needs make worse progress than their classmates because their specific needs are not dealt with. There are many students in Years 10 and 11 whose achievement is poor because they do not have ICT lessons and so do not cover the requirements of the National Curriculum.

## Teaching and learning

85. Teaching, whilst satisfactory overall, ranges from unsatisfactory to excellent. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject, which they pass on to students well. Students are well prepared for examinations but their coursework is weak. Teachers are generally good at circulating the class throughout the lesson to monitor learning and to challenge students further. In the best lessons, teachers make the content interesting through excellent use of resources, including digital projectors, to demonstrate exactly what is required. They maintain students' concentration by moving seamlessly from one exciting task to the next. It is this high pace of learning that ensures students achieve well. When teaching is less effective, teachers do not engage the students enough because lessons lack pace and challenge. Most students pay attention when the teacher is speaking, but as soon as students move to computers some will surf the Internet or just sit and chat. Despite some effective on-the-spot feedback, the assessment information about students in Years 7 to 9 is not accurate or used to ensure that achievements are recognised and appropriate targets set. Marking of work is not consistent and fails to inform students of what they need to do to improve.

## Leadership and management

86. Management has not got a clear handle on how all aspects of the department work. ICT across subjects is managed separately as is the applied GCSE course. This results in a lack of cohesion and understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each area of the overall provision. Documentation is adequate but assessment procedures are weak and have resulted in over-generous teacher assessments at the end of Year 9. The new national strategy has been introduced through valuable work of the visiting consultant but the impact of this is not yet clear. There is an element of resistance to change and not all aspects of the strategy have been welcomed. The mapping of the use of ICT in other subjects in Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory and not enough guidance is given for subject teachers to ensure they are meeting the ICT requirements. Since the last inspection standards have dropped and the quality of management has deteriorated.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

87. The use of computers in other areas of the curriculum is generally satisfactory in Years 7 to 9. The highly valued bank of wireless laptops is used well. In geography and history, the Internet is used well for research and appropriate information is selected and presented using word processing and presentation software. In design and technology, there is good use of computer-aided design software to create textiles, but not enough use is made of computer-aided manufacturing. In music all but one class of Year 9 students have music technology lessons in which students use sampling software to create, manipulate and refine their dance style pieces. However, in most other subjects, students do not get enough opportunities to use computers to enhance their learning. In Years 10 and 11, many students have large gaps in their ICT knowledge and skills because they do not get enough opportunities to build on the skills they gained in Years 7 to 9.

## HUMANITIES

### Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well below average	Well below average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Teaching and learning	Good	Satisfactory

Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students are making good progress in Years 7 to 9 because of good teaching.
- Learning is enhanced through the use of ICT.
- Assessment arrangements do not inform enough about how well students are achieving.
- The schemes of work provide insufficient information to teachers.

### **Commentary**

#### **Examination results**

88. Results in the 2003 GCSE examinations were very low and below those attained in 2002.

#### **Standards and achievement**

89. By the end of Year 9, students have a range of geographical skills but standards are lower than is expected because map and graphical skills lack clarity and accuracy. They know about the Richter scale in earthquake studies, but have little understanding about global distribution. Gains are made in knowledge of places, such as the local area and flooding in Bangladesh, but knowledge of places is insecure because not enough use is made of the atlas. Knowledge of cultures such as the Masaai in Kenya is good, and students understand why some countries are more developed than others. Written standards are low however, because many students have difficulty in grammatical accuracy and expression.
90. By the end of Year 11, students improve their geographical skills but do not use maps and drawings enough to support written answers. The quality of coursework, however, is better because good use is made of ICT, but marks are lost because findings are not detailed enough. Students are aware of development and impact on local cultures in the Amazon, but are limited in depth and range of knowledge of topics. They know about physical features but using examples and understanding their formation is weak.

#### **Teaching and learning**

91. In Years 7 to 9, teachers provide clear aims and plan lessons carefully to provide opportunities for students to participate actively. Teachers are subject specialists and explain points clearly and this leads to good progress in lessons. Resources are carefully prepared and tailored to meet individual students' requirements. In a Year 8 lesson for example, students made good progress because the teacher prepared resources that supported students' writing needs well, enabling them to prepare and organise work on the Kobe earthquake. Work is regularly marked but there is not enough evaluation of its quality and insufficient attention is given to improving the quality of maps and diagrams.
92. In Years 10 and 11, teaching is well structured and provides variety of activity to interest and engage students in learning. Students are well prepared to meet requirements in GCSE coursework. They benefit from opportunity to undertake study at Whitley Bay that gives them direct experience of relating theoretical study to real places. The work is enhanced through the use of ICT. Revision, however, is not rigorous enough in ensuring that students consolidate knowledge of place and improve reasoning in answers.

## Leadership and management

93. The newly appointed joint heads of department have had insufficient time to plan the longer-term development of the subject, but the current development plan rightly places emphasis on raising standards of literacy skills. Staffing changes have given rise to instability and interrupted the continuity of learning and has contributed to low standards. However, many of these problems have now been satisfactorily resolved. Standards continue to be well below average but teaching and learning is now good in Years 7 to 9.

## History

Provision in history is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Below average	Below average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory

There has been a significant change in staff during the last year.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching is leading to rising standards.
- Students with special educational needs achieve well because of the support they receive.
- The arrangements to assess students' achievements require improvement.

## Commentary

### Examination results

94. Results in the 2003 GCSE examination were low and students did less well in history compared with the other subjects they studied. The results were consistent with those attained in 2002.

### Standards and achievement

95. By the end of Year 9, students have an understanding of chronological events and can place events in time, but do not identify enough 'key' events. They have knowledge of topics and have improved research skills because they are now receiving regular practice. They know about sources of evidence but do not evaluate evidence in enough detail. In recent work, however, students show higher standards in studies of links between industrialisation in England and the spread of disease. Students with special educational needs achieve well because their needs are identified and regular support ensures that achievement is good. Standards of written work are well below average because of weakness in grammatical accuracy and improvement over time is slow.

96. By the end of Year 11, students gain knowledge of a wide range of topics. Achievement of a minority of students, however, is reduced by irregular attendance. Students understand about the spiritual and cultural aspects of topics in studies of American Indians and Mormons beliefs. Standards of written work are below average because of grammatical inaccuracies and

answers are not detailed enough. Word processing of coursework, however, improves standards.

### Teaching and learning

97. In Years 7 to 9, most lessons are taught by specialist teachers. Teachers plan their lessons very well and are well structured to incorporate opportunities for the active involvement of students in learning. Teachers manage students very well so that they know what is expected and respond positively to the challenges provided. In a Year 9 lesson, for example, students researched and gave presentations about the growth of dictatorships, whilst careful preparation of others enabled them to evaluate the presentations. Students enjoyed the lesson, gained self-confidence and improved understanding of the topic. Teachers make good use of resources and work is regularly marked, but insufficient attention is given to evaluation of the content and to improving grammatical weaknesses. In Years 10 and 11, teachers are enthusiastic and good role models for students. Students show respect and have confidence in learning. This is leading to a rise in standards. They benefit from careful guidance and support, such as provision for additional learning opportunities and as a result are now better prepared for the examination.
98. Teachers expect much of students in effort and application, but occasionally learning is too teacher centred, students are passively involved and progress is slow. Work is marked but there is not enough guidance on the quality of the historical content.

### Leadership and management

99. The newly appointed head of department has made a good start in identifying the longer-term objectives for the subject; these are appropriate. There are good support systems for managing students and inducting new teachers. There is however, insufficient planning to improve students' literacy weaknesses. The procedures for and use of assessment is not fully informing on standards and achievement. The subject has made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection. Teaching and learning continue to be good and students are now beginning to achieve more.

### Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Below average	Below average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are good and are leading to improvements.
- Teaching is good and enables students to achieve well.
- Religious education makes a very good contribution to students' personal development.
- Relationships with students are very good which aids their achievement.

## Commentary

### Examination results

100. A new GCSE short-course has been introduced and students are being entered for the first time in 2004.

### Standards and achievement

101. By Year 9, students know and understand the main beliefs and traditions of Christianity and other world faiths. They understand some of the ways in which religious belief affects people's lives and of how symbols and rituals are used in worship. Many have a below average grasp of religious language. There are weaknesses in literacy, particularly spelling, capital letters and sentence construction.

102. In Years 10 and 11, the achievement of students on the newly introduced GCSE course is good. In Year 10, students are developing a good understanding of crime and punishment. By Year 11, students have a satisfactory understanding of the units of study on medicine, equality and poverty. A good feature of their work is their understanding of the Christian perspectives on issues such as abortion and euthanasia.

### Teaching and learning

103. The most effective teaching is very well planned, and uses motivating and engaging tasks. Focused questioning challenges students and requires them to think about issues. Teaching is enthusiastic and knowledgeable, the use of artefacts and video makes learning interesting for students. Classroom management is very good and teachers create an environment in which students want to work. Relationships are very good and students respond well to the subject. Assessment procedures are good; students' work is marked accurately and there is good guidance on what they need to do to improve. Across Years 7 to 11, students' learning in religious education makes a very good contribution to their social, moral, cultural and spiritual development.

### Leadership and management

104. Teamwork is good and is leading to improvements in the subject. The curriculum is satisfactory overall but there are no visits to churches or other faith centres. Accommodation and learning resources are of good quality and meet the needs of the curriculum well. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Teaching has improved and focuses on challenging students of all abilities.

## TECHNOLOGY

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

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well below average	Below average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since the previous inspection	Satisfactory

There has been a significant change in staff since January 2004.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of leadership is good and provides a clear vision for moving the subject forward.
- The established textiles and food courses promote good achievement.
- Boys are enthusiastic about the new engineering course.
- Inconsistencies in marking and teaching methods cause delays in achievement.

## **Commentary**

### **Examination results**

105. Results in the GCSE examinations were well below average. Whilst girls achieved well, boys underachieved. Results in textiles were above average.

### **Standards and achievement**

106. By the end of Year 9, students' use of equipment, drawing and product quality is average. They use computers well for designing. However, plans and notes are well below average, though in this aspect, those students with special educational needs achieve well. Weak literacy skills adversely affect students' research work. Students' attitudes are good and they enjoy the subject which aids their achievement.

107. By the end of Year 11, students' making skills are above average and their products are well made. However, whilst designing skills are above average in textiles and food, skills are below average in resistant materials. Students in Year 11 do not make decisions with sufficient information and thought and designs often lack precision. Boys behave well because the new and improved courses are interesting, particularly the engineering course. Students have a sound knowledge of CAD/CAM processes when applied to the production of aluminium car components.

### **Teaching and learning**

108. In Years 7 to 9, knowledgeable and enthusiastic teachers motivate students to work well. Some teachers did, however, miss opportunities to encourage students to show off their ideas or to forge ahead more quickly. In Years 10 and 11, the best teaching built confidence quickly and encouraged students to work on their own for long periods. However, some students lacked confidence in knowing how to improve because the guidance was not precise enough or the teacher too busy. The quality of marking is variable and students do not always know how to improve.

### **Leadership and management**

109. Through good systems and good vision much has been achieved since the team formed in January 2004. Standards, after declining, have been restored very quickly.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

Art and design and music are reported in full below. Drama was sampled.

### **Drama**

A sample of drama lessons in Years 7 to 9 was observed during the inspection. Standards seen were in line with the national average. Students' achievement is very good and teaching and learning are also very good. In the lessons there is a valuable emphasis upon improving communication skills. This includes non-verbal communication, such as mime and facial expression, as well as



speech. The latter is taught effectively through an emphasis upon voice projection, audibility and the pace of delivery, as well as allowing students to improvise and create their own dialogues.

## Art and design

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

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Average	Below average
Achievement	Good	Satisfactory
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Very good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well in Years 7 to 9 as a result of good teaching.
- The department is very well managed and as a consequence, standards are improving.
- Drawing from observation is not systematically developed.
- Students do not spend enough time on experimentation and the creative development of initial ideas.
- Students do not make full use of ICT.

## Commentary

### Examination results

110. Results at GCSE and in Year 9 teacher assessments are well below the national average but continue to improve.

### Standards and achievement

111. By the end of Year 9, students have a good awareness of the formal elements of art and gain experience of a wide variety of two and three-dimensional media. They use their sketchbooks well, particularly for research. Students' ability to use ICT, particularly for making art, is limited. Their art vocabulary and use of technical terms is poor, both orally and in written evaluations of work. Students have a good understanding of composition and the use of line. They show good creative and imaginative skills. They gain confidence in their ability to learn and are not inhibited when faced with challenge.
112. The achievement of students in Years 10 to 11, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory as a result of teaching that involves individual support and well-prepared resources. However, teachers do not always describe the intended learning outcomes clearly enough. Drawing, especially from observation, is not developed systematically and lack of technical expertise adversely affects the standards of finished work. Although students regularly study other artists they do not analyse in depth and therefore do not incorporate new techniques and ideas into their own work. Similarly, students do not develop or refine their initial thoughts and visual ideas and as a result much finished work lacks sophistication.

## Teaching and learning

113. In all years students benefit from well-planned lessons with work set at different levels to cater for all abilities. Students know exactly what is expected of them by a combination of whole-

class teacher demonstration illustrated by exemplar material. Classroom assistants are effectively deployed and provide a high standard of resource, preparation, and student support and also help with work display. Homework directly linked to the lesson is regularly set and marked. Students respond well to the well-structured and pacy lessons, which are taught with enthusiasm. Good behaviour and application to work is noticeable.

## Leadership and management

114. Leadership of the department is good. The newly appointed head of department provides enthusiasm and commitment. She has correctly focused her initial attention on improving the learning environment and status of the subject. Consequently, there is now a strong work ethic and high standards of behaviour in the department. Management is very good. There are clear systems, policies and procedures evident in classroom practice. Teachers benefit from programmes of professional development and enlist external support from the Local Education Authority effectively. Art clubs and an open door policy allow students, including the gifted and talented, to further develop their work. Work is well presented and displayed throughout the college.

115. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The quality of the teaching has led to improved standards and homework is now more relevant. ICT is still underused and accommodation remains unsatisfactory.

## Music

Provision in music is **unsatisfactory**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well below average	Well below average
Achievement	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Teaching and learning	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory

Leadership	Unsatisfactory
Management	Unsatisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Unsatisfactory

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Unsatisfactory management has resulted in gaps in the coverage of the required curriculum and poor assessment procedures.
- Students in Years 8 and 9 achieve well in the music technology lessons because of well planned and taught lessons.
- Performance activities, particularly drumming are central to the musical experience of students but listening and appraising are weak.
- Marking does not tell students how well they are doing or what they need to do to get better.
- Music has a positive impact on the life of the college and students' enjoyment is evident.

## Commentary

### Examination results

116. Teacher assessments of students' attainment at the end of Year 9 were significantly below those reported nationally. Results for GCSE in 2003 for those students taking the examination were well below average.

## Standards and achievement

117. By the end of Year 9 standards are generally well below average and students are underachieving because they do not cover all the requirements of the National Curriculum. Musically talented students have well developed performance skills, particularly in drumming, because of the high emphasis given to rhythmic work in lessons and extra-curricular activities. Composing and appraising skills are considerably weaker and hardly any students understand the basic elements of music as set out in the National Curriculum. Lower attainers and those with special educational needs do not get as much opportunity to shine within the subject because lessons are geared to stretching those who have been identified as particularly musically talented. The bias towards drumming and singing along to pop-videos has resulted in a lack of breadth and balance to the curriculum. However, a strength of the curriculum is the opportunity for some students to create music using dance-music software in music technology lessons. Students, including some higher attainers, have weak writing skills and their written work contains many spelling errors.
118. Standards by the end of Year 11 are well below average; all students underachieve because they are not taught all aspects of the examination course. Theory and appraising are considerably weaker than performance and practical work. Higher attainers perform well on their chosen instrument but struggle with reading notation and understanding musical history. Lower attainers do not fully understand even the most basic musical features such as ostinato and dynamics. Many students do not know what the term 'classical' means. Coursework is not well presented and shows weaknesses in writing and literacy skills particularly in descriptive writing work.

### **Teaching and learning**

119. Whilst overall the teaching is unsatisfactory and results in unsatisfactory learning there are times when it can be exciting and inspirational. Teaching is characterised by a passion for music making and a belief that music should be fun. Relationships are very good and students enjoy making music. Lessons frequently open with attention-grabbing drumming activities that motivate the students very well. However, this level of excitement rarely continues because planning is weak and work is not modified to allow all students to achieve their full potential. Many lessons do not fully involve all students. In these lessons, lower attainers and those with special educational needs, become bored and uninvolved in the activities and do not learn as much as they should. Teaching does not always have learning at its core and there is frequently not enough focus on achievement. During the week of the inspection, the same lesson was taught to all students in Years 7 to 9 irrespective of their age or ability. Teaching and learning in music technology is very good and students achieve very well as a result. In Years 10 and 11, important weaknesses in appraising have been identified but are not given the attention they need in lessons so students do not improve their skills. Marking of work rarely informs students of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Learning is well supported by good quality instrumental tuition and extra-curricular activities.

### **Leadership and management**

120. Leadership has a clear vision for the enjoyment of music making but fundamentally misunderstands students' entitlement to all the elements of the National Curriculum. Schemes of work are geared to students' enjoyment of music but do not allow them to make the same rate of progress as that found in other schools. Assessment procedures are unnecessarily complex, the curriculum is imbalanced and the subject has not made the progress expected since the previous inspection. Music has a high profile within the college with regular performance opportunities and is very popular with the students.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

	Year 9	Year 11 (Core course)	Year 11 (GCSE course)
Standards	Average	Average	Well below average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Leadership	Good
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The department is led well and this gives a clear direction to the subject's development.
- Teachers have good relationships with students, which ensure good behaviour and levels of attendance and participation.
- Information about students' performance is used effectively to chart their progress on the GCSE course and keep them on target.
- The narrow range of teaching styles used does not give enough opportunities to students to take some responsibility for their own learning.
- The assessment procedures in the non-examination course in Years 10 and 11 are unsatisfactory.
- The monitoring of teaching in the department is not undertaken with enough rigour to identify strengths to build on and weaknesses to tackle.

### Commentary

#### Examination results

121. The 2003 GCSE examination results were well below average.

#### Standards and achievement

122. Standards in athletics are average, but students' knowledge and understanding of how to prepare for and recover from strenuous exercise are below average. Students with special needs are well integrated and achieve as well as other students. In Year 11, standards in the non-examined course are broadly average. Standards in athletics and in basketball are average. In trampolining, standards are well above average. In all these activities, students' ability to evaluate their own and others' performance against appropriate criteria is below average.
123. GCSE students attain well below average standards. Their understanding of theoretical aspects of the course is adversely affected by their well below average literacy skills. In practical coursework, they show a good knowledge and understanding of how to construct and perform a complex sequence of skills in trampolining. The achievement of GCSE students is satisfactory overall, but some have their achievement lowered significantly by poor attendance patterns.

#### Teaching and learning

124. Teachers are knowledgeable about their subject and students benefit from teachers' good level of knowledge about the demands of the GCSE course. Where teaching is good, students are organised well and lessons proceed with good pace that challenge students to produce good quality work. Where teaching is less successful, it is not rigorous enough, and there are insufficient demands on students to do better. Where teaching is poor, students' levels of participation are low and they become bored and learn very little. In the majority of work seen,

teachers organise their classes effectively and plan their lessons so that there is a good structure that allows students to build their skills progressively and successfully. For example, girls in a Year 8 class quickly learned the fundamentals of an effective running action and were able to demonstrate and explain the ideal posture adopted by a sprinter. In the teaching of athletics, teachers do not give students enough opportunity to contribute their ideas or take responsibility for their learning. A strength in the department is the positive relationships teachers build with their students and engender between students. As a result, the large majority of lessons are characterised by good behaviour and a productive working atmosphere where learning is valued. There is good practice in the use of assessment in Years 7 to 9 and in setting targets for students on the GCSE course. However, the assessing of students' achievement in Years 10 and 11 on the non-examination course is unsatisfactory and does not allow their achievement to be tracked effectively.

### Leadership and management

125. The very good documentation ensures a clear educational direction to the development of the subject. Good systems and strategies are being put into place to guide the department's work, and the department is developing its self-evaluation procedures well. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

## BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

### Business studies

Provision in business studies is **good**.

	Year 11
Standards	Below average
Achievement	Good
Teaching and learning	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Not applicable

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching brings about effective learning for students of all levels of attainment.
- Students do better in GCSE examinations than might be expected, given their test results when they enter the college.
- Students' practical skills are better than their standards in other aspects of business studies.
- Students have weak literacy skills and find it difficult to give precise written answers to unfamiliar questions.
- Teachers are well informed and enthusiastic and generally establish good relationships with students.

### Commentary

#### Examination results

126. Results in the 2003 GCSE examinations were below average.

#### Standards and achievement

127. Students have a good understanding of the factors that need to be considered when promoting goods; they link price, place and promotion to the marketing of their product. Presentations are of a good quality. Students benefit from a significant input from outside speakers from commerce and industry. Students' knowledge and skills are below what might typically be expected. Students respond well to the variety of challenges offered to them. Students in Year 10 identify the pros and cons related to the factors affecting the location of companies. They demonstrate secure knowledge and understanding of those elements appropriate to current and local business practices. Lower attainers are very dependent on teachers for guidance and struggle to cope with basic business concepts. Students' practical skills are average but their research skills are below average and are also weakened by poor literacy skills.

### **Teaching and learning**

128. Teachers are knowledgeable about their subject and students benefit from teachers' good level of knowledge about the demands of the GCSE course. They quickly establish a purposeful atmosphere for learning. Lessons are planned thoroughly. Teachers' enthusiasm and commitment inspire students, who respond well to the challenges set for them. Over a period of time, students' work demonstrates that the range of teaching methods used is varied and students are therefore able to develop different ways of working. Teachers organise "mini-enterprise" activities which link into students' understanding of production processes. Students are encouraged to develop independent learning skills. Assessment is well organised.

### **Leadership and management**

129. There is a strong drive for continual improvement. Teamwork is good and is leading to improvements in the subject. Since the time of the previous inspection, the department has undergone several changes, notably the recent changes in staffing. Teaching is now good but this has yet to have a full impact on examination results.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

Citizenship was inspected in full and PSHE was sampled.

### **Personal, social and health education**

The college has a good programme for personal development which includes provision for careers education, relationships and sex education and for teaching about alcohol and drug abuse. There is a well structured and resourced programme of topics taught by form tutors. It was not possible to sample any lessons in the PSHE programme. Planning within religious education and personal development is good and is being effectively delivered across all year groups. Focus Days are well organised and effectively deliver major units of the programme.

Work seen for students in Years 7 to 11, indicates good teaching, average standards and good achievement. Personal programmes make a good contribution to students' welfare and help them make gains in understanding concepts of anti-social behaviour and in recognising the impact on themselves and others of alcohol or other drugs. The college's sex education programme is good.

In Years 10 and 11, good attention continues to be given to health and drugs education. Well organised work experience makes a good contribution to careers' education. In Years 10 and 11, good efforts are made to match placements to students' career aspirations and there is also a good emphasis on adding breadth to their experience. Good liaison with the careers service contributes to the good success rate in helping students identify their post-16 routes.

## Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Below average	Below average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of leadership is good and provides a clear vision.
- The introduction of citizenship as a National Curriculum subject has been well planned.
- The college council is very effective in involving students and with planning activities to promote involvement in the college and local community.
- The subjects where aspects of citizenship have been identified need to formally write them into their plans.
- Monitoring and evaluation of citizenship is unsatisfactory.
- Students' achievement is adversely affected by unsatisfactory attendance.

### Commentary

#### Examination results

130. Students are not entered for public examinations in citizenship.

#### Standards and achievement

131. By Year 9, students have a developing knowledge and understanding of their rights in society through topics such as crime, human rights, prejudice and discrimination. In Years 10 and 11, students develop a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the environment, global issues and poverty. There is a good range of opportunities for students to develop successfully their skills as active citizens. Students demonstrate good skills of enquiry and communication through the planning of community events such as the recycling project and fund raising activities. The work of the college council, *help at hand* (peer mentoring) and the "Environ *flippin* Mental" group are examples of how students are developing good skills of participation and responsible actions. Students' erratic attendance reduces their achievement to only satisfactory and negates some of the good teaching.

#### Teaching and learning

132. Evidence from students' work shows that teaching and learning of citizenship is satisfactory. Some lessons in religious education, geography and history were observed in which aspects of citizenship were being taught. In these lessons, the quality of teaching and learning were good. Lessons were well planned. Teaching was enthusiastic and energetic and successfully engaged students in their learning. Relationships were good and students displayed good attitudes to learning. In a religious education lesson, students' learning was well supported by the use of the college's police liaison officer.

## **Leadership and management**

133. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the development of citizenship education. She is a knowledgeable and innovative leader and in the classroom she is a good role model. The standard of documentation is good but procedures for monitoring and evaluating citizenship are unsatisfactory. In other subjects, heads of department are aware of the opportunities for delivering aspects of citizenship but these have not been formally written into all plans. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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